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## **The Zeph Story**

Kenneth A. Godfrey

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# **Paper**

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■ F.A.R.M.S.  
P.O. BOX 7113  
UNIVERSITY STATION  
PROVO, UTAH 84602

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## THE ZELPH STORY

by Kenneth W. Godfrey

When the twenty men who formed the vanguard of Zion's Camp left Kirtland, Ohio, on 1 May 1834, they could not know that one of their most lasting and intriguing contributions to Latter-day Saint history would take place, not on a Missouri battlefield but rather on top of a large mound in Illinois.<sup>1</sup> This elevation, apparently located one mile south of modern Valley City, has been called Naples-Russell Mound Number Eight, Pike County.<sup>2</sup> According to historian Stanley B. Kimball, this mound is a "typical prehistoric Middle Woodland mortuary complex of the Hopewell culture."<sup>3</sup> There, on 3 June 1834, members of Zion's Camp located a few bones, including a broken femur and an arrowhead, approximately a foot below the earth's surface, and these remains became the catalyst for revelation to Joseph, the Seer, regarding the skeleton's identity.

Subsequently, the information recorded by several of the camp's members would be used by historians, geographers and other scholars as evidence that Book of Mormon events, especially those in its closing chapters, took place in the northeastern part of the United States.<sup>4</sup> Because this account is cited so frequently, usually as it is given in the History of the Church,<sup>5</sup> it seems useful to examine closely the primary sources reporting the details of this extraordinary event.

The day after the finding of Zelph, the Prophet Joseph Smith, "on the banks of the Mississippi River," wrote a letter to his

wife Emma. While he does not mention Zelph by name, Joseph describes the setting in general:

The whole of our journey, in the midst of so large a company of social honest and sincere men, wandering over the plains of the Nephites, recounting occasionally the history of the Book of Mormon, roving over the mounds of that once beloved people of the Lord, picking up their skulls & their bones, as a proof of its divine authenticity, and gazing upon a country the fertility, the splendour and the goodness so indescribable, all serves to pass away time unnoticed.

Obviously, Joseph and his companions were inspired and elated as they moved closer to their land of promise in Missouri. The territory they were in was vast, rich, and unsettled. The ghostly mounds of former inhabitants, however, reminded Joseph and his camp that the land had once been occupied. As they went, they naturally talked about the Book of Mormon. Joseph called the land "the plains of the Nephites." They believed that the mounds had belonged to "that once beloved people," and they interpreted the mere fact that skulls and bones were readily found as evidence of the divine authenticity of the book. Evidently they were most impressed by the fact that a prior civilization had been destroyed from off the face of this land, for the Book of Mormon similarly reported the destruction of a large group of people on this continent. Simple confirmation of the fact that destructions had taken place was evidence enough for these adventurers that the Book of Mormon was true.

Beyond enjoying this general confirmation of their faith, the members of Zion's Camp received more specific information about one skeleton in particular. Although Joseph did not mention this

particular episode in his letter to Emma, seven others in the camp made records about the finding of Zelph's bones and what Joseph said about them. These records are generally consistent with each other, but they leave a number of details in doubt. Who was Zelph? Was he a Nephite or a Lamanite? When did he die? What army was he in? As will be seen, the answers to these questions cannot be given with certainty from the complex historical sources that resulted from this event. While this means that Book of Mormon scholars must remain tentative in drawing implications from this notable incident, it does not diminish the fact that Joseph was moved by the spirit of revelation to speak about Zelph and his noble past in connection with Book of Mormon peoples or their descendants.

#### Finding Zelph

Seven men who were in Zion's Camp wrote or dictated accounts of the Zelph incident. Their accounts will be discussed in the apparent order in which they were written. The data they furnish is summarized in a chart as Appendix 1. In the quotations from these diaries and journals, minor improvements in some spelling and punctuation have been made to enhance their readability.<sup>7</sup>

(1) Reuben McBride's account is shorter and less detailed than the others, but it may have been the first one recorded, having been written on the day the find occurred, although in no case are we completely sure when the information was put down in writing. McBride wrote:

Tuesday [June] 3 [1834] visited the mounds. A skeleton was dug up [by] Joseph, said his name was Zelph a great warrior under the Prophet Omandagus. An arrow was found in his Ribs--

[page break; top of next page begins with different lighter ink, indicated here by underlining; it is partly illegible, but appears to read:

His name was Zelph a warior under the Prophet  
Omandagus Zelph a white Laman[il]te

Crossed the Missipi River on the 4 (th of June) 2  
days in Crossing

June 6 resumed our jorney (illegible) at Salt River  
Staid 12 days

From Salt River to Richmond Ray County (illegible)  
that (illegible) the (illegible) . . .

(June) 19 on fishing River

(June) 20 went 5 miles meeting held counsel

June 24 Colera (illegible)

(June) 23 Arived at Rush Creek

Rush Creek Mo Clay Co

Choler (June) 24.]

--which he said he suposed ocaisoned his death Said he was killed in battle. Said he was a man of God and the curse was taken off or in part he was a white Lamanite **was known from the atlantic to the Rocky Mountains** [bold type indicates words added interlinearly].

June, the 4 came to the Missipi River were 2 days in Crossing being very high one mile wide

On the 7th arived at Salt River. Staid their 12 days to recrute and reorganise. Some came from Michigan and joined the company.

According to this handwritten journal, Zelph was a great warrior under Omandagus,<sup>9</sup> a man of God, and a white Lamanite known from the Atlantic to the Rocky Mountains,<sup>10</sup> and the arrow that killed him was found with his remains. Joseph Smith is credited with uncovering the bones, but little more is said.<sup>11</sup>

(2) Another member of Zion's Camp, 22-year old Moses Martin, also kept a diary of his experiences while traveling through Pike County:

This being in the Co of Pike, here we discovered a large quantity of large mounds. Being filed with curiosity we excavated the top of one so[m?]e 2 feete when we came to the bones of an extraordinary large person or human being, the thigh bones being 2 inches longer from one Socket to the other than of the Prophet whi who is upwards of 6 feete high which would have constuted some

8 or 9 feet high. In the trunk of this skeleton near the vitals we found a large stone arrow which I suppose broug[h]t him to his end. Soon after this Joseph had a vision and the Lord shewed him that this man was once a mighty Prophet and many other things concerning his people. Thus we found those mounds to have be[en] deposits for the dead which had fallen no doubt in some great Battles. In addition to this we found many large fortifications which als[o] denotes civilisation and an innumerable population which has fallen by wars and comotion and the Banks of this Beautiful River became the deposit of many hundred thousands whose graves and fortifications have<sup>12</sup> are overgrown with the sturdy oak 4 feet in diameter.

It is interesting to note that while Martin is impressed with the size of the skeleton and with Joseph's vision of the unnamed prophet, he says nothing about his being killed in battle, about his ancestry, about his name, or about his having served under a prophet chief named Omandagus or Onandagus. Instead, in the Martin account, this deceased man was "a mighty prophet," while nothing more is written, for example, about his being a white Lamanite. No details are given about who did the excavating.

(3) Wilford Woodruff, who five years later would be called to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, wrote in his journal the following account of what transpired:

While on our travels we visited many of the mounds which were flung up by the ancient inhabitants of this continent, probably by the Nephites & Lamanites. We visited one of those Mounds and several of the brethren dug into it and took from it the bones of a man. Brother Joseph had a vision respecting the person he said he was a white Lamanite, the curse was taken from him or at least in part, he was killed in battle with an arrow, the arrow was found among his ribs, one of his thigh bones was broken, this was done by a stone flung from a sling in battle years before his death, his name was Zelph. Some of his bones were brought into the camp and the thigh bone which was broken was put into my waggon and I carried it to Missouri. Zelph was a large thick set man and a man of God, he was a warrior under the great prophet that was known from the hill Cumorah

to the Rocky mountains.<sup>13</sup> The above knowledge Joseph received in a vision.

Sometime later (date unknown), Woodruff added interlinearly in the same paragraph the following information:

+considerd to be 300 feet above the level of the Illinois river, three persons dug into the mound & found a body, Elder Milton Holmes took the arrow out of the back bones that killed Zelph & brought it with some of the bones into the camp, I visited the same mound with Jesse J. Smith. Who the other persons were that dug into the mound & found the body I am undecided.<sup>14</sup>

At the same time, he apparently also added the word Onandagus after the words "great prophet," and inserted the words on East sea after "Cumorah."

Woodruff says that the Prophet "Onandagus" was known "from the hill Cumorah on East sea to the Rocky mountains." This is the earliest source for this geographical data. He too reported that the information about the skeleton came through a vision given to the Prophet Joseph. Two other accounts of this incident were later penned by Woodruff, but their wording is essentially identical to the one above except for omitting the information added interlinearly to the earlier paragraph (See Appendix 1).

From the last few lines of the interlinear addition, it seems that Wilford Woodruff visited the mound only after the original group had made the find and that he remained "undecided" about who dug and found the body. While the point is not entirely clear, it appears that he was not with the original party, thus his value as a witness to the events on the mound is somewhat diminished. He almost certainly was party to discussions that took place away from the mound, however, since the thigh bone was carried in his own wagon.

(4) The longest and most detailed near-contemporaneous account about Zelfh was written by Levi Hancock, later one of the Presidents of the Seventy. Like Woodruff, he did not go with the group that discovered the remains of Zelfh, but he saw the bones and the arrowpoint they brought back to camp. Hancock wrote in his journal:

On the way to Illinois River where we camped on the west side in the morning, many went to see the big mound about a mile below the crossing, I did not go on it but saw some bones that was brought with a broken arrow, they was layed down by our camp Joseph addressed himself to Sylvester Smith, "This is what I told you and now I want to tell you that you may know what I meant; this land was called the land of desolation and Onendagus was the king and a good man was he, there in that mound did he bury his dead and did not dig holes as the people do now but they brought there dirt and covered them untill you see they have raised it to be about one hundread feet high, the last man buried was Zelf, he was a white Lamanite who fought with the people of Onendagus for freedom, when he was young he was a great warrior and had his th[igh] broken and never was set, it knited together as you see on the side, he fought after it got strength untill he lost every tooth in his head save one when the Lord said he had done enough and suffered him to be killed by that arrow you took from his brest." These words he said as the camp was moving of[f] the ground; as near as I could learn he had told them something about the mound and got them to go and see for themselves. I then remembered what he had said a few days before while passing many mounds on our way that was left of us; said he, "there are the bodies of wicked men who have died and are angry at us; if they can take the advantage of us they will, for if we live they will have no hope." I<sup>15</sup> could not comprehend it but supposed it was all right.

Hancock reports different information than do the earlier accounts when he tells us the land was named Desolation and that Onendagus was a king and a good man, but he says nothing about his being a prophet. However, he does inform us that Zelfh lost all his teeth but one, and he implies that Zelfh was relatively

aged at death. His account makes no mention of the Hill Cumorah, but it agrees that Zelfh was a white Lamanite.

Hancock's is the only source to report any specific circumstances surrounding Joseph Smith's statements about the skeleton, and this information may be significant: He spoke about it to Sylvester Smith. This is not a trivial point, for Sylvester Smith was a troublemaker in the camp,<sup>16</sup> who "rebelled against the order of the camp," eventually apostatizing.<sup>17</sup> Joseph's addressing him specifically may have been intended as a warning of evil influences and threats from "the bodies of the wicked men" buried in these mounds who were "angry" at the camp as they marched through "desolation." Such threats surrounding the group required their fullest obedience and alertness in order to escape.

(5) An account of the finding of Zelfh by Heber C. Kimball was published in the Times and Seasons in 1845 under the title, "Extracts from H. C. Kimball's Journal." An identical account, except for a lack of editing, is found in the autobiography of Heber C. Kimball dictated to James Sloan after the Saints arrived in the Salt Lake Valley. The Kimball account under the date June 3, 1834, published in 1845, says:

On Tuesday the 3rd, we went up, several of us, with Joseph Smith Jr. to the top of a mound on the bank of the Illinois river, which was several hundred feet above the river, and from the summit of which we had a pleasant view of the surrounding country: we could overlook the tops of the trees on to the meadow or prairie on each side the river as far as our eyes could extend, which was one of the most pleasant scenes I ever beheld. On the top of this mound there was the appearance of three altars, which had been built of stone, one above another, according to the ancient order; and the ground was strewn over with human bones.

This caused in us very peculiar feelings, to see the bones of our fellow creatures scattered in this manner, who had been slain in ages past. We felt prompted to dig down into the mound, and sending for a shovel and hoe, we proceeded to move away the earth. At about one foot deep we discovered the skeleton of a man, almost entire; and between two of his ribs we found an Indian arrow, which had evidently been the cause of his death. We took the leg and thigh bones and carried them along with us to Clay county. All four appeared sound. Elder B. Young has yet the arrow in his possession. It is a common thing to find bones thus drenching upon the earth in this country.

The same day, we pursued our journey. While on our way we felt anxious to know who the person was who had been killed by that arrow. It was made known to Joseph that he had been an officer who fell in battle, in the last destruction among the Lamanites, and his name was Zelph. This caused us to rejoice much, to think that God was so mindful of us as to show these things to his servant. Brother Joseph had<sup>18</sup> enquired of the Lord and it was made known in a vision.

Kimball alone says that Zelph was killed in "the last destruction among the Lamanites," although the meaning of this phrase is unclear. "Last" may refer to the final destruction of the Nephites 1500 years earlier, or it may have reference to the last battle of Zelph's people, whoever they were. The battle was "among the Lamanites," which may mean between the Nephites and the Lamanites, but may also refer to a battle of Lamanites against other Lamanites, allowing that the Lamanites may have had prophets among them if the statement about Zelph being a "mighty prophet" is given credence. His account is also unique in that he says he went with Joseph Smith, Jr., to the top of the mound and relates that they felt prompted to dig down into the mound, but first they had to send for a shovel and hoe before they could proceed to move away the earth. The discovery was made after digging about one foot.<sup>19</sup> The other early accounts do not say

that Joseph was present when the bones were dug up; rather they state or imply that he was not involved until some time later. According to Kimball, it was later in the day while continuing on the journey westward that the Prophet made the identification of the person whose bones they had found, which is consistent with Hancock's statement that Joseph spoke "as the camp was moving off the ground." Kimball states further that this was made known by means of a vision to Joseph after he had inquired of the Lord.

Kimball's account has a different tone from the earlier ones, especially when compared with Martin and Hancock. Instead of mentioning any concerns about death, destruction, evil influences, the angry dead, or thousands of graves, Kimball paints an idyllic scene, pleasantly overlooking meadow and tree tops, and he recalls their "peculiar feelings" as feelings of sympathy for these "fellow creatures" whose bones had been scattered in ages past. His depiction is in keeping with the joyous spirit reflected in Joseph's letter to Emma.

Kimball also speaks of locating certain remains that had "the appearance" of three altars, a detail mentioned in no other primary source. The passage of time may have dimmed Kimball's memory on this point.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, Kimball's account makes no explicit reference to the Nephites, and he sees the value of Joseph's vision primarily not in what it revealed about the ancient inhabitants of that region, but in how it showed that "God was so mindful of" the camp and especially of his "servant, Brother Joseph."

(6) George A. Smith, another member of Zion's Camp who became an apostle, included the following information in a history prepared in 1857:

Monday, 2 June 1834: Some of us visited a mound on a bluff about 300 feet high and dug up some bones, which excited deep interest among the brethren. The President and many<sub>21</sub> others visited the mound on the following morning.

According to this brief version, the discovery of Zelph excited deep interest among the brethren, and Joseph's visit to the mound came on the morning after the discovery of the skeleton.

(7) Sometime after arriving in the Salt Lake Valley, probably during the 1850's, Wilford Woodruff began writing his autobiography. An examination of the manuscript in his own hand, now in the Church archives, reveals that when he came to that part of his life when the bones of Zelph were found, he added information that is not found in his journal account. Woodruff's autobiographical account is as follows:

During our travels we visited many mounds thrown up by the Ancient inhabitants of Nephites and Lamanites, this morning we went unto a high mound near the river Joseph & many of the Brethren went up this mound was very high from the top of it--we could overlook the tops of the trees as far as our vision could extend and the scenery was truly delightful. On the top of the mound were stones which presented the Appearance of three Alters having been erected one above the other according to the Ancient order of things & human bones were strun upon the ground. We had taken a shovel along with us Brother Joseph wished us to dig into the mound we dug into it about one foot & came upon the skeleton of a man almost entire and an Arrow was found sticking in his back bone Elder Milton Holmes picked it out & brought it into camp with one of his leg bones which had been brocken He put the leg bones in my waggon & I carried it to Clay County Missouri. Brother Joseph feeling anxious to learn something Governing the man, prayed to the Lord & the Lord gave him a vision in open day while lying in his

waggon, this mound & his history was placed before him. His name was Zelph, He was a white Lamanite the curse had been taken off from him because of his faith and righteousness He had embraced the gospel, he was a short stout thick set man, He had been a great warrior, Had joined the Nephites & fought for them under the direction of the great Onandagus who held sway & command over the Armies of the Nephites from the Hill Cumorah & Eastern sea to the rocky mountains though the Book of Mormon does not speak of him, He was a great warrior leader & great prophet Zelph had his thigh bone broken from the sling of a stone while in battle in the yr of his youth He was killed with the Arrow sticking in his back bone the vision of the great prophet at the time that Zelph was killed was opened to the prophet Joseph & there [word unclear] were heaped upon the earth & that great Mound of near 300 Feet High placed over them. I felt impressed to bury Zelph's thigh bone in Temple Block at Jackson County Missouri but I did not have an opportunity and I brought it to Clay County near the house owned by Colonel Arthur & occupied by Lyman Wight.

The arrow head is now in possession of his wife Emma Woodruff [written in another hand, probably at a later date].<sup>22</sup>

In this account, written upwards of 20 years after the event, the Prophet was lying on his back in his wagon when he received the vision in "open day" regarding not only Zelph but the mound and its history. Zelph is here described as a "short, stout, thick set" man, in contrast to the extremely tall man in the Moses Martin account. According to Woodruff, he had joined the Nephites and fought for them under the direction of the Prophet Onandagus, who, he says, is not referred to in the Book of Mormon, but who "held sway" from the Hill Cumorah and Eastern sea to the Rocky Mountains. Zelph's thigh bone was broken by a stone while in a battle in his youth, and he was killed by the arrow found in his back. We are led to believe that the thigh bone was buried near the Clay County house owned by a Colonel Arthur. Emma Woodruff, according to the writing at the bottom of this

account, had possession of the arrow, not Brigham Young nor Burr Riggs, as in other accounts. This might indicate that President Young did not attach any particular significance to either the arrow or the remains in which it was found. Finally, in this account, Zelph was clearly associated with the Nephites, as also was Onandagus.

(8) On 22 February 1893, James E. Talmage visited President Wilford Woodruff who showed him "a sacred relic then in his possession in the shape of an Indian arrow head." This arrow was said to have been the cause of the death of the white Lamanite, Zelph. The arrow point had allegedly come into the president's possession through Zina Young Card, a daughter of Brigham Young who, according to the same account, had formerly had possession of it. President Woodruff, at the suggestion of George F. Gibbs, his secretary, then dictated the following account regarding the finding of Zelph:

While traveling with Zion's camp, through the State of Ohio, we came to a very high mound, to the top of which we climbed by means of steps over which grass had grown. The steps were very wide, probably about twelve feet. We found the top of the mound to be quite level and to cover a great deal of ground. After overlooking the surrounding country, and descending half way down we were halted by command of the Prophet Joseph. We had taken a shovel with us to the top of the mound, thinking we might have some use for it, and after halting, the Prophet, speaking to the man who had the shovel, told him to throw up the dirt at a certain place to which he pointed. After removing a little more than six inches of soil the skeleton of a man was discovered, from a joint in whose backbone the Prophet drew a flint arrow head which had been the means of taking his life.

The Lord showed the Prophet Joseph that this was the skeleton of a white Lamanite named Zelph, and that he fought under a great chieftain named Onandagus, whose dominion covered an immense body of country. The book of Mormon does not mention the name of this Indian Chief, Onandagus.<sup>23</sup>

In this account, dictated 59 years after the event, Woodruff says that he accompanied the Prophet onto the hill, which was not the case according to his earlier accounts; he also adds details that are absent from his Journal and from the other primary sources. He tells us they took the hoe and the shovel with them, while others said they had to send for them after they arrived on top of the hill. He also states that they were halfway down the hill before they began digging and that they commenced at the request of the Prophet himself. President Woodruff also tells us that they found ancient steps which they used to make their way up the hill.<sup>24</sup> Understandably, some details had faded in the memory of President Woodruff and other points had been logically added over the space of many intervening years. Still several basic parts of the story are recognizable in this late recollection.

Thus, we see that the story of Zelph is recounted in multiple documents. My purpose in scrutinizing these accounts closely is not in any way to discredit the diligent writers of these diary and journal entries. Given the circumstances under which these records were kept and the independent viewpoint of most of these authors one from one another, it is remarkable that they agree in as many respects as they do. There can be no doubt that the men of Zion's Camp were deeply impressed with the discovery on 3 June 1834 of the bones of a man Joseph called Zelph. Nevertheless, some accounts report one detail; others give additional and sometimes conflicting details. Several of these facts are significant in interpreting the nature and meaning of this

discovery and of the revealed insights shared by the Prophet Joseph with his companions soon afterward. Interestingly, the earlier accounts do not expressly identify Zelph with the Nephites, as do the later accounts. Perhaps this is because Joseph's statements to his brethren were not as clear to them at the time they were made as they seemed to them later in retrospect or as we might be inclined to assume today. It also appears that particular information, originally couched in several of these accounts with some degree of probability, came to be understood with greater certainty and specificity than the earlier written records indicate. Accordingly, close and cautious examination of these historical records is necessary.

How the Story of Zelph Was Prepared for the History of the Church

The foregoing examination of the primary sources for the Zelph story has laid the foundation for a comparison of them with the section on Zelph in the History of the Church, the source consulted by most people on this subject. The story of Zelph is related in this history as if Joseph Smith himself were telling it, but that is not actually the case, of course. How then did the story reached its present form in this history?

In 1842, Willard Richards, as Church Historian, was assigned the task of compiling a large number of documents and producing a history of the Church from them. He worked on this material between 21 December 1842 and 27 March 1843. He himself had not joined the Church until 1836, but he would easily have learned from associates that the Prophet had kept no record of the march of Zion's Camp. Therefore, Richards presumably had to rely on

the writings or recollections of Kimball and Woodruff and perhaps others for his information. The McBride and Martin accounts in particular, and perhaps also the Hancock record, might have been unknown to him, as the writers were not prominent church figures. He may also have checked the story with the Prophet himself, for the latter was overseeing the preparation of the history.

A close study of the accounts discussed above allows us to see how Richards probably came to write what he did. Since this was only one small incident in a long narrative, he did not spend a long time checking for detailed consistency in what he wrote, or at least he introduced minor differences or discrepancies into the story. For example, Wilford Woodruff's "inhabitants of this continent" became "the inhabitants of this country," (others would later say "county"), and Woodruff's statement that mounds in the area had been built "probably by the Nephites and Lamanites" became an implied certainty when Richards left out the word "probably." The mere "arrow" of the three earliest accounts became an "Indian Arrow" (as in Kimball), and finally a "Lamanitish Arrow." The phrase "known from the Atlantic to the Rocky Mountain," as in the McBride diary, became "known from the Hill Cumorah" (stricken out) or "eastern sea to the Rocky Mountains," similar to words penned by Wilford Woodruff. The statement that the battle in which Zelph was killed "among the Lamanites" (as in Kimball) became "with the Lamanites." We cannot tell whether these changes were true to Joseph's original intent, for they give the account an air of greater precision than may have been originally present.

Blending the sources available to him, and perhaps utilizing oral input from some of the members of Zion's Camp, but writing as if he were Joseph Smith, historian Richards drafted the story of Zelph as it appears in the "Manuscript History of the Church, Book A-1" (words in bold type are in the handwriting of Wilmer Benson):

Tuesday the 3rd During our travels we visited several of the mounds which had been thrown up by the ancient inhabitants of this country, ~~Nephites,--Lamanite s&c-~~ and this morning I went up on a high mound near the river, accompanied by **several** the brethren. From this mound we could overlook the tops of the trees and view the prairie on each side of the river as far as our vision could extend and the scenery was truly delightful.

On the top of the mound were stones which presented the appearance of three altars ~~having-been-erected,~~ one above the other, according to ancient order and **the remains of human bones** were strewn over the surface of the ground. The brethren procured a shovel and hoe, and removing the earth to the depth of about one foot discovered the skeleton of a man, almost entire, and between his ribs **the stone point of** was a Laman[=]itish arrow, which evidently produced his death. Elder Burr Riggs Brigham-Young retained the Arrow, ~~and-the-brethren-carried-some-pieces-of-the-skeleton-to-Clay-County -~~

The contemplation of the scenery around before us produced peculiar sensations in our bosoms and **subsequently** the vision of the past being opened to my understanding by the Spirit of the Almighty, I discovered that the person whose Skeleton **we had seen wa s-before-us** was a white Lamanite, a large thick set man and a man of God. **His name was Zelph.** He was a warrior and chieftain under the great prophet Onandagus who was known from the ~~hill-Cumerah-or~~ eastern Sea, to the Rocky Mountains, ~~His-name-was-Zelph.~~ The curse was taken from **Zelph him**, or at least, in part. one of his thigh bones was broken by a stone flung from a sling, while in battle, years before his death. He was killed in battle, by the arrow found among his ribs, during a last great struggle with the Lamanites ~~and-Nephites:~~ **Elder Woodruff carried the thigh bone to Clay county. -** , Note I, Addenda page 5<sup>25</sup>

It is apparent that a number of details were not settled in Richards' mind as he drafted and revised this statement. The careful reader will without too much difficulty be able to identify the various sources upon which historian Richards drew to construct the story of Zelph for the history.

A second copy of the same material exists, known as "Manuscript History of the Church, Book A-2," apparently written entirely in the hand of Wilmer Benson. It differs from the Richards version in a dozen details of spelling, punctuation and phrasing, but only two differences are substantive.<sup>26</sup> Where Richards had Zelph "a man of God," Benson put "a son of God," and the former's in "a great struggle with the Lamanites" reads in Benson, "the last great struggle with the Lamanites." The second manuscript was written as a back-up in case the first was lost or destroyed. Following the martyrdom of the Prophet, the Times and Seasons published serially the "History of Joseph Smith." When the story of the finding of Zelph appeared in the 1 January 1846 issue, it read as follows:

We encamped on the bank of the river until Tuesday the 3rd during our travels we visited several of the mounds which had been thrown up by the ancient inhabitants of this county, Nephites, Lamanites, &C., and this morning I went up on a high mound, near the river, accompanied by the brethren. From this mound we could overlook the tops of the trees and view the prairie on each side of the river as far as our vision could extend, and the scenery was truly delightful.

On the top of the mound were stones which presented the appearance of three alters having been erected one above the other, according to ancient order; and human bones were strewn over the surface of the ground. The brethren procured a shovel and hoe, and removing the earth to the depth of about one foot discovered [the] skeleton of a man, almost entire, and between his ribs was a Lamanitish arrow, which evidently produced his death, Elder Brigham Young retained the arrow and the

brethren carried some peices of the skeleton to Clay county. The comtemplation of the scenery before us produced peculiar sensations in our bosoms; and the visions of the past being opened to my understanding by the spirit of the Almighty I discovered that the person whose skeleton was before us, was a white Lamanite, a large thick set man, and a man of God. He was a warrior and chieftain under the great prophet Omandagus, who was known from the hill Cumorah, or Eastern sea, to the Rocky Mountains. His name was Zelph. The curse was taken from him, or at least, in part; one of his thigh bones was broken, by a stone flung from a sling, while in battle years before his death. He was killed in battle, by the arrow found among his ribs, during the last great struggle of the Lamanites and Nephites.<sup>27</sup>

Most of the words crossed out in the Richards' manuscript were, for some unknown reason, included in this publication, along with the point that the prophet's name was Omandagus. Brigham Young, not Burr Riggs, was still said to have retained the arrow, and the reference to the Hill Cumorah, from the unamended Wilford Woodruff Journal, was still included in the narrative. Further, the concluding sentence in the Times and Seasons account reads, "during the last great struggle of the Lamanites and Nephites," whereas both the Richards and Benson manuscripts had crossed off "and Nephites."

The story of Zelph appeared again in June 1888 in the Historical Record.<sup>28</sup> This was a periodical edited and published by Andrew Jenson, the Church's primary historical writer at that time. Burr Riggs was now said to have retained the arrow; the Hill Cumorah was still mentioned, as were the Nephites.

The 1904 first edition of the B. H. Roberts' edited History of the Church in seven volumes had the account as Richards had left it. In 1948, after Joseph Fielding Smith had become Church historian, explicit references to the Hill Cumorah and the

Nephites were reintroduced.<sup>29</sup> That phrasing has continued to the present in all reprintings.

When Reorganized LDS Church historian Heman C. Smith, in 1922, wrote his "History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints 1805-1835," he included the story of the finding of Zelph without mentioning the man's name:

We encamped on the bank of the river until Tuesday the 3d. During our travels we visited several of the mounds which had been thrown up by the ancient inhabitants of this county, Nephites, Lamanites, etc., and this morning I went up on a high mound, near the river, accompanied by the brethren. From this mound we could overlook the tops of the trees and view the prairie on each side of the river as far as our vision could extend, and the scenery was truly delightful.

On the top of the mound were stones which presented the appearance of three altars having been erected one above the other, according to ancient order; and human bones were strewn over the surface of the ground. The brethren procured a shovel and hoe, and removing the earth to the depth of about one foot discovered [a] skeleton of a man, almost entire, and between his ribs was a Lamanitish arrow, which evidently produced his death. Elder Brigham Young retained the arrow and the brethren<sup>30</sup> carried some pieces of the skeleton to Clay County.

That Heman Smith used the 1845 Times and Seasons account as his source is apparent, and this material was, as shown earlier, based on Heber C. Kimball's recollections.

Historians in both the LDS Church and the RLDS Church have written the accounts so that the reader believes he is reading the Prophet Joseph Smith's own words. While, as Dean Jessee has shown, this was an accepted practice among nineteenth century historians,<sup>31</sup> it has misled many readers by conveying the impression that Joseph Smith personally recorded far more about

the events in which he participated than was the case. Moreover, the official historians would be faulted by modern scholars both for shaping and modifying the published narratives to agree with particular sources without considering their factual merits and for ignoring several of the earliest sources.

### Summary and Conclusions

In summary, I shall not attempt to reconstruct what Joseph Smith may have said to members of Zion's Camp regarding Zelph on 3 and 4 June, 1834. His exact words are beyond our historical grasp. I shall offer, however, the following observations:

1. Discussion and argumentation about historical and geographical questions in LDS circles has put more weight than is justified on the detailed phrasing of the account of Zelph as it is published in the History of the Church.

2. Joseph Smith himself did not write much about the incident. He only came close to writing about it once, in his letter to Emma on 4 June 1834, when he identified the terrain over which the camp had marched as the "plaines of the Nephites." These plains were in some respect associated with, or comparable to, the battlefields of the Nephites, but beyond that it is unclear what Joseph meant by this expression.

3. An examination of the original accounts of the events of 3 June 1834, on the Illinois River yields the following general descriptions: The extant accounts vary in the range of information they cover, from 40 words to about 375. Where they report statements or observations about the same particular point, unanimity is rare; noticeably different "facts" were reported about the same events.

Only one account (Hancock's) is perfectly clear about not being a firsthand witness to the primary happenings. All the others leave it unclear whether the writers saw or heard for themselves some or all of what they report or whether their information came by hearsay. In no case are we certain how much time elapsed before the journal accounts were recorded.

The experience of historians and the experiments of psychologists have made clear that precise recall of details about a happening fades notoriously rapidly. Differences in the reported facts among the basic sources may owe in part to delays in recording. Certainly Wilford Woodruff's recollections 59 years after the event were markedly inaccurate, and Heber C. Kimball's story, which he seems to have put on the record at least a decade after the Zeph affair, contains phrasings only uncertainly supported by other accounts.

The earlier accounts are more tentative, including words like "suposed" (McBride), "suppose" and "no doubt" (Martin), "probably" and "undecided" (Woodruff). The later accounts are more specific and certain. The chart below shows the points of agreement and difference in these sources.

4. Regarding the process by which the narrative as it appears in the History of the Church was constructed by historical writers, not all the details are apparent. Practically all elements of the story incorporated into the account by Willard Richards are found in just two sources, those of Woodruff and Kimball. Kimball's diaries begin with his British mission in 1837, and his journal, from which the account

of the finding of Zelph is taken, was dictated from memory to Robert B. Thompson in 1840.<sup>32</sup>

5. It is probable that Joseph read what his clerks, Willard Richards and Wilmer Benson, wrote about this event for the history of the Church. Their manuscript accounts cross out all reference to "the Nephites" and to the "hill Cumorah." We cannot know on present evidence, however, whether the crossing out was at his instance or with his approval, or not.

6. Versions of the Zelph narrative published by the Church have changed slightly from time to time.

7. That members of Zion's Camp dug up a skeleton near the Illinois River in early June, 1834 is certain. Equally sure is that Joseph Smith made statements about the deceased person and his historical setting. It is unclear which statements attributed to him derived from his vision, as opposed to being implied or surmised, either by him or by others. Nothing in the diaries suggests that the mound itself was discovered by revelation.<sup>33</sup>

Most sources agree that Zelph was a white Lamanite who fought under a leader named Onandagus (variously spelled). Beyond that, what Joseph said to his men is not entirely clear, judging by the variations in the available sources. Therefore, those who try to support a particular historical or geographical point of view about the Book of Mormon by citing the Zelph story are on inconclusive grounds.

8. The date of the man Zelph remains unclear. Expressions such as "great struggles among the Lamanites," if accurately

reported could refer to a period long after the close of the Book of Mormon narrative as well as to the fourth century A.D. None of the sources before the Willard Richards' composition, however, actually say that Zelph died in battle with the Nephites, only that he died "in battle" when the otherwise unidentified people of Onandagus were engaged in great wars "among the Lamanites."

Archaeological research in mounds near the one where the bones of Zelph were discovered disclose that the mounds and the artifacts found within them belong to the Middle Woodland Period, dated somewhere between perhaps 100 B.C. and A.D. 500. Nevertheless, the Zelph skeleton came from a shallow burial near the top of the mound. Who knows whether it was intrusive, buried there more recently than the period of the main mound construction? Apostle John A. Widtsoe once wrote, "Zelph probably dated from a later time when the Nephites and Lamanites had been somewhat dispersed and had wandered over the country."<sup>34</sup> Thus, it is unclear when Zelph himself lived.

9. Zelph was identified as a "Lamanite," a label agreed on by all the accounts. This term might refer to the ethnic and cultural category spoken of in the Book of Mormon as actors in the destruction of the Nephites, or it might refer more generally to a descendant of the earlier Lamanites and could have been considered in 1834 as the equivalent of "Indian" (e.g., D&C 3:18, 20; 10:48; 28:8; 32:2). Nothing in this study can settle the question of Zelph's specific ethnic identify.

10. Exactly what Joseph Smith believed at different times in his life concerning Book of Mormon geography in general is also

indeterminable. Only a few clues remain. For example, while the Church was headquartered in Nauvoo, Joseph read a best-selling book of his day by John Lloyd Stephens, Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatan, which John Bernhisel had sent to him from the East. In a letter dated 16 November 1841, the Prophet thanked the Pennsylvania doctor and wrote about the book that "of all histories that had been written pertaining to the antiquities of this country it is the most correct," and what is more, it "supports the testimony of the Book of Mormon."<sup>35</sup> Ten months later, the Times and Seasons printed an enthusiastic review of the Stephens volume; John Taylor was the editor, although Joseph Smith had shortly before announced his editorial responsibility for the newspaper. The unnamed writer [probably Wilford Woodruff] of the review stated that "we have just learned . . . the city of Zarahemla . . . stood upon this land," that is, Guatemala, whose ruins Stephens was reporting. Still, other data seem to reflect a different view and make it uncertain just what geographical view, if any single one, prevailed among the early Church leaders. Evidently Joseph Smith's views on this matter were open to further knowledge. Thus, in 1834, when Zelph was found, Joseph believed that that portion of America over which they had just traveled were "the plains of the Nephites" and that their bones were "proof" of the Book of Mormon's authenticity. By 1842 he believed that the events in most of Nephite history took place in Central America. While it is possible to reconcile these two views, for example by believing that the bulk of Nephite history occurred in Central America,

while only certain battles or excursions took place in Illinois,<sup>36</sup> it is also likely that the thinking of the early Church leaders regarding Book of Mormon geography was subject to modification, indicating that they themselves did not see the issue as settled.

Furthermore, when the committee preparing the 1921 edition of the Book of Mormon (composed of George F. Richards, Orson F. Whitney, James E. Talmage, Anthony W. Ivins, Joseph Fielding Smith and Melvin J. Ballard) met "to give certain brethren an opportunity to state their views regarding the geography of the Book of Mormon," none of the scholars who spoke to the group used the Zelph story as evidence for their position. That was probably because the quartet who made presentations--Joel Ricks, Willard Young, B. H. Roberts, and President Ivins--generally argued that the Nephite-Lamanite civilization spoken of in the scripture was centered in South or Central America. A quarter of a century later, Joseph Fielding Smith, however, used the Zelph story to support his view that the Hill Cumorah in the state of New York "is the exact hill spoken of in the Book of Mormon."<sup>37</sup> The debate about Zelph's relation to Book of Mormon geography will likely continue, since the facts in hand rule out any decisive settlement of the matter.

11. Daniel J. Boorstin has reminded historians that they are both discoverers and creators, always trying to reduce or remove ambiguity. The successful historian leads his readers to take--or mistake--his accounts for what really occurred and was recorded. The historian's labor is limited "by the reliability of the remains of the past as clues to what was really there."<sup>38</sup>

It is hoped that this study has brought us closer to what was really there in the story of Zelfh and has thoughtfully cautioned all in drawing conclusions from the evidence remaining.

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- 1 Roger D. Lanius, Zion's Camp (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1984), p. 50.
  
  - 2 James L. Bradley, "The Naples-Russell Mound," research paper in the LDS Church Archives; Stanley B. Kimball, Heber C. Kimball, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 31. A fine discussion of the route of Zion's Camp through Pike County, Illinois, is found in Edward B. Jelks, "Route of the Zion's Camp March Across Pike County, Illinois, June 1834," Bulletin of Illinois Geographical Society (Fall 1986), 17-40. See also Charles W. Allen, "Evidence of Zion's Camp Crossing of the Illinois River," unpublished paper, copy in possession of the writer. This paper was called to my attention by Stanley B. Kimball. In an archaeological survey of the Naples-Russell Mound Number Eight, conducted by the National Register of Historic Places, the following information was given. "First reported by Henderson in 1884, this mound is among the largest of the existing prehistoric earthworks in the lower Illinois River region. Artifacts recovered from early amateur excavations clearly identify this mound with the Middle Woodland Period (Henderson, 1884). The structure, therefore, reflects mortuary activity of approximately 2,000 years ago. The size of the mound suggests that it should be classed with other large Middle Woodland structures which Struever and Houart (1972) term local centers of the Hopewell Interaction Sphere. However, its location--if it is to be associated with the other earthworks of comparable size--is unique. The mound is located on a loessic bluff approximately 300 feet above the Illinois River floodplain. In association with numerous smaller and perhaps more typical burial mounds, Naples-Russell Mound 8 clearly dominates the landscape. All other mounds of comparable size are located in the valley floodplain." Copy of this report in possession of the writer. Additionally, in a letter to Stanley Kimball, Dr. Jane E. Buikstra, Associate Professor of Anthropology at Northwestern University, now at the University of Chicago, makes the following observations: "Other artifacts recovered from similar small-scale excavations at the site date to what we term the Middle Woodland Period (ca. 100 B.C.-400 A.D.). Archaeologists believe that the Middle Woodland Period is one of great cultural complexity in the eastern United States. During this time both Illinois and Ohio saw extensive population concentrations along the major river systems, with the Illinois River Valley being a major site of this phenomenon. Artifacts were manufactured from "exotic" raw
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materials, such as copper, mica, and obsidian, and these artifacts were frequently deposited with the dead. Although there are many mound groups which we think date to this important, yet imperfectly understood, period, the Russell complex is unique due to the presence of the large Naples-Russell #8 Mound. This structure, which is much larger than any other bluff crest mound in Illinois, is a monument with special potential for archaeological investigation. A few Middle Woodland mounds of similar large size exists, and some of these have been excavated. However, in all cases the sites were located in the floodplain or the Illinois River, and the soils from which the sites were constructed were of a type which does not allow the preservation of human bones and most perishable artifact types. . . . The potential for Naples-Russell #8 containing unique archaeologically recoverable data is great. Another important aspect of the Napoleon Hollow Complex is the presence of a relatively undisturbed habitation site nearby." Letter of Jane E. Buikstra to Stanley Kimball, 4 August 1977, copy in the possession of the writer provided to him by Stanley B. Kimball.

Because of the construction of the Central Illinois Expressway, thirteen mounds and several knolls were excavated, including mound number eight, where the members of Zion's Camp found Zelph. The following information may be helpful: "A Middle Archaic Helton phase cemetery (ca. 4400 B.C.) at the site contained at least 68 burials and over 10,000 isolated bone fragments, some 10% of which had been burned prior to deposition. Occupants of two nearby Middle Archaic habitation sites may have used the cemetery. One of these sites, probably an eastern extension of the DOC site, is situated on the blufftop and was partially buried and preserved by construction of the two westernmost Middle woodland mounds at Elizabeth. . . . A second Middle Archaic occupation was discovered at the bluff base below Elizabeth during excavation of buried archeological deposits at the Napoleon Hollow site. A report on these excavations is currently being prepared by Michael Wiant and Charles McGimsey to accompany earlier volumes on the geology (Styles: Research Series 5) and Woodland occupations (Wiant and McGimsey, eds.: Research Series 6) of the site. The present report describes the structure and contents of the Elizabeth Middle Archaic cemetery. An interpretive analysis of the cemetery's regional social significance has been published elsewhere (Charles and Buikstra 1983). In addition, Wiant and McGimsey's upcoming report on the Napoleon Hollow Archaic occupations will evaluate the Middle Archaic relationship between Napoleon Hollow site and the Elizabeth cemetery." For more information on this subject, see Douglas K. Charles, Steven R. Leigh, and Jane E. Buikstra, eds., The Archaic and Woodland Cemeteries at the Elizabeth Site in the Lower Illinois Valley, (Kampsville, Illinois: Illinois Department of Transportation by the Center

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for American Archeology, Kampsville Archeological Center,  
1988). The quotation above is taken from the Preface.

3 Kimball, Heber C. Kimball, p. 31.

4 George Q. Cannon, "Biography: Joseph Smith, The Prophet," The Juvenile Instructor 10-11 (1875-1876), 242; David A. Palmer, In Search of Cumorah (Bountiful: Horizon Publishers, 1981), p. 73. Thomas Stuart Ferguson, Cumorah-Where? (Oakland: Thomas Stuart Ferguson, 1947); Fletcher B. Hammond, Geography of the Book of Mormon, (Salt Lake City: Utah Printing Co., 1959); Cecil E. McGavin and Willard Bean, The Geography of the Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1948); George Reynolds and J. M. Sjodahl, Book of Mormon Geography (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1957); Joel Ricks, The Geography of the Book of Mormon (n.p., n.d.); Norman C. Pierce, Another Cumorah, Another Joseph (Norman C. Pierce, 1954); Thomas Stuart Ferguson, One Fold, One Shepherd (San Francisco: Book of California, 1958); J. A. Washburn, From Babel to Cumorah (Provo: New Era Publishing Co., 1937).

5 Joseph Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, B. H. Roberts, ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1948), 2:79, discussed further below.

6 Dean C. Jessee, The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1984), p. 324.

7 All primary documents are gratefully used here by permission of the Church Historical Department. I also acknowledge the work of John W. Welch, Tim Rathbone, John L. Sorenson, James Treadway, and Brenda Miles at F.A.R.M.S. in helping to prepare this article for publication, and I express gratitude to the Church Educational System for sponsoring my research on this project.

8 Diary of Reuben McBride, in the LDS Church Archives, 3 June 1834.

9 Onandagus is the name of a tribe of Indians that belonged to the five-nation confederacy of the Iroquois Indians who occupied upper New York state. Note also that at the time when "the Peacemaker" (whom some authorities label as a prophet) came among these tribes, who much later would become  
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known as the Mohawk, the Oneida, the Onandaga and the Cayuga, he found a powerful disciple in Hiawatha, a member of the Onondago society who was grieving at the deaths of his "beloved daughters." The objective of the Peacemaker, Hiawatha, and the other disciples was to make the world safe from irrational behavior. The center of their new world was to be Onandago, which was also to be the capital at which decisions affecting the continent would be made. The league the Peacemaker founded characterized by many of the principles of democracy now embraced by the West. These people, called the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois), furthermore perfected the skill of negotiating a truly peaceful settlement and provided their people with the vision of a totally peaceful future. See John Mohawk, "Origins of Oroquois Political Thought," Northeast Indian Quarterly, 3 (Summer 1986), pp. 16-20.

10 John L. Sorenson, in a letter to the writer, observed that the only period when an Indian might be known even approximately from the Rocky Mountains to the eastern part of the continent is likely limited to the Middle Woodland Period or Hopewell culture dating within the limits A.D. 1-500. It is possible, though less likely, that something of the same situation of widespread, inter-regional communication could date to the Mississippian Period, 1300-1600 A.D. It is of course also possible that the Zelph burial, which was near the surface at the mound's top, dated considerably later than the period of mound construction. For information regarding connections between Mesoamerica and the Hopewell Indians, see James B. Griffin, "Mesoamerica and the Eastern United States in Prehistoric Times," Handbook of Middle American Indians, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1966), 4:111-31; D. S. Brose and N. Greber, Hopewell Archaeology (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1979); Time (29 October 1973), Science section, "Cache in the Corn Field."

11 A puzzling thing about this diary is the way that it duplicates itself. The first entry for Tuesday, June 3, appears at the bottom of page 3 in dark ink. The top of page 4 repeats in light ink the information that Zelph was a warrior under the Prophet Omandagus and adds that Zelph was "a white Lamanite." The light ink continues on page 4 to give information about events up to June 24 and then at the bottom of the page returns in dark ink mid-sentence to the events of June 3. The account then reports again the events from June 4 to June 24 on page 5. Finally, the information that Zelph "was a man of God" and "was known from the atlantic to the Rocky Mountains" was added above the line, apparently sometime later as an afterthought. This seems to indicate that McBride made entries in his diary about the

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Zelph incident on perhaps as many as four separate occasions. Thus, the information about his name, his status as a warrior under Omandagus, and his being a white Lamanite appears to be present in the earliest entries. The information surmised about his death, the removal of the curse, and his widespread reputation seems to have been added about three weeks later. The arrow that Joseph "supposed" had killed him during some here-unidentified battle was found with his remains.

12 Diary of Moses Martin, in LDS Church Archives. It appears that Moses Martin was present when the digging occurred, since he reports vividly the party's curiosity that led them to excavate and find the bones. It seems that his entry was made while still in Pike County, shortly after the event.

13 Diary of Wilford Woodruff, found in the LDS Church Archives. See also Scott Kenney, ed., Wilford Woodruff's Journal (Signature Books: Midvale, Utah, 1983), 1:10. This entry is on a page headed May 8th, 1834.

14 Ibid.

15 Diary of Levi Hancock, taken from a photocopy found in the LDS Church Archives. Typically Hancock did not let many days pass without writing in his diary.

16 History for May 14 and 17.

17 We do not know to what extent others heard Joseph speak about Zelph or whether some of their information was filtered through Sylvester Smith. The possibility seems small, however, that Sylvester Smith had much influence on the story, since no other account mentions him.

18 Heber C. Kimball, Autobiography, original found in the LDS Church Archives. This was probably written after the Saints had arrived in the Salt Lake valley. There is evidence that the autobiography was taken from the 1 February 1845 Times and Seasons article. See page 788.

19 As to how much time some of the members of Zion's Camp  
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spent on the mound, it has been estimated that it would have taken them at least ten minutes to travel the mile from the camp to the mound--perhaps longer because it is a rather steep climb--then sending for a shovel and hoe would have taken at least another twenty minutes; some archaeologists estimate it would have taken at least another thirty minutes to excavate the almost complete skeleton of a large man, which would mean that the group of men were on the mound for at least an hour. See letter of Edward B. Jelks to Warren D. Winston, 13 January 1984; xerox copy in possession of Stanley B. Kimball, Urbana, Illinois.

20 His statement appears to be a later recollection, written possibly around 1843. See the connection with the work of Willard Richards discussed below.

21 George A. Smith, Journal, 2 June 1834. Original in the LDS Church Archives. The following note was appended, "a narrative of which is published in the Church History."

22 Undated autobiography of Wilford Woodruff, filed in the Wilford Woodruff Collection, MS 5506, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah. Wilford Woodruff wrote this autobiography in his own hand through page 50, or through the 25 November 1835 period of his life. After that, probably William Appleby or Robert Lang wrote as he dictated. Woodruff began writing the events in his life after the arrival of the Saints in the Salt Lake Valley.

23 This account was obtained by Richard L. Anderson on 31 October 1986 from the George A. Smith family papers, in the Church Archives, MS 36, Box 174 FD 1 26.

Questions have been raised regarding the arrowhead referred to in the Woodruff account. When shown pictures of the arrowhead, archaeologists have indicated that it is not of a type common in the area of the Zelph mound. However, survey and archaeological work on the Zelph mound will take years to complete. Furthermore, as Donald T. Schmidt, former LDS Church archivist, indicates, "There are no indications however, that this is the same arrowhead spoken of by Wilford Woodruff." See letter of Donald T. Schmidt to James L. Bradley, 3 February 1975, copy in possession of the writer furnished by Bradley. The arrowhead that was found in the Church Archives and has been shown to experts seems

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to be of the type used by the Plains Indians and is probably not more than a few hundred years old.

24 According to James L. Bradley, who has visited the mound many times, there are no steps leading to the top, or altars.

25 Joseph Smith, Manuscript History of the Church, Book A-1, 3 June 1834, Original in the LDS Church Archives.

26 The words crossed out are in Richards' own hand and read as follows: "Tuesday 3rd. During our travels we visited several of the mounds which have been thrown up by the ancient inhabitants of this country. ~~Nephites-Lamanites~~ and this morning I went up on a high mound near the river accompanied by several ~~the~~ Brethren From the mound we could overlook the tops of the trees, and view the prairie on each side of the river as far as our vision could extend. And the scenery was truly delightful. On the top of the Mound were stones which presented the appearance of three altars ~~having-been-rested~~ one on the top above the other. According to ancient order and human the remains of bones were strewn over the surface of the ground. The brethren procured a shovel and hoe, and removing the earth to the depth of about one foot discovered the skeleton of a man, almost entire and between his ribs the stone point of was a Lamanitish Arrow which obviously produced his death. Elder Burr Riggs retained the arrow and the skeleton to Clay County The contemplation of the scenery before around us produced peculiar sensations in our bosoms and subsequently the visions of the past being--in my understanding by the spirit of the almighty I discovered that the person whose skeleton was ~~as-before~~ we had seen was a white Lamanite, a large thick set man and a son of God. His name was Zelph. He was a warrior and chiefton--the great prophet onandagus who was known from the ~~hill-Eumerah~~ or Eastern Sea to the Rocky Mountains ~~his-name-was-Zelph~~ The Curse was taken from Zelph, or at least in part. One of his thigh bones was broken by a stone flung from a sling while in battle years before his death. He was killed in battle by the arrow found among his ribs during the last great struggle with the Lamanites ~~and-Nephites~~. Elder Woodruff carried the thigh bone to clay county."

27 Times and Seasons (1 January 1846): 1076.

28 Historical Record 7/4-6 (1888): 581.

- 29 Joseph Smith, History of the Church (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1902), 2:79-80. Compare 1948 edition, pp. 79-80. Fletcher B. Hammond states that Preston Nibley, Assistant Church Historian, had authorized him to say that "the 1904 edition of the Documentary History of the Church, Vol. 2, pages 79-80, correctly reports the Zelph incident, and that part of the 1934 [sic] [1948] edition of the same history which differs from it is erroneous. That is to say that the Prophet Joseph did not say: 'Onandagus who was known from the hill Cumorah, or eastern sea to Rocky Mountains,' but he did say: 'Onandagus, who was known from the eastern sea to the Rocky Mountains.' He did not say Zelph was killed 'during the last great struggle of the Lamanites and Nephites,' but he did say Zelph was killed in a battle during a great struggle with the Lamanites." However, as we have shown previously, it is impossible to know exactly what Joseph said on these matters. Therefore, even Preston Nibley's educated statement may attribute more to Joseph Smith than the facts warrant. See Fletcher B. Hammond, Geography of the Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: Author, 1959), pp. 481-96.
- 30 Heman C. Smith, "History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," Journal of American History 10 (July-September 1916): 481-96.
- 31 Dean C. Jessee, "Has Mormon History Been Deliberately Falsified," Mormon Miscellaneous, No. 2, April 1982; and Dean C. Jessee, "The Reliability of Joseph Smith's History," Journal of Mormon History 3 (1976): 23-46.
- 32 On the Potter's Wheel, The Diaries of Heber C. Kimball, Stanley B. Kimball, ed. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1987) p. xii.
- 33 Moses Martin indicates that the men dug because they were "filled with curiosity." Levi Hancock simply reports that "many went to see the big mound about a mile below the crossing." H. C. Kimball seems to say they went to the mound to get "a pleasant view of the surrounding country."
- 34 John A. Widtsoe, "Is Book of Mormon Geography Known?" Improvement Era (July 1950): 451.
- 35 Letter of Joseph Smith to John M. Bernhisel, 16 Nov. 1841, found in The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith, Dean C. (Footnote 35 Continued on Next Page)

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Jessee, ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1984), pp. 501-2. For a discussion of other journalist and diary entries concerning the possible location of Book of Mormon lands, see Ross T. Christensen, "The River of Nephi: An Archeological Commentary On An Old Diary Entry," Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archeology, Number 158, December 1984. Christensen discusses some diary entries of Charles L. Walker, Reuben McBride, and Levi Hancock, and then treats the topic "How Much Did The Prophet Know?" (about Book of Mormon geography and archeological claims).

- 36 Even though the events of most of Nephite history may have taken place within a relatively small area, see, e.g., John L. Sorenson, An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: Deseret and F.A.R.M.S., 1985), 8-23; John Clark, "A Key for Evaluating Nephite Geographies," Review of Books about the Book of Mormon (Provo: F.A.R.M.S., 1989), 1:20-70, it is evident that cultural transmissions radiated out from Central America, both to the north and to the south. See "Mesoamericans in Pre-Spanish South America," and "Mesoamericans in Pre-Columbian North America," F.A.R.M.S. Updates (November 1986, and February 1987).
- 37 "Sermons and Writings of Joseph Fielding Smith," Bruce R. McConkie, ed., Doctrines of Salvation (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1956), 3:232-36.
- 38 Daniel J. Boorstin, "The Historian: 'A Wrestler With the Angel,'" New York Times Book Review, 20 September 1987, p. 1.

CHART SHOWING THE VARIOUS SOURCES AND SOME VARIATIONS IN CONTENT USED  
TO RECONSTRUCT THE STORY OF ZELPH

Content Item	Joseph Smith Letter 1834 1	McBride 1834 Hand Copy 2	Martin 1834 Hand Copy 3	Woodruff V.1 1834 V.2 interlinear V.3 1881 4	Hancock 1834 V.1 Hand Copy V.2 Journal(1838) 5	Kimball V.1 T&S 1845 V.2 Sloan 6	Richards T&S 1846 7
1. Where did it take place?	[East side] Mississippi River	Illinois	Co of Pike lilancy River	Illinois river(V.2)	Illinois river ... west side (V.1&2)	on bank of Illinois river (V.1&2); V.2 adds "w bank"	
2. Date of personal visit?		3rd	3rd implied	"we visited"(V.1 & 2) but implies not with the large group(V.2)	many went... I did not go (V.1&2)	3rd(V.1&2)	
3. Date Joseph visited?	[on or before] June 4th 1834	3rd implied				3rd, "with Joseph"(V.1&2)	Tuesday the 3rd
4. Were there multiple mounds?	yes	yes	yes	yes(V.1&2)			yes
5. Who built the mounds?				ancient inhabitants of this continent probably by the Nephites & Lamanites(V.1 & 2)			ancient inhabitants of this country, Nephites, Lamanites, &c.
6. Were there fortifi- cations near?			yes, "many large"				
7. Land called; or once called?	plaines of the Nephites				land of desolation(V.1&2)		
8. Mound height?				300 feet above ...river(V.2)	about one hundread feet (V.1); hundred feet(V.2)	several hun- dred feet above the river(V.1 & 2)	high
9. Were bones seen on surface?	yes, implied					yes, human (V.1&2)	yes, human
10. Were altars seen?						there was the appearance of three altars (V.1&2)	stones which presented the appearance of three altars
11. Were there steps up mound?							
12. Motive in digging?			curiosity			felt prompted (V.1&2)	
13. Dug at whose insistence?							
14. Who dug?			we	several of the bre- thren(V.1&2); M. Holmes & two others, implied (V.2); we(V.3)		we proceeded to move away earth(V.1&2)	brethren
15. Were tools sent for?						sending for a shovel an hoe(V.1&2)	procured a shovel and hoe
16. Where dug on mound?			top of one				
17. Dug how deep?			some 2 feet			about one foot(V.1&2)	about one foot

CHART SHOWING THE VARIOUS SOURCES AND SOME VARIATIONS IN CONTENT USED  
TO RECONSTRUCT THE STORY OF ZELPH

	HC A1 8	HC A2 9	Woodruff MS 5506 1850's 10	George A. Smith 1857 11	Jenson 1888 12	Woodruff 1893 13	HC 1904 Edition 14	HC 1948 Edition 15	HC RLDS 1922 16
1.	Illinois			near crossing of the Illinois River before reaching Pittsfield	Illinois	Ohio	Illinois	Illinois	Illinois
2.				Monday June 2.... Some of us visited					
3.	3rd,... accompanied by several brethren	Tuesday 3rd		[with] many others... on following morning [3rd]	(June 2nd)		3rd	3rd	Tuesday the 3d
4.	we visited several	yes	yes		yes		yes	yes	yes
5.	ancient inhabitants of this country Nephites, Lamanites, &c.	ancient inhabitants of this Country Nephites, Lamanites, &c.	Ancient inhabitants of Nephites and Lamanites		ancient inhabitants of this county Nephites, Lamanites, etc.,		ancient inhabitants of this country... Nephites, Lamanites, etc.,	ancient inhabitants of this country Nephites, Lamanites etc.,	ancient inhabitants of this county, Nephites, Lamanites, etc.,
6.									
7.									
8.	high	high	high/very high/ near 300 feet	on a bluff about 300 feet high	high	very high	high	high	high
9.	yes, human	yes, human	yes, human		yes, human		yes	yes	yes, human
10.	stones which presented the appearance of three altars	stones which presented the appearance of three altars	stones which presented the appearance of three altars		stones which presented the appearance of three altars		stones which presented the appearance of three altars	stones which presented the appearance of three altars	stones which presented the appearance of three altars
11.						yes, about twelve feet			
12.			Joseph wished us to dig						
13.			Joseph			the Prophet			
14.	the brethren	brethren	us		brethren		brethren	brethren	brethren
15.	yes, procured a shovel and hoe	procured a shovel and hoe	had taken a shovel along with us		procured a shovel and hoe	had taken a shovel with us	procured a shovel and a hoe	procured a shovel and a hoe	procured a shovel and hoe
16.			top implied			half way down			
17.	about one foot	about one foot	about one foot		about one foot	a little more than six inches of soil	about one foot	about one foot	about one foot

—2A—  
CHART SHOWING THE VARIOUS SOURCES AND SOME VARIATIONS IN CONTENT USED  
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18. Remains found?		a skeleton	the Bones of	bones of a man (V.1,2&3); a body (V.2)	some bones that was brought(V.1& 2) back(V.2); with a broken arrow(V.2); broken(V.1)	skeleton of a man, almost entire(V.1&2); Indian arrow (V.1&2)	skeleton of a man, almost entire... Lamanitish arrow
19. Name of remains found?		Zelph		Zelph(V.1,2&3)		Zelph(V.1&2)	Zelph
20. Who was the last man buried?					Zelf(V.1&2); or Telg(V.2)		
21. Was he a sarrior?		a great warrior		yes(V.1&2)	when he was ("a";V.2) young ("man";V.2) he was a great warrior		yes
22. Was he a captain?						officer(V.1&2)	chieftain
23. Was he godly?		a man of God	a mighty Prophet	a man of God (V.1&2)			a man of God
24. Who was he fighting under?		Omandagus		Omandagus(V.2)	Ondedagus(V.1) Ondedagus/ Ondedagus(V.2)		Omandagus
25. Was Omandagus a prophet?		Prophet		great prophet (V.1&2)			great prophet
26. Was Omandagus a chief/king?					King and a good man(V.1 &2)		
27. Omandagus known from?		the atlantic to the Rocky Mountains		the hill Cumorah [on East sea (V.2)] to the Rocky moun- tains(V.1&2)			hill cumorah, or Eastern sea, to the Rocky Moun- tains
28. Cause of Zelph's death?		arrow	large stone arrow	arrow(V.1&2)		Indian arrow (V.1&2)	Lamanitish arrow
29. Where was arrow point?		in his Ribs	in the trunk... near the vitals	among his ribs (V.1&2) out of the back bones (V.2); among his bones(V.3)	breast(V.1) breast(V.2)	between two of his ribs (V.1&2)	between his ribs...among his ribs
30. What was the occasion of death?		in battle		in battle	fought with the people of Ondedagus for freedom	In battle, in the last des- truction among the Lamanites (V.1&2)	during the last great struggle of the Lamanites and Nephites.
31. Who removed arrow?				Elder Milton Holmes(V.2)			
32. Zelph's unusual size?			Some 8 or 9 feet high	large thick set man(V.1&2)			large, thick set man
33. Zelph's suffering? Lost his teeth?					yes		

[illegible]

CHART SHOWING THE VARIOUS SOURCES AND SOME VARIATIONS IN CONTENT USED  
TO RECONSTRUCT THE STORY OF ZELPH

Content Item	Joseph Smith Letter 1834 1	McBride 1834 Hand Copy 2	Martin 1834 Hand Copy 3	Woodruff V.1 1834 V.2 interlinear V.3 1881 4	Hancock 1834 V.1 Hand Copy V.2 Journal(1838) 5	Kimball V.1 T&S 1845 V.2 Sloan 6	Richards T&S 1846 7
34. Was his thigh broken before his death?				yes(V.1,2&3)	yes(V.1&2) never was sat it knited together... on the side	no, "all four appeared sound"(V.1&2)	yes, years before his death
35. How was the thigh broken?				stone flung from a sling(V.1&2); stone slung(V.3)			broken, by a stone flung from a sling
36. Was he a white Lamanite?		Yes		yes(V.1&2)	yes(V.1&2)		yes
37. Curse removed?		Yes, "or in part"		yes, "at least in part"(V.1&2)			yes, "or, at least in part"
38. When did Joseph explain about?			Soon after		as the camp was moving off the ground(V.1&2)	While on our way(V.1&2)	
39. How Joseph learned about Zelph's history?			a vision	a vision/vision (V.1&2); vision (V.3)		vision(V.1&2)	visions
40. Who Joseph was speaking to?					Sylvester Smith(V.1&2)		
41. How were the mounds built?					they brought there dirt and covered them (V.1); their(V.2)		
42. Mounds contained bodies of wicked men?					...are the bodies of wicked men (V.1&2)		
43. Mound's purpose?			deposits for the dead		bury his dead (V.1&2)		
44. Multiple battles, deaths?			no doubt... some great Battles...many hundred thousands		implied multiple deaths(V.1&2)		implied
45. Who carried bones to camp?				Elder Milton Holmes(V.2)			
46. Who carried bones in wagon or kept bones?				I [WW] carried it [broken thigh bone] to Missouri (V.1,2&3)		We(V.1&2)	
47. Final dispositions of bones?				buried it in the earth (Clay county, Missouri) (V.3)			
48. Who carried arrow into camp?				Milton Holmes (V.2)			
49. Who kept arrow?				Milton Holmes(?) (V.2)		Elder B. Young(V.1&2)	Elder Brigham Young

CHART SHOWING THE VARIOUS SOURCES AND SOME VARIATIONS IN CONTENT USED  
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	HC A1 8	HC A2 9	Woodruff MS 5506 1850's 10	George A. Smith 1857 11	Jenson 1888 12	Woodruff 1893 13	HC 1904 Edition 14	HC 1948 Edition 15	HC RLDS 1922 16
34.	yes, years before his death	yes, years before his death	yes, in the yr of his youth		yes, years before his death		yes, years before his death	yes, years before his death	
35.	stone flung from a sling	broken by a stone flung from a sling	brocken from... sling of a stone while in battle		stone flung from a sling		stone flung from a sling	stone flung from a sling	
36.	yes	yes	yes		yes	yes	yes	yes	
37.	yes, "or, at least in part"	yes, "or, at least in part"	yes, because of his faith and righteousness		yes, "or, at least in part,"		yes, "or, at least in part"	yes, "or, at least in part"	
38.	subsequently	subsequently	in open day while lying in his waggon		subsequently		subsequently	subsequently	
39.	visions of the past...by the spirit of the Almighty	visions	a vision in broad daylight		visions	Lord showed the Prophet Joseph	visions	visions	
40.									
41.			great mound... placed over them [bones of dead]						
42.									
43.			to bury the dead implied						
44.	implied	implied	implied		implied		implied	implied	
45.			Elder Milton Holmes						
46.	Elder Wood- ruff	<del>brethren carried some pieces of the skeleton to Clay County</del>	I [WW] carried [leg bones] to Clay County Missouri						brethren carried some pieces of the skeleton to Clay County
47.			wanted to bury in Temple Block						
48.			Milton Holmes						
49.	Burr Riggs <del>Reigham Young</del>	Burr Riggs	Emma Woodruff		Elder Burr Riggs		Elder Burr Riggs	Elder Burr Riggs	Elder Brigham Young

Letter From Joseph Smith to his Wife, 1834, Dean C. Jessee, The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1984), p. 324.

The whole of our journey, in the midst of so large a company of social honest and sincere men, wandering over the plains of the Nephites, recounting occasionally the history of the Book of Mormon, roving over the mounds of that once beloved people of the Lord, picking up their skulls & their bones, as a proof of its divine authenticity . . .

Reuben McBride (from handwritten copy) Microfilm 920 #57, BYU

tuesday 3 visited the mounds a skeleton was dug up Joseph said his name was Zelph a great warrior under the Prophet Omandagus an arrow was found in his Ribs [page break; top of next page; different ink; much lighter writing indicated here by underlining; appears to read: His name was Zelph a warrior under the Prophet Omandagus Zelph a white Laman[il]te

Crossed the Missipi River on the 4 2 days in Crossing  
June 6 resumed our journey [illegible] at Salt River Staid 12 days

from Salt River to Richmond Ray County [illegible] that  
 [illegible] the [illegible] . . .]

19 on fishing River

20 went 5 miles meeting held counsel[?]

June 24 Colera [illegible]

23 Arived at Rush Creek

Rush Creek Mo Clay Co

Choler 24

which he said he suposed ocaisoned his death Said he was killed in battle Said he was a man of God and the curse was taken off or in part he was a white Lamanite **was known from the atlantic to the Rocky Mountains\***

June, the 4 came to the Missipi River were 2 days in Crossing being very high one mile wide

On the 7th arived at Salt River Staid their 12 days to recrute and reorganise Some came from Michigan and joined the company.

\*Words that were added interlinearly above the line have been shown in bold.

on fishing river 20. went 50 miles  
23 arrived at Bush  
Creek  
Cholera 24

which he said he supposed occasioned  
his death said he was killed in battle  
said he was a man of God and the cause  
was taken up for in part he was a  
white Lamanite was known from the mountains  
June the 4 came to the Mississippi River  
were 2 days in crossing being very high  
one mile wide

On the 7th arrived at Salt River  
staid there 12 days to recruit and  
reorganize some came from Michigan  
and joined the company here and  
of the Church here

Moses Martin, 1834 (from handwritten copy)

this being in the Co of Pike hear we discovered a larg quantity of large moun[=]ds\* being filed with curiosity we excavated the top of one Son[m?]e 2 feete when we came to the Sbones of an extraordinary large person or humane being the thigh bones being 2 inches longer from one Scket to the other than of th Prophet whi who is upwards of 6 feete high which would have constuted Some 8 or 9 feete high in the trunk of this Skeleton near the vitals we found a large stone arrow which I suppose broug[h]t him to his end Soon after this Joseph had a vision and the Lord shewed him that [page break] this man was once a mighty Prophet and many other things conserning his people thus we found those mounds to have be deposits for the dead which had falen no doubt in some great Batles in additio[=]n to this we found many larg fortificati[=]ons which als[o] denotes siviliseation and an in numerable population which has falen by wares and comotion and the Banks of this Beautiful River became the deposit of many hundred thousands whos graves and fortifications have are over grown with the sturday oak 4 feete in dian[m?]eter

\*[=] indicates a line break in the middle of a word.

this being in the "Co of Pike" we  
discovered a large quantity of large mounds  
being filled with curiosity we excavated  
the top of one and found when we came to  
the bones of an extraordinary large person  
of human being the thigh bones being  
2 inches longer from one socket to the other  
than of the Prophet who is supposed  
to be 6 feet high which would have constituted  
some 6 or 8 feet high in the trunk of  
this skeleton near the vitals we found  
a large stone arrow which I suppose brought  
him to his end - soon after this Zeph had  
a vision and the Lord showed him that

This man was once a mighty Prophet  
and doing other things concerning his  
people thus we found those mounds to have  
be deposits for the dead which had fallen  
no doubt in some great battles in addition  
to this we found many large fortifications  
and which indicates civilization and an  
innumerable population which has fallen  
by war and corruption and the banks of  
this beautiful River became the deposit  
of many hundred thousands of graves and  
fortifications have been overgrown with the  
sturdy oak 12 feet in diameter

**Wilford Woodruff's Journal (initial entry) 1834**

While on our travels we visited many of the mounds which were flung up by the ancient inhabitants of this continent probably by the Nephites & Lamanites we visited one of those Mounds and several of the brethren dug into it and took from it the bones of a man Brother Joseph had a vision respecting the person he said he was a white Lamanite the curse was taken from him or at least in part he was killed in battle with an arrow the arrow was found among his ribs, one of his thigh bones was broken this was done by a stone flung from a sling in battle years before his death his name was Zelph Some of his bones were brought into the camp and the thigh bone which was broken was put into my waggon and I carried it to Missouri Zelph was a large thick set man and a man of God he was a warrior under the great prophet that was known from the hill Cumorah to the Rocky mountains. The above knowledge Joseph received in a vision.

# Wilford Woodruff's Journal

1833-1896  
Typescript

Volume 1  
29 December 1833 to 31 December 1840

Edited by Scott G. Kennedy

*Signature  
Book*

601.1.1.1.1.1



hand with my Brother Azmon and his family And also with the Brethren and Sisters in the Church and commenced our Journey for Kirtland which place was appointed to meet at by the first day of May 1834 that all those who were going up to Zion might go together according to the word of the Lord.

We called on the Brethren at Lyons and spent the Sabbath with them And the next Sabbath we spent with the brethren at Geneseo. Then we continued our Journey. We called on Brother MCWilla and spent the night with him.

We also Called on Brother Lewis. We there found Brother John Murdock & Orson Pratt. We spent the Sabbath with them and heard them both preach and on Monday continued our Journey for Kirtland accompanied by Brother John & Orson.

Brother Ingols and myself called on Brother Strong at Thompson and spent the night with him. I was much edified with his conversation. I had a view of the draft of the City of Zion which he held in his possession.

We continued To travel towards Kirtland and arrived there at night on the 25 of April 1834. There for the first time I had a view of our beloved Brother Joseph Smith the prophet & Seer which God hath raised up in these last days through whom the Saints receive Revelations from time to time. Brother Joseph invited us to take up our abode with him & accordingly we did and boarded at his house most of the time for a week. [Interlinally after "Brother Joseph invited":] I here [for the] first time became acquainted with Elder Milton Holmes who traveled with us in the camp to Ho.

Here I became not only acquainted with him and his family but with many of the brethren both high priests, Elders, and private members those which were making it their home at Kirtland and also those which were gathering for the purpose of going up to Zion.

/26 [April] I was introduced to Elder Brigham Young & Heber C Kimball. Br Young gave me a Butcher knife.

APRIL - MAY 1834

On the 27th of April being the Lords day I attended meeting and heard several of the Brethren preach. Brother Sidney Rigdon, Orson Hyde, Orson Pratt and others spoke /Joseph Smith Closing/ during the meeting. It appeared to me there was more light made manifest at that meeting respecting the Gospel and Kingdom of God than I had ever received from the whole Sactarian world.

According to appointment on the first day of May 1834 we left Kirtland for Missouri. There was not but a small part of the company left Kirtland untill the Monday following on account of their not being in readiness going five days later. There was four baggage waggons and riding of 20 men in the company which left Kirtland the first of May.

We traveled to New Portage and there remained with the Church untill the remainder of the company joined us from Kirtland which was on the 6th of May. Then we were organized in regular order and took up our march on the 8th day of May.

Our march was similar to the ancient Israelites. Our horses, waggons and tents were in readiness and we were led by Joseph. Our Company now consisted of twenty baggage waggons and riding of one hundred & fifty men. The men were armed with dirks pistols Swords & rifles for Self defence and according to Brother Joseph's request I delivered him my Sword for his own use. Our lives were threatened in consequence of advocating and maintaining the gospel of Jesus Christ. For this cause it became necessary to be in readiness to defend our lives our persons and property.

As I before said we commenced our march or Journey on the 8th day of May from New Portage the weather very pleasant and delightful. We continued to travel through the day and dwell in our tents at night. I witnessed many interesting things while on this Journey. We made it a practice of pitching our tents on Saturday night and not remove them untill Monday morning. We had preaching on the Lords day. Brother Joseph often addressed us in the name of the Lord while on our Journey and often while addressing

the camp he was clothed upon with much of the spirit of God. His precepts were very instructive and interesting.

While on our travels we visited many of the mounds which were flung up by the ancient inhabitants of this continent probably by the Nephites & Lamanites. We visited one of these mounds and several of the brethren dug into it and took from it the bones of a man.

[Interlinearly after "We visited one of these mounds":] considered to be 300 feet above the level of the Illinois river. Three persons dug into the mound & found a body. Elder Milton Holmes took the arrow out of the back bones that killed Zeph & brought it with some of the bones in to the camp. I visited the same mound with Jesse J Smith. Who the other persons were that dug in to the mound & found the body I am undecided.

Brother Joseph had a vision respecting the person. He said he was a white Lamanite. The ours was taken from him or at least in part. He was killed in battle with an arrow. The arrow was found among his ribs. One of his thigh bones was broken. This was done by a stone flung from a sling in battle years before his death. His name was Zeph. Some of his bones were brought into the Camp and the thigh bone which was broken was put into my wagon and I carried it to Missouri. Zeph was a large thick set man and a man of God. He was a warrior under the great prophet /Onandagus/ that was known from the hill Camorah /or east sea/ to the Rocky mountains. The above knowledge Joseph received in a vision.

It excited the curiosity of people more to see such a Company of people traveling through the country in perfect order. People came forth out of their houses to behold the scene and thousands of questions were asked concerning our movements.

We had several rivers to ferry and when we arrived at Salt River we pitched our tents to remain stationary for several days. And on the day following our arrival at Salt River we were joined by

MAY - JUNE 1834

11

Brother Lyman Wight and the company of 30 men which he had gather'd together at Mission or in that region of country. It was a joyful meeting. This added to our company so that it now consisted of 25 baggage waggoners and about two hundred men.

We remained at Salt River about one week. We were reorganized and Brother Lyman Wight was now appointed as a leader of the army.

And now again after all things were put in readiness we again took up our march towards Zion. We continued to travel until we had arrived within a few miles of Liberty Clay County Missouri. Here we pitched our tents and remained quite a number of days on account of the great excitement which prevailed in consequence of false reports which were abroad in the land respecting us. The majority of the people or public opinion were against us and even their were about seventy men mounted on horseback with firearms gathered together for the intention of coming against our camp. But the God of Israel frustrated their design for while they were coming against us the Lord rained upon them rain and great hail so that it was expedient for them to seek shelter from the storm. And after the storm they dispersed and would not go against the camp.

After remaining stationary for several days the leading men of Clay County and some principals from other Counties called at our camp to enquire into our motives. And after a fair investigation of the subject they manifested to us that they were satisfied that we had no evil designs or intentions in our movements or proceedings.

We remained in this situation visited daily by both friends[?] and foes until the High priests held a council and there was a Revelation given concerning us. By this time the excitement had in a great measure ceased and the Lord had granted us favour in the eyes of the people.

We now again prepared ourselves to move forward. We traveled till within about two miles of Liberty. Then we again pitched our tents near by the house of Brother Burgetts. Here we remained

Wilford Woodruff's Journal (Version 2--with insertions)

While on our travels we visited many of the mounds which were flung up by the ancient inhabitants of this continent probably by the Nephites & Lamanites we visited one of those

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+Onandagus

+on East sea

great prophet + that was known from the hill Cumorah+ to the Rocky mo[=]untains. The above knowledge Joseph received in a vision.

\*[The following was added interlinearly above the "and" designated and continues within this paragraph]: +considerd to be 300 feet above the level of the Illionis river three persons dug into the mound & found a body Elder Milton Holmes took the arrow out of the back bones that killed Zelph & brought it with some of the bones in to the camp, I visited the same mound with Jesse J Smith who the other persons were that dug in to the mound & found the body I am undecided

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 of the Lord while on our journey and  
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 and interesting. While on our travels

we were  
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 Haysider  
 and Sam  
 river &  
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 a day &  
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1834  
According to  
I delivered him  
in use, and  
in consequence  
staining the gospel  
of course it became  
incumbent to defend our  
reputation as I before  
in market or just  
from the per-  
spective and delight  
and through the  
into at night of  
ing things while in  
the practice of pitching  
night and not rem-  
embering morning we  
to Gods day Brother  
I us in the name  
our journey and  
of the camp he was  
with of the spirit of  
our instruction  
our travels

May 1884  
we visited many of the mounds which  
were sprung up by the ancient inhabitants  
of this continent probably by the chipewits &  
Somewits we visited one of these mounds  
considered to be 300 feet above the level of the Illinois  
and General of the brothers dug into it and  
river three persons dug into the mound & found  
tools from it the bones of a man Brother  
a dear Elder William Holmes took the arrow out of the  
Joseph had a vision respecting the person  
of the bones that killed Joseph & brought it with him  
he said he was a white Somewits the  
of the bones in the camp, I visited the same  
and was taken from him on at first  
mound with Joseph who the other persons were  
in part he was killed in battle with an  
that dug into the mound & found the body I am  
under the arrow was found among his  
rib, one of his thigh bones was broken  
this was done by a stone flying from  
a sling in battle years before his death.  
his name was Joseph one of his bones  
were brought into the camp and the thigh  
bone which was broken was put in two  
wagons and I carried it to Missouri.  
Joseph was a large thick set man  
and a man of peace he was a warrior  
under the great prophet Onondaga that was known  
from the hill Cannawatch to the Rocky mo  
untains. He alone knew Joseph  
received in a vision et—

Wilford Woodruff, Leaves From My Journal, Third Book of the Faith-Promoting Series (Juvenile Instructor Office: Salt Lake City, 1881)

The published history of Zion's Camp gives an account of the bones of a man which we dug out of a mound. His name was Zelph. The Lord showed the Prophet the history of the man in a vision. The arrow, by which he was killed, was found among his bones. One of his thigh bones was broken by a stone slung in battle. The bone was put into my wagon, and I carried it to Clay county, Missouri, and buried it in the earth.

**Diary of Levi Hancock (from handwritten account) 1834**

on the way to Illinois River where we camped on the west side in the morning many went to see the big mound about a mile below the cro[=]ssing I did not go on it but saw some bones that was brought with a broaken arrow they was layed down by our camp Joseph address[=]ed himself to sylvester smith this is what I told you and now I want to tell you that you may know what I ment this land was called the land of desolation and Onendagus was the king and a good man was he there in that mound did he bury his dead and did not dig holes as the people do now but they brought there dirt and covered them untill you see they have raised it to be about one hundread feet high the last m[=]an buried was Zelf he was a white Lamanite who fought with the people of Onendagus for freedom when he was young he was a great war[=]ior and had his thy broaken and never was sat it knited together as you see on the side he fought after it got strength untill he lost evry tooth in his head save one when the Lord said he had done enough and suffered him to be cild by that arrow you took from his brest these words he said as the camp was moving of[f] the gro[=]und as nere as I could lern he had told them something about the mound and got them to go and see for themselves. I then remembered what he had said a few days before while passing many mounds on our way that was left of us said he there are the bodies of wicked men who have died and are angry at us if they can take the advantage of us they will for if we live they will have no hope I could not comprehend it but supposed it was all right.

When we had many beavers from  
from the country who listened to the  
preaching of Brother Joseph  
Joseph and others of dignified  
who was bound to himself and  
excited the people to believe in God  
do right next morning we started  
on our journey in good spirits  
on the way to Illinois River when  
we camped on the west side of the  
morning many went to see the big  
mound about a mile below the Bio-  
logy did not go on it but saw  
some bones that was brought with  
a bag. Answer they was buried  
down by our camp Joseph address-  
ed himself to Sylvester Smith  
this is what I told you and now  
I want to tell you that is a man  
he was what found the land and  
called the land of desolation  
and Oneida was the king  
and a good man was he there  
in that mound did he bury  
his dead and did not dig a  
hole as the people do now but  
they brought those dirt and  
covered them, until you see

We had our morning and evening  
prayers when we had got to the  
or considerable of a town in the  
for part of this morning  
we found considerable of a  
man, traveling, asked us as we  
was traveling I heard one man say  
it looks like the camp of some  
other said as he was looking at us  
well I guess some place west have  
taken a summit in other said  
the North has given up we stoped  
not but continued our march  
westward passing many places  
and before we had meetings in  
point of account until we got in  
Illinois when Joseph said in our  
heart I want you to remember what I  
say to you the Lord is a going to  
give us dry winter now until we  
get through he has given many  
that there might be water on the  
Principles you will see the snowings  
if the falling snow all the  
way through it began to be very  
pleasant and soon we entered  
on the wide Prairies camping  
and holding meetings everywhere

they have raised it to be where  
 and head and feet high, the last  
 one buried was, & left he was a white  
 Spaniard who fought with the  
 side of the soldiers for freedom, when  
 he was young he was a great wan-  
 derer and had his legs broad and  
 never was so fit, he liked to go  
 as you see on the side, he caught  
 often it got strength in till he lost  
 every tooth in his head & some  
 when the Lord said he had done  
 enough and suffered him to be  
 killed by that arrow you took from  
 his breast there would be said as  
 the Campers moving of the gro-  
 und us more us & killed many he  
 had told them something about  
 the ground and got them to go  
 and see for themselves, then  
 remembered what he had said,  
 a few days before while passing  
 many mountains on our way,  
 the powers left it so said he there  
 are the bodies of wicked men who  
 are dead and are crying out  
 if they could take the advantage  
 of us they will

for if we live they will have no  
 hope, I could not comprehend it  
 but supposed it was all right  
 we continued our march westward  
 until we came to the Mississippi  
 River opposite of Louisiana and  
 camped next day, one day over  
 and camped about five miles  
 west of town, I had made one or  
 two trips that day and stayed  
 some places on the way to the  
 camp being led by a hunter, the  
 day I was in came in sight of  
 a camp as I began to think he was  
 to stay there and tried to bite him  
 it made him mad and said he would  
 kill that dog, Joseph said he  
 would not he would whip any  
 man who should do it and if  
 Joseph had a good spirit he could  
 get along without being bit, it was  
 by a man being even come  
 with such a spirit that caused  
 him to always try to take  
 advantage and back an other  
 man to do it and take life

**The Levi Hancock Journal (from one-page typescript) 1838**

Next morning we started on our journey in good spirits. On the way to Illinois River where we camped on the west side. In the morning many went to see the big mound about a mile below the crossing. I did not go on it but saw some bones that was brought back with a broken arrow. They were laid down by our camp. Joseph Smith addressing himself to Sylvester Smith and said, "This is what I told you and now I want to tell you that you may know what I meant. This land was called the land of desolation and Onedages was the King and a good man was he. There in that mound did he bury his dead and did not dig holes as the people do now, but they brought their dirt and covered them until you see they have raised it to be about one hundred feet high. The last man buried was Zelf or Telf. He was a white lamanite who fought with the people of Onedagus for freedom. When he was a young man he was a great warrior and had his thigh broken and never was set. It knitted together as you see on the side. He fought after it got strength until he lost every tooth in his head save one, when the Lord said he had done enough and suffered him to be killed by that arrow you took from his breast. These words he said as the camp was moving off the mounds as near as I could learn he had told them something about the mound and got them to go and see it for themselves. I then remembered what he had said a few days before while passing many mounds on our way that was left of us. Said he, "these are the bodies of wicked men who have died and are angry at us and if they can take the advantage of us they will, for if we live they will have no hope." I could not comprehend it, but supposed it was alright.

**THE**  
**LEVI HANCOCK**  
**JOURNAL**

1838

given up." We did not stop but continued on our march westward passing many places I had traveled before and held meetings in. Nothing occurred of any account until we got in Illinois when Joseph said, in our tent, "I want you to remember what I say to you. The Lord is going to give us dry weather now until we get through. He has given rains that there might be water on the prairies. You will see the movings of the Lord in our favor all the way through." It began to be very pleasant and soon we entered on the wide prairies camping and holding meetings on Sunday. Once we had many listeners from the County who listened to the preaching of Orson Hyde. Joseph Young and others of different sects who were bound to preach peace and exhorted the people to believe in God and do what is right.

Next morning we started on our journey in good spirits. On the way to Illinois River where we camped on the west side. In the morning many went to see the big mound about a mile below the crossing. I did not go on it but saw some bones that was brought back with a broken arrow. They were laid down by our camp. Joseph Smith addressing himself to Sylvester Smith and said, "This is what I told you and now I want to tell you that you may know what I meant. This land was called the land of desolation and Onedages was the King and a good man was he. There in that mound did he bury his dead and did not dig holes as the people do now, but they brought their dirt and covered them until you see they have raised it to be about one hundred feet high. The last man buried was Zelf or Telf. He was a white lamanite who fought with the people of Onedagus for freedom. When he was a young man he was a great warrior and had his thigh broken and never was set. It knitted together as you see on the side. He fought after it got strength until he lost every tooth in his head save one, when the Lord said he had done enough and suffered him to be killed by that arrow you took from his breast. These words he said as the camp was moving off the mounds as near as I could learn he had told them something about the mound and got them to go and see it for themselves. I then remembered what he had said a few days before while passing many mounds on our way that was left of us. Said he, "these are the bodies of wicked men who have died and are angry at us and if they can take the advantage of us they will, for if we live they will have no hope." I could not comprehend it, but supposed it was alright.

We continued our march westward until we came to the Mississippi River opposite of Louisiana and camped. The next day we crossed over and camped about one mile west of town. I had made me an Elder fife that day and played some marches on the way to the camp, being led by Sylvester Smith. As soon as we came in sight of camp a dog came, he began to bark and ran to Sylvester and tried to bite him.

"Extracts from H. C. Kimball's Journal," Times and Seasons, vol. 6 (February 1, 1845), p. 788.

On Tuesday the 3rd, we went up, several of us, with Joseph Smith jr. to the top of a mound on the bank of the Illinois river, which was several hundred feet above the river, and from the summit of which we had a pleasant view of the surrounding country: we could overlook the tops of the trees on to the meadow or prairie on each side the river as far as our eyes could ex'tend, which was one of the most pleasant scenes I ever beheld. On the top of this mound there was the appearance of three altars, which had been built of stone, one above another, according to the ancient order; and the ground was strewn over with human bones. This caused in us very peculiar feelings, to see the bones of our fellow creatures scattered in this manner, who had been slain in ages past. We felt prompted to dig down into the mound, and sending for a shovel and hoe, we proceeded to move away the earth. At about one foot deep we discovered the skeleton of a man, almost entire; and between two of his ribs we found an Indian arrow, which had evidently been the cause of his death. We took the leg and thigh bones and carried them along with us to Clay county. All four appeared sound. Elder B. Young has yet the arrow in his possession. It is a common thing to find bones thus drenching upon the earth in this country.

The same day, we pursued our journey.--While on our way we felt anxious to know who the person was who had been killed by that arrow. It was made known to Joseph that he had been an officer who fell in battle, in the last destruction among the Lamanites, and his name was Zelph. This caused us to rejoice much, to think that God was so mindful of us as to show these things to his servant. Brother Joseph had enquired of the Lord and it was made known in a vision.

The Account of the Finding of Zeph From the Times and Seasons,  
1 February 1845. Extracts from the Diary of Heber C. Kimball.

Extracts from H. C. Kimball's Journal.

[Continued.]

One circumstance that occurred while we were traveling in Indiana, I will here mention, concerning some spies who came into our camp. One day while we were eating dinner three gentlemen came riding up on very fine looking horses and commenced their inquiries of various ones concerning our traveling in so large a body, asking where we were from, and where we were going. The reply was as usual some from the State of Maine, another would say, I am from York state, some from Massachusetts, some from Ohio, and some replied, we are from the east, and as soon as we have done eating dinner we shall be going to the west again. They then addressed themselves to Doctor Williams to see if they could find out who the leader of the camp was. The Doctor replied, we have no one in particular. They asked if we had not a general to take the lead

On Tuesday the 3rd, we went up, several of us, with Joseph Smith jr. to the top of a mound on the bank of the Illinois river, which was several hundred feet above the river, and from the summit of which we had a pleasant view of the surrounding country: we could overlook the tops of the trees, on to the meadow or prairie on each side the river as far as our eyes could extend, which was one of the most pleasant scenes I ever beheld. On the top of this mound there was the appearance of three altars, which had been built of stone, one above another, according to the ancient order; and the ground was strewn over with human bones. This caused in us very peculiar feelings, to see the bones of our fellow creatures scattered in this manner, who had been slain in ages past. We felt prompted to dig down into the mound, and seeking for a shovel and hoe, we proceeded to move away the earth. At about one foot deep we discovered the skeleton of a man, almost entire; and between two of his ribs we found an Indian arrow, which had evidently been the cause of his death. We took the leg and thigh bones and carried them along with us to Clay county. All four appeared sound. Elder B. Young has yet the arrow in his possession. It is a common thing to find bones thus drenching upon the earth in this country.

The same day, we pursued our journey.— While on our way we felt anxious to know who the person was who had been killed by that arrow. It was made known to Joseph that he had been an officer who fell in battle, in the last destruction among the Lamanites, and his name was Zeph. This caused us to rejoice much, in that God was so mindful of us.

As to show these things to his servant, Brother Joseph had enquired of the Lord and it was made known to him in a vision.

**Account of the finding of Zelf from the Autobiography of Heber C. Kimball dictated to James Sloan**

many having volunteered and joined us from the different branches of the Church through which we had passed in our journey. We camped on the bank of the River until next day. Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> we went up several of us with Joseph Smith Junr to the top of a mound on the w banks of this Illinois River which was several hundred feet above the River, and from the summit of which we had a pleasant view of the surround[=]ing Country; we could overlook the tops of the trees, on to the meadow or prairie on each side the river as far as our eyes could extend, which was one of the most pleasant scenes I ever beheld. On the top of this mound[s] there was the appearance of three Altars, which had been built of stone one above another, according to the ancient Order; and the ground was strewn over with human Bones. This caused in us very peculiar feelings, to see the bones of our fellow creatures scattered in this manner who had been slain in ages past. We felt prompted to dig down into this mound and sending for a shovel and hoe we proceeded to move away the Earth. at about one foot deep we discovered the Skeleton of a Man almost entire; and between two of his ribs we found an Indian Arrow, which had evidently been the cause of his death. We took the leg and thigh bones and carried them along with us to Clay County, all four appeared sound. Elder B. Young has yet the Arrow in his possession. It is a common thing to find bones thus drenching upon the earth in this Country. Same day we pursued our journey. While on our way we felt anxious to know who the person was who had been killed by that arrow when it was made known to Joseph that he had been an officer who fell in Battle in the last destruction among the Lamanites; and his name was Zelf. This caused us to rejoice much to think that God was so mindful of us as to show these things to his servant. Brother Joseph had enquired of the Lord and it was made known in a vision.

The Account of the Finding of Zeph From the Autobiography of  
Heber C. Kimball dictated to James Sloan.

many having volunteered and joined us from the different branches of the Church through which we had passed in our journey. We camped on the bank of the river, while, next day, Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> we went up several of us with Joseph Smith found to the top of a mound on the banks of this Illinois river, which was several hundred feet above the river, and from the summit of which we had a pleasant view of the surrounding country; we could overlook the tops of the trees, on to the meadow & prairie on each side the river as far as our eyes could extend, which was one of the most pleasant scenes of our abode. On the top of this mound there was the appearance of three mounds, which had been built of stone one above another, according to the ancient order; and the ground was strewn over with human bones. This caused in us very peculiar feelings, to see the bones of our fellow creatures scattered in this manner who had been slain in ages past. We felt prompted to dig down into the mound and searching for a shroud and had we succeeded to move away the earth at about one foot deep we discovered the skeleton of a man, almost entire, and between two of his ribs was found an Indian arrow, which had evidently been the cause of his death. We took the leg and thigh bones and carried them along with us to Clay County, all four appeared sound. Elders H. Young has yet the arrow in his possession. It is a common thing to find bones thus protruding from the earth in this country. Some days we pursued our journey. While on our way we felt anxious to know who the persons were who had been killed by the Indians, when it was made known to Joseph that he had been an officer who fell in battle in the last destruction among the Lamanites; and his name was Zeph. This caused us to rejoice much to think that God was so mindful of us as to show these things to his servant. Brother Joseph had enquired of the Lord, and it was made known in a vision. We pursued our journey on the 4<sup>th</sup> and camped on the banks of the Mississippi river. Here we were somewhat afflicted, and the coming threatened much that we should not cross over the river into Missouri; it took us two days to cross the river, as we had but one ferry boat, and the river was one mile and a half wide. While some were crossing many others spent their time in swimming and fishing &c. (When we all got over we camped on the banks of the river) and here Sylvester Smith <sup>again</sup> rebelled against Brother Joseph and the Camp; this I think was the first thing that transpired to mar our peace while on our journey. Friday 6<sup>th</sup> we resumed our journey. Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> at night we camped among our brethren at Salt River, <sup>in the State of Missouri</sup> in a place of wood, by a beautiful Spring of water, and prepared for the Sabbath. On the Sabbath we had preaching. There we remained several days, washing our clothes and preparing to pursue our journey. There we were joined by Hyrum Smith and Lyman Wright with another company. The Company now numbered 205 men, all armed and equipped as the Law desired. It was delightful to see this company, for they were all young men with one or two exceptions, and in good spirits. We were now reorganized, according

"History of Joseph Smith," Times and Seasons, vol. 6 (January, 1846), p. 1076.

Tuesday the 3rd during our travels we visited several of the mounds which had been thrown up by the ancient inhabitants of this county, Nephites, Lamanites, &c., and this morning I went up on a high mound, near the river, accompanied by the brethren. From this mound we could overlook the tops of the trees and view the prairie on each side of the river as far as our vision could extend, and the scenery was truly delightful.

On the top of the mound were stones which presented the appearance of three alters having been erected one above the other, according to ancient order; and human bones were strewn over the surface of the ground. The brethren procured a shovel and hoe, and removing the earth to the depth of about one foot discovered skeleton of a man, almost entire, and between his ribs was a Lamanitish arrow, which evidently produced his death, Elder Brigham Young retained the arrow and the brethren carried some pieces of the skeleton to Clay county. The contemplation of the scenery before us produced peculiar sensations in our bosoms; and the visions of the past being opened to my understanding by the spirit of the Almighty I discovered that the person whose skeleton was before us, was a white Lamanite, a large thick set man, and a man of God. He was a warrior and chieftain under the great prophet Omandagus, who was known from the hill Cumorah, or Eastern sea, to the Rocky Mountains. His name was Zelph. The curse was taken from him, or at least, in part; one of his thigh bones was broken, by a stone flung from a sling, while in battle years before his death. He was killed in battle, by the arrow found among his ribs, during the last great struggle of the Lamanites and Nephites.

"History of Joseph Smith," serialized in the Times and Seasons (January, 1846), and later the Deseret News, then edited for publication as the History of the Church. [These two pages (482-83) were written by Willard Richards on July 22, 1843, according to his journal.]

Tuesday the 3rd. During our travels we visited several of the mounds which had been thrown up by the ancient inhabitants of this country, ~~Nephites, -Lamanites-&c~~ and this morning I went up on a high mound,        the view accompanied by the several brethren. From this mound we could overlook the tops of the trees and view the prairie on each side of the river as far as our vision could ex[=]tend and the scenery was truly delightful.

On the top of the mounds were stones which presented the appearance of three altars ~~having-been-erected~~ one above the other, according to ancient order, and the remains of human bones were strewn over the surface of the ground. The brethren procured a shovel & hoe. and removing the earth to the depth of about one foot discovered the skeleton of a man. almost entire, and between his ribs the stone point of ~~was~~ a Lamanitish arrow, which evidently produced his death. Elder Brigham-Young Burr Riggs retained the Arrow. ~~and-the-brethren-carried-some-pieces-of-the-skeleton-to-Clay-county-~~ The contemplation of the scenery ~~before~~ around us produced peculiar sensations in our bosoms; and ~~subsequently~~ the visions of the past being opened to my understanding by the Spirit of the Almighty. I discovered that the person whose Skeleton ~~was-before-us-we~~ had seen was a white Lamanite, a large thick set man. and a man of God. His name was Zelph. He was a warrior and chieftain under the great prophet Onandagus, who was known from the ~~hill-Cumerah-or~~ eastern Sea to the Rocky Mountains. ~~His-name-was-Zelph-~~ The curse was taken from him Zelph, or, at least, in part. One of his thigh bones was broken by a stone flung from a sling. while in battle, years before his death. He was killed in battle by the arrow found among his ribs. during a ~~last~~ great struggle with the Lamanites. ~~and-Nephites~~ Elder Woodruff carried the thigh bone to Clay county.



each side of the river - as far as our vision  
extended, and the scenery was truly delightful.

stead, and the scenery was truly delightful.

one the top of the mounds were stones which presented

the appearances of three human beings. one  
the remains of

the appearance of three areas

above the surface, becoming more numerous as the bones were strewn over the surface of the ground. The

brother procured a stool; he, and removing the cart

to the depth of about one foot discovered the skeleton of the stone period of

is the depth of water

tribe names, which evidently produced his death. Elder

with nerves, which coming  
Bartholomew retained the brand. Another leather brand

~~same process of the solution to clay society -~~ the contemporary

A few scenes - 2 rounds as produced peculiar sensations in acid

I subsequently ~~to~~  
booms; and the visions of the past being opened to my

understanding by the Spirit of the All-wise & discoverer

that the person whose skeleton we had seen was a white man.

Lamanite, a large thick set man, and a son of Gas

His name was Jeph  
He was a warrior, under the great prophet Amadeg

[illegible]

Rocky Mountains. 4th name was affected. The curve in  
 North. 4th curve of his thigh

taken from Joseph, or, at least, in part. — One of his friends  
 is John — a student from a sem. where

1 3 1 1  
 bones was broken. by a stone plung from a dig. while  
 the two killed in battle by

little years before his death.  
He was never in the great drug

The review found among his subs. derived a  
 Elder Woodruff gained the high home to my domain!  
 of communities in Distribution - Note I address on page 5:

with the domaniles, ~~some~~ <sup>some</sup> ~~lighter~~ - ~~now~~ <sup>now</sup> ~~and~~  
~~some~~ <sup>some</sup> ~~are~~ <sup>are</sup> ~~there~~ <sup>there</sup> ~~if~~ <sup>if</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~are~~ <sup>are</sup> ~~longer~~ <sup>longer</sup> ~~and~~

Page 10 - 11

Bayano found retained the bones. and the bones  
imposed of the children to stay empty. The contents of  
of the scenery before us produced peculiar sensations in our  
brains; and the visions of the past being opened to my  
understanding by the Spirit of the Almighty. I discovered  
that the person whose skeleton we had seen was a white  
Lamanite, a large thick set man, and a man of God.

She was a warrior, under the great prophet Benandages.  
who was known from the Lake to the mountains eastward. To the  
Rocky Mountains. The bones were kept. The bones were  
taken from Beth, or, at least, on part. One of his thigh  
bones was broken by a stone flung from a sling, when in  
battle, years before his death. The bone killed in battle by

the arrow found among his ribs. <sup>devised a great struggle</sup>  
with the Lamanites. <sup>that woodcut carried the high bone to say that,</sup>  
Note I add on page 5.

Bayano and I found a number of the bones in the  
in the banks of the Mississippi River. At this place we  
were somewhat afflicted, and our enemies strongly threatened  
that we should not escape with our bones.

never being nearly another half mile wide, and having  
a narrow bank, it took two days for us to reach the  
mouth. When some were ferrying others were engaged in  
hunting fishery &c. As we moved we encountered on the  
banks, within the limits of Missouri, while at this  
fired Egyptian smoke, and called against the order of the

of the morning trumpet every man was again on his knees before the Lord, imploring his blessing for the day.

After completing the organization of the companies on the 8th, we recommenced our march towards Zion, and pitched our tents in a beautiful grove, at Chippaway, twelve miles from New Portage, for the night. On the 9th we proceeded onward, and on Saturday the 10th passing through Mandanfield, encamped for the Sabbath in Richfield.

Sunday 11th, Elder Sylvester Smith preached, and the company received the sacrament of bread and wine.

Monday the 12th, we left Richfield, for the Miami River, where we arrived, after daily marches, on the 16th.

During this march the brethren in Missouri wrote Col. Lucas as follows:

"Liberty, Clay county, May 15th 1834.  
Col. S. D. Lucas,

Sir: We have this day received a communication from the Governor of this State, concerning the order herewith, and we hasten to forward the said order to you, by the bearer, Mr. Richardson, who is instructed to receive your reply. We would further remark, that under existing circumstances, we hope to receive our arms on this side the river, and we would name a place near one of the ferries for your convenience, as the arms are few in number, we request that they may be delivered with as little delay as possible.

Respectfully, yours,

(Signed) A. S. GILBERT,  
JOHN CORRIILL,  
W. W. FIELDS,  
EDWARD PARTRIDGE,  
JOHN WHITMER.

P. S. We will thank you for a written communication, in answer to this letter, and the accompanying order."

We forded the Miami river with our baggage wagons, and the men waded through the water. On the 17th of May we crossed the State line of Ohio, and encamped for the Sabbath just within the limits of Indiana, having travelled forty miles that day. Our face were very sore and blistered, our stockings wet with blood, the weather being very warm. This night one of our enemies' spies attempted to get into our camp, but was prevented by our guards. We had our sentinels every night on account of spies, who were continually striving to harass us.

About this time the saints in Clay county, Missouri, established an armory, where they commenced manufacturing swords, dirks, pis-

tole, stocking tilks, and repairing arms in general for their own defence against mob violence. Many arms were purchased, for the leading men in Clay county rendered every facility in their power, in order, as they said "to help the Mormons settle their own difficulties, and pay the Jackson mob in their own way."

Sunday 18th, we had preaching as usual, and the administration of the sacrament. Monday 19th, although threatened by our enemies that we should not, we passed through Vandalia quietly, and unmolested; all the inhabitants were silent and appeared as though possessed with fear. At night we encamped on an eminence, where we lost one horse.

Wednesday 21st, we forded White river. Sunday 23rd, arrived at the State line of Illinois. We had no meeting but attended to washing, baking and preparing to resume our journey, which we did on Monday the 26th and at night were aroused by the continual threats of our enemies. Notwithstanding our enemies were continually breathing threats of violence, we did not fear, neither did we hesitate to prosecute our journey, for God was with us and his angels went before us, and the faith of our little band was unwavering. We know that angels were our companions, for we saw them.

On Tuesday the 27th we arrived at the deep river Kaskaskia, where we found two skiffs, which we lashed together, and on which we fringed our baggage across the stream. We then swam our horses and wagons, and when they arrived at the opposite shore, the brethren attached ropes to them and helped them out of the water and up the steep bank. Some of the brethren fell trees across the river, on which they passed over. Thus we all safely passed the river, and the day following arrived at Decatur, where another horse died.

Saturday evening, May 31st, we encamped one mile from Jacksonvill, and made preparations for the Sabbath.

Two days previous the brethren in Clay county wrote the following letter to his Excellency Daniel Dunklin.

"Liberty, Missouri, May 29th 1834.  
Sir: Your communication to us of May 2nd containing or enclosing an order on Col. S. D. Lucas for the arms which were forcibly taken from us last November, was received the 15th inst., and the order forwarded to Col. Lucas, at Independence, on the 17th, giving him the privilege of returning our arms at either of several ferries in this county. His reply to the order was, that he would write what he would do the next mail (May 23rd). But as

he has removed to Lexington without writing, we are at a loss to know whether he means to delay returning them for a season, or entirely refuse to restore them.

At any rate, the excitement, or rather spite of the mob, runs so high against our people, that we think best to request your Excellency to have said arms returned through the agency of Col. Allen or Captain Atkinson. Report says the arms will not be returned, and much exertion is making by the mob to prevent our return to our possessions in Jackson county. We also understand that the mob is employing certain influential gentlemen to write to your Excellency to persuade us to compromise our matters in difference with the Jackson mob, and probably divide Jackson county. We ask for our rights and no more.

Respectfully, your Excellency's servants,  
(Signed) W. W. FIELDS,  
JOHN CORRIILL,  
A. S. GILBERT,  
EDWARD PARTRIDGE."

Sunday, June 1st, 1834, We had preaching, and many of the inhabitants of the town came to hear. Elder John Carter, who had formerly been a Baptist preacher, spoke in the morning, and was followed by four other Elders in the course of the day all of whom had formerly been preachers for different denominations. When the inhabitants heard these clergies they appeared much interested, and were very desirous to know who we were, and we told them one had been a Baptist preacher, and one a Campbellite; one a Reformed Methodist, and another a Restorationist, &c. During the day many questions were asked but no one could learn our names, profession, business or destination, and, although they suspected we were Mormons they were very civil. Our enemies had threatened that we should not cross the Illinois river, but on Monday the 2nd we were ferried over without any difficulty. The ferryman counted and declared there were five hundred of us; yet our true number was only about one hundred and fifty. Our company had been increased since our departure from Kir-land, by volunteers from different branches of the church through which we had passed. We encamped on the bank of the river until Tuesday the 3rd during our travels we visited several of the mounds which had been thrown up by the ancient inhabitants of this country, Nephites, Lamanites, &c., and this morning I went up on a high mound, near the river, accompanied by the brethren. From this mound we could overlook the tops of the trees and view the prairie on each side of the river as far

as our vision could extend, and the scenery was truly delightful.

On the top of the mound were stones which presented the appearance of three altars having been erected one above the other, according to ancient order; and human bones were strewn over the surface of the ground. The brethren procured a shovel and hoe, and removing the earth to the depth of about one foot discovered the skeleton of a man, almost entire, and between his ribs was a Lamanite arrow, which evidently produced his death, Elder Brigham Young retained the arrow and the brethren carried some pieces of the skeleton to Clay county. The contemplation of the scenery before us produced peculiar sensations in our bosoms; and the visions of the past being opened to my understanding by the spirit of the Almighty I discovered that the person whose skeleton was before us, was a white Lamanite, a large thick set man, and a man of God. He was a warrior and chieftain under the great prophet Omandagum, who was known from the hill Cumorah, or Eastern sea, to the Rocky Mountains. His name was Zeph. The curse was taken from him, or at least, in part; one of his thigh bones was broken, by a stone flung from a sling, and was broken in battle years before his death. He was killed in battle, by the arrow found among his ribs, during the last great struggle of the Lamanites and Nephites.

Continuing our journey on the 4th we encamped on the banks of the Mississippi river, at this place we were somewhat afflicted, and our enemies strongly threatened that we should not cross over into Missouri. The river being nearly one mile and a half wide and having but one ferry boat, it took two days for us to pass over. While some were ferrying others were engaged in hunting, fishing, &c.; as we arrived we encamped on the bank, within the limits of Missouri. While at this place Sylvester Smith rebelled against the order of the company, and gave vent to his feelings against myself in particular. This was the first outbreak of insubordination which had occurred to our people since we commenced the journey. While we were crossing the Mississippi river the Elders in Clay county wrote Gov. Dunklin as follows:

"Liberty, June 6th. 1834.

Dear Sir,—We think the time is just at hand when our Society will be glad to avail themselves of the protection of a military guard, that they may return to Jackson county. We do not know the precise day, but Mr. Reese gives his opinion that there would be no improvement in petitioning your excellency for an order on the commanding officer to be sent by

Joseph Smith, "Manuscript History of the Church," Book A-1, p. 483.

Tuesday the 3rd During our travels we visited several of the mounds which had been thrown up by the ancient inhabitants of this country, ~~Nephites, Lamanites &c.~~ and this morning I went up on a high mound near the river, accompanied by several the brethren. From this mound we could overlook the tops of the trees and view the prairie on each side of the river as far as our vision could ex[=]tend and the scenery was truly delightful.

On the top of the mound were stones which presented the appearance of three altars ~~having-been-erected,~~ one above the other, according to ancient order and the remains of human bones were strewn over the surface of the ground. The brethren procured a shovel and hoe, and removing the earth to the depth of about one foot discovered the skeleton of a man, almost entire, and between his ribs the stone point of was a Laman[=]itish arrow, which evidently produced his death. Elder Burr Riggs Brigham-Young retained the Arrow, ~~and-the-brethren-carried-some-pieces-of-the-skeleton-to-Clay-County~~ - The contemplation of the scenery around before us produced peculiar sensations in our bosoms and subsequently the vision of the past being opened to my understanding by the Spirit of the Almighty, I discovered that the person whose Skeleton we had seen was-before-us was a white Lamanite, a large thick set man and a man of God. His name was Zelph. He was a warrior and chieftain under the great prophet Onandagus who was known from the hill-Cumerah-~~er~~ eastern Sea, to the Rocky Mountains, His-name-was-Zelph. The curse was taken from Zelph him, or at least, in part. one of his thigh bones was broken by a stone flung from a sling, while in battle, years before his death. He was killed in battle, by the arrow found among his ribs, during a last great struggle with the Lamanites and-Nephites: Elder Woodruff carried the thigh bone to Clay county. - , Note I, Addenda page 5.

The Account of the Finding of Zelfh as Found in the Manuscript History of the Church, Book A-1.

Tuesday the 8<sup>th</sup>. During our travels we visited several of the mounds which had been thrown up by the ancient

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inhabitants of this country, ~~Stephen, Remond, &c.~~ and this morning I went up on a high mound, ~~near the river~~, accompanied by ~~the~~ <sup>several</sup> brothers. From this mound we could overlook the tops of the trees and view the prairie on each side of the river as far as our vision could extend, and the scenery was truly delightful.

On the top of the mound were stones, which presented the appearance of three altars ~~having been erected~~ <sup>the remains of</sup> above the others, according to ancient order; and bones were strewn over the surface of the ground. The brethren procured a shovel & hoe, and removing the earth to the depth of about one foot discovered the skeleton of a man, almost entire, and between his ribs ~~was~~ <sup>he found</sup> a ~~single~~ <sup>single</sup> arrow, which evidently produced his death. Elder Brigham ~~young~~ <sup>retained</sup> the bone. ~~and the brethren saw~~ <sup>some pieces of the skeleton to clay county.</sup> The contemplation of the scenery ~~and~~ <sup>ground</sup> ~~us~~ <sup>subsequently</sup> produced peculiar sensations in our bosoms; and the visions of the past being opened to my understanding by the Spirit of the Eternity. I discovered that the person whose skeleton ~~we had seen~~ <sup>we had seen</sup> was a white Lamanite, a large thick set man, and a man of God. ~~His name was Joseph.~~ <sup>and his name</sup> He was a warrior, under the great prophet Anandagus, who was known from the ~~Little River~~ <sup>Little River</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> ~~eastward~~ <sup>eastward</sup> to the Rocky Mountains. ~~His name was Joseph.~~ The curse was taken from ~~Joseph~~ <sup>Joseph</sup>, in at least in part. One of his thigh bones was broken by a stone flung from a sling, when in battle, years before his death. He was killed in battle, by the arrow found among his ribs, during a ~~great~~ <sup>great</sup> struggle with the Lamanites. ~~His name was Joseph.~~ <sup>His name was Joseph.</sup> Note I, addendum page 5.

Joseph Smith, "Manuscript history of the Church," Book A-2,  
pp. 319-320.

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Tuesday 3rd. During our travels we visited several of the mounds which have been thrown up by the Ancient inhabitants of this Country. ~~Nephites-Lamanites~~ and this morning I went up on a high mound near the river accompanied by ~~severa~~[1] the Brethren From this mound we could overlook the tops of the trees, and view the prairie on each side of the river as far as our vision could extend . and the scenery was truly delightful. On the top of the mound were stones which presented the appearan[ce] of three Altars ~~having-been-erected~~. one above the other. according to ancient order and the remains of human bones were strewn over the surface of the ground. The brethren procured a shovel and hoe, and removing the earth to the depth of about one foot discovered the skeleton of a man, almost entire and between his ribs the stone point of a was a Lamanitish Arrow which evidently produced his death. Elder Barr Riggs retained the Arrow ~~and-the-brethren-carried-some-pieces-of-the-Skeleton-to-Clay-County~~ The contemplation of the scenery around before us produced peculiar sensations in our bosoms and subsequently the visions of the past being opened in my understanding by the Spirit of the Almighty I discovered that the person whose skeleton we had seen ~~was-before-us~~ was a white Lamanite, a large thick set man and a man of God. His name was Zelph. He was a warrior and chieftain under the great prophet Onandagus who was known from the ~~hill-Cumerah-er~~ Eastern Sea to the Rocky mountains

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~~his-name-was-Zelph~~ The curse was taken from Zelph him , or at least, in part. One of his thigh bones was broken by a stone flung from a sling while in battle years before his death. He was killed in battle, by the arrow found among his ribs during last great struggle with the Lamanites ~~and-Nephites~~: Elder Woodruff carried the thigh [h] [b]one to Clay County.

Joseph Smith, "Manuscript history of the church" book A-2 p. 319-320.

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[illegible]



Tuesday 3rd During our travells we visited several mounds which had been thrown up by the ancient inhabitants of this Country. ~~Nephites, Lamanites &c~~ and this morning I went up on a high mound near the river, accompanied by <sup>several</sup> ~~the~~ brethren. From this mound we could overlook the tops of the trees, and view the prairie on each side of the river as far as our vision could extend, and the scenery was highly delightful. on the top of the mound were stones which presented the appearance of three altars ~~having been erected~~, one above the other, according to ancient order and <sup>the remains of</sup> ~~human bones~~ were strewn over the surface of the ground. The brethren procured a shovel and hoe, and removing the earth to the depth of about one foot discovered the skeleton of a man, almost entire, and between his ribs <sup>the stone point of a</sup> ~~was a Lamanitish Arrow~~, which evidently produced his death. Elder Burr Riggs retained the Arrow, and ~~the brethren carried away pieces of the skeleton to Clay County~~ - The contemplation of the scenery <sup>around</sup> ~~before~~ us produced peculiar sensations in our bosoms and <sup>subsequently</sup> ~~the vision~~ of the past being opened to my understanding by the spirit of the Almighty, I discovered that the person whose skeleton <sup>we had seen</sup> ~~was before us~~ was a white Lamanite, a large thick set man and a man of God. <sup>His name was Zelph</sup> ~~He was a warrior~~ and chieftain under the great prophet Grandagus who was known from the ~~hill-Gomereh~~ <sup>eastern</sup> Sea, to the Rocky mountains, <sup>his name was Zelph</sup>. The curse was taken from <sup>Zelph</sup> ~~him~~, or at least, in part. one of his thigh bones was broken by a stone ~~flung~~ from a sling while in battle years before his death. He was killed in battle, by the arrow found among his ribs, during the ~~last~~ great struggle with the Lamanites ~~and Nephites~~: Elder Woodruff carried the bone to clay county. While we were.....

**Wilford Woodruff, Undated autobiography of Wilford Woodruff, filed in the Wilford Woodruff Collection, MS 5506, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah. Written after the arrival of the Saints in the Salt Lake Valley.**

During our travels we visited many mounds thrown up by the Ancient inhabitants of Nephites and Lamanites, this morning we went unto a high mound near the river Joseph & many of the Brethren went up this mound was very high from the top of it--we could overlook the tops of the trees as far as our vision could extend and the scenery was truly delightful. On the top of the mound were stones which presented the Appearance of three Alters having been erected one above the other according to the Ancient order of things & human bones were strun upon the ground. we had taken a shovel along with us Brother Joseph wished us to dig into the mound we dug into it about one foot & came upon the skeleton of a man almost entire and an Arrow was found sticking in his back bone Elder Milton Holmes picked it out & brought it into camp with one of his leg bones which had been brocken He put the leg bones in my waggon & I carried it to Clay County Missouri. Brother Joseph feeling anxious to learn something Governing the man prayed to the Lord & the Lord gave him a vision in open day while lying in his waggon this mound & his history was placed before him His name was Zelph He was a white Lamanite the curse had been taken off from him because of his faith and righteousness He had embraced the gospel he was a short stout thick set man He had been a great warrior Had joined the Nephites & fought for them under the direction of the great Onandagus who held sway & command over the Armies of the Nephites from the Hill Cumorah & Eastern sea to the rocky mountains though the Book of Mormon does not speak of him He was a great warrior leader & great prophet Zelph had his thigh bone brocken from the sling of a stone while in battle in the yr of his youth He was killed with the Arrow sticking in his back bone the vision of the great prophet at the time that Zelph was killed was opened to the prophet Joseph & there [word unclear] were heaped upon the earth & that great Mound of near 300 Feet High placed over them. I felt impressed to bury Zelph's thigh bone in Temple Block at Jackson County Missouri but I did not have an opportunity and I brought it to Clay County near the house owned by Colonel Arthur & occupied by Lyman Wight.

The arrow head is now in possession of his wife Emma Woodruff [written in another hand, probably at a later date]

During our travels we visited many mounds thrown up by the Ancient inhabitants of Nephites & Lamanites, this morning we went unto a high mound near the river Joseph & many of the Brethren went up this mound was very high from the top of it--we could overlook the tops of the trees as far as our vision could extend and the scenery was truly delightful. On the top of the mound were stones which presented the Appearance of three Alters having been erected one above the other according to the Ancient order of things & human bones were strun upon the ground. we had taken a shovel along with us Brother Joseph wished us to dig into the mound we dug into it about one foot & came upon the skeleton of a man almost entire and an Arrow was found sticking in his back bone Elder Milton Holmes picked it out & brought it into camp with one of his leg bones which had been brocken He put the leg bones in my waggon & I carried it to Clay County Missouri. Brother Joseph feeling anxious to learn something Governing the man prayed to the Lord & the Lord gave him a vision in open day while lying in his waggon this mound & his history was placed before him His name was Zelph He was a white Lamanite the curse had been taken off from him because of his faith and righteousness He had embraced the gospel He was a short stout thick set man He had been a great warrior Had joined the Nephites & fought for them under the direction of the great Prophet Onandagus who held sway & command over the Armies of the Nephites from the Hill Cumorah & Eastern sea to the rocky mountains though the Book of Mormon does not speak of him He was a great warrior leader & great prophet Zelph had his thigh bone brocken from the sling of a stone while in battle in the yr of his youth He was killed with the Arrow sticking in his back bone the vision of the great prophet at the time that Zelph was killed was opened to the prophet Joseph & there [word unclear] were heaped upon the earth & that great Mound of near 300 Feet High placed over them. I felt impressed to bury Zelph's thigh bone in Temple Block at Jackson County Missouri but I did not have an opportunity and I brought it to Clay County near the house owned by Colonel Arthur & occupied by Lyman Wight.

The arrow head is now in possession of his wife Emma Woodruff [written in another hand]

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Story of the Finding of Zelph from the Autobiography of Wilford Woodruff, found the LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

we encamped upon the banks of the river until Jan. 16 35. During our travels we visited many men  
known up by the ancient inhabitants the Ephraim & Samarians & this morning we went onto a high mound near  
the river Joseph & many of the brethren went up this mound was very high from the top of it we could overlook  
the tops of the trees as far as our vision could extend and the scenery was truly delightful. On the top of  
the mound were stones which presented the appearance of three altars having been erected one about 100  
according to the ancient order of things & human bones were seen upon the ground. we had taken up several  
along with us Brother Joseph wished us to dig into the mound & we dug into it about 100 feet & having upon the surface  
of a mandible entire and an arrow was found striking in his back bone Elder Milton Holmes proclaimed  
out & brought it into camp with one of his legs bones which had been broken He put the leg bone in my satchel  
& 4 carried it to Clay County Missouri. Brother Joseph feeling anxious to learn something concerning the man  
promised to be sent to the Lord gave him a vision in open day while lying in his wagon this man & his history was  
placed before him His name was "Belph" He was a white Samarian the Carse had been taken off from him  
because of his faith & righteousness He had embraced the gospel He was a short stout thick set man He had become  
a great warrior had learned the Ephraim & fought for them under the direction of the great Prophet Omard  
who held sway & Commanded armies of the Ephraim from the Hill Carmichael & Samarian back to the  
Rocky mountains though the Rock of Mormon does not speak of him He was a great warrior and a  
great prophet Belph Had his thigh bone broken from the striking of a stone while in battle with the  
his youth He was killed with the arrow striking in his back bone He vision of the great Prophet  
proved as the time that Belph was killed was opened to the prophet Joseph & there had been many who had  
the earth & that great Mound of near 300 feet high placed over them. The first prophet to bury them  
was in the Joseph Mound of Washington County Mo. 1800's but He did not know an of the prophet  
in Clay Co. until he was shown to the Mound of Belph & Omard & the Mound of Belph & Omard

The drawing is of a man in a suit and hat, standing and facing left. The drawing is a simple line drawing, possibly a sketch or a reproduction of a photograph. The man is wearing a dark suit jacket, a light-colored shirt, and a dark hat. He is standing with his feet slightly apart and his arms at his sides. The background is plain and light-colored.

History of George Albert Smith (Prepared in 1857).

Monday, June 2. . . . Some of us visited a mound on a bluff about 300 feet high and dug up some bones, which excited deep interest among the brethren. The President and many others visited the mound on the following morning, a notice of which is published in the Church History.

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were, where they were going, or what was their business, and I believe them to be a fine set of fellows, or a pack of damned knaves, and I can't tell for my life which'. Another intelligent gentleman remarked

'I do not believe there is a college in the United States that could turn out such an eloquent set of speakers as I have heard this day in the Camp.'

Dr. Williams said he had heard hundreds of such remarks at Jacksonville, and the most perfect good humor prevailed throughout the town.

Eighteen good rifles were standing up fastened with a strap round our tent pole. No other arms were visible in the Camp, they being carefully deposited in our baggage wagons, and as I was tent-keeper that day I was greatly amused at the remarks made by the people about those guns, and at the numberless questions asked me by our visitors. The plan of answering these questions was for every one to tell where he was from himself and that he was traveling to the West to see the country and hunt out a good place for a location, and as we were aware of spies being around us who sought to kill Joseph Smith we called him Squire Cook. Whenever any stranger was in the Camp he never appeared to have anything to do with directing its movements, the great mystery to be solved by visitors being who the general of the crowd was. When the spies first began to question us it was observed that they picked out the greenest looking fellows in the Camp to quiz. As I was only 16, very large of my age, my eyes weak and naturally deficient of sight, wore a pair of striped bed-tick pantaloons, which were worn off on the inside, nearly up to my knees on account of my interfering as I walked, my straw hat having been smashed by accidentally sitting on it in the tent, Joseph invited me to throw myself in a position to answer such questions; and on passing through the towns I generally fell somewhat in the rear cutting a sorry figure which naturally singled me out, - on the principle that children and fools always tell the truth. In this way I had many amusing conversations with inquisitive strangers. I tried to treat them with kindness and urbanity, but presume very few of them gained much information by talking with me.

Monday, June 2. Traveled 27 miles, crossed the Illinois River at Phillips ferry and camped on the west bank near a skirt of timber. Joseph was not present when we camped, and when he came I asked him how he liked our position. He replied that it was a very pleasant camp ground but not

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safe in a time of danger, as an enemy could shelter themselves in the point of timber and kill us before we could be formed ready for defense. Some of us visited a mound on a bluff about 300 feet high and dug up some bones, which excited deep interest among the brethren. The President and many others visited the mound on the following morning, a notice of which is published in the Church History.

Tuesday, June 3. During our noon halt near the place where the town of Pittsfield now stands, Joseph stood on a wagon wheel and made a speech to the Camp. He said, 'The Lord was displeased with us; that our murmuring and fault-finding and want of humility had kindled the anger of the Lord against us, and that a severe scourge would come upon the Camp and many would die like sheep with the rot.' He said, 'I cannot <sup>9</sup> it, it must come, but by repentance and humility and the prayer of faith, the chastisement may be alleviated but cannot be entirely turned away, for as the Lord lives this Camp must suffer a severe scourge for their wickedness and rebellion. I say it in the name of the Lord.'

This prophecy struck me to the heart; I thought we should probably get into a battle with the mob and some of us get killed. Little thought I that within four weeks a dozen of my brethren would be laid in the ground without coffins by the fell hand of the plague. But so it was, and I learned ever after to heed the counsels of the Prophet and not murmur at the dispensations of providence.

At Atlas we purchased 25 gallons of wild honey at 25 cents a gallon; also a little meat and corn meal. We then ferried the Snyc to an island in the Mississippi, which was 5 miles wide and 60 long. Col. Ross, who resided at Atlas, offered to hire 100 of us and to make ready pay. Our commissary obtained about a dozen Missouri-cured hams, but there not ) being enough to supply every mess our company agreed to do without. Our supper consisted of mush and honey as we had been unable to procure flour. After the fatigue of the day it hardly satisfied our hunger, but about an hour after supper, some six or eight of the hams were thrown down in anger at our tent door by some of the brethren saying, 'We don't eat dirty, stinking meat'.

The Prophet then told Zebedee, our cook, to be quick and fry some ham as he had not had his hunger fairly satisfied for 13 hours. Zebedee immediately commenced cooking ham and for once all our mess feasted to

Andrew Jenson, "Zion's Camp," The Historical Record, vol. 7, nos. 4-6 (June 1888), p. 581.

During our travels we visited several of the mounds which had been thrown up by the ancient inhabitants of this county, Nephites, Lamanites, etc., and this morning (June 2nd) I went up on a high mound, near the river, accompanied by the brethren. From this mound we could overlook the tops of the trees and view the prairie on each side of the river as far as our vision could extend; and the scenery was truly delightful. On the top of the mound were stones which presented the appearance of three altars having been erected one above the other, according to the ancient order; and human bones were strewn over the surface of the ground. The brethren procured a shovel and hoe, and removing the earth to the depth of about one foot discovered a skeleton of a man, almost entire, and between his ribs the stone point of a Lamanitish arrow, which evidently produced his death. Elder Burr Riggs retained the arrow. The contemplation of the scenery around us produced peculiar sensations in our bosoms; subsequently the visions of the past being opened to my understanding by the spirit of the Almighty, I discovered that the person whose skeleton we had seen was a white Lamanite, a large, thick-set man, and a man of God. His name was Zelph. He was a warrior and chieftain under the great Prophet Omandagus, who was known from the Eastern seas to the Rocky Mountains. The curse was taken from Zelph, or, at least, in part; one of his thigh bones was broken by a stone flung from a sling, while in battle years before his death. He was killed in battle, by the arrow found among his ribs, during the last great struggle with the Lamanites.

Such a company of men traveling in this manner through the country did not fail to excite the curiosity of the people; and every effort was made by them to learn the names of the leaders, the business, object and destination of the expedition; but in this they failed, as it was Joseph's instructions to the members of the company not to make these things known. There were several boys in the expedition, and at times these were questioned by strangers, but with very ungratifying results. Among the number of boys so questioned was George A. Smith, afterwards one of the counselors to President Brigham Young. The questions and answers were about like this: "My boy, where are you from?" "From the East." "Where are you going?" "To the West." "What for?" "To see where we can get land cheapest and best." "Who leads the camp?" "Sometimes one, sometimes another." "What names?" "Captain Wallace, Major Bruce, Orson Hyde, James Allred, etc."

The people not unfrequently, however, suspected they were "Mormons," and many times the little band was threatened with destruction. A circumstance in the experience of Parley P. Pratt furnishes us further testimony of the presence of angels with this expedition. Elder Pratt was chiefly engaged as a recruiting officer. And on one occasion, when he had traveled all night to overtake a small company he was conducting to the main company, he camped at noon on a broad level plain to let his horse feed. No habitation was near. Stillness and repose reigned around him. "I sank down," he says, "overpowered with a deep sleep, and might

have lain in a state of oblivion till the shades of night had gathered about me, so completely was I exhausted for the want of sleep and rest; but I had only slept a few moments till the horse had grazed sufficiently, when a voice, more loud and shrill than I had ever before heard, fell upon my ear, and thrilled through every part of my system; it said: 'Parley, it is time to be up and on your journey.' In the twinkling of an eye I was perfectly aroused, I sprang to my feet so suddenly that I could not at first recollect where I was, or what was before me to perform. I afterwards related the circumstance to Brother Joseph Smith, and he bore testimony that it was the angel of the Lord who went before the Camp, who found me overpowered with sleep, and thus awoke me."

Joseph continues his account of the journey as follows:

"Sunday, June 1st, 1834, we had preaching, and many of the inhabitants came to hear. Elder John Carter, who had formerly been a Baptist preacher, spoke in the morning, and was followed by four other Elders in the course of the day, all of whom had formerly been preachers for different denominations. When the inhabitants heard these Elders, they appeared much interested, and were very desirous to know who we were, and we told them one had been a Baptist preacher, and one a Campbellite; one a Reformed Methodist, and another a Restorationist, etc. During the day, many questions were asked, but no one could learn our names, profession, business, or destination; and although they suspected we were 'Mormons,' they were very civil.

"Our enemies had threatened that we should not cross the Illinois River, but on Monday, the 2nd, we were ferried over without any difficulty. The ferryman counted, and declared there were five hundred of us; yet our true number was only about one hundred and fifty. Our company had been increased since our departure from Kirtland, by volunteers from different branches of the Church through which we had passed. We encamped on the bank of the river until Tuesday, the 3rd.

"During our travels we visited several of the mounds which had been thrown up by the ancient inhabitants of this county, Nephites, Lamanites, &c., and this morning (June 2nd) I went up on a high mound, near the river, accompanied by the brethren. From this mound we could overlook the tops of the trees and view the prairie on each side of the river as far as our vision could extend; and the scenery was truly delightful. On the top of the mound were stones which presented the appearance of three altars having been erected one above the other, according to the ancient order; and human bones were strewn over the surface of the ground. The brethren procured a shovel and hoe, and removing the earth to the depth of about one foot discovered a skeleton of a man, almost entire, and between his ribs the stone point of a Lamanite arrow, which evidently produced his death. Elder Burr Riggs retained the arrow. The contemplation of the scenery around us produced peculiar sensations in our bosoms; subsequently the visions of the past being opened to my understanding by the spirit of the Almighty, I discovered that the

person whose skeleton we had seen was a white Lamanite, a large, thick-set man, and a man of God. His name was Zeph. He was a warrior and chieftain under the great Prophet Onandagus, who was known from the Eastern seas to the Rocky Mountains. The curse was taken from Zeph, or, at least, in part; one of his thigh bones was broken by a stone flung from a sling, while in battle years before his death. He was killed in battle, by the arrow found among his ribs, during the last great struggle with the Lamanites.

"Continuing our journey on the 4th, we camped on the banks of the Mississippi River. At this place we were somewhat afflicted, and our enemies strongly threatened that we should not cross over into Missouri. The river being a mile and a half wide, and having but one ferry-boat, it took two days for us to pass over. While some were ferrying, others were engaged in hunting, fishing, etc. As we arrived, we encamped on the bank, within the limits of Missouri. While at this place, Sylvester Smith rebelled against the order of the company, and gave vent to his feelings against myself in particular. This was the first outbreak of importance which had occurred to mar our peace since we commenced the journey."

This Sylvester Smith, who afterwards apostatized, exhibited a selfish and, with others, a quarrelsome spirit. One evening when provisions in camp were scarce, Elder Parley P. Pratt called upon Sylvester Smith for something to eat; and although Smith had food, he refused to minister to Brother Pratt, and sent to some

Wilford Woodruff 1893 (University of Utah Special Collections Dept., Papers of the George A. Smith family, Ms. 30, Box 174, fd. 26).

While traveling with Zion's camp, through the State of Ohio, we came to a very high mound, to the top of which we climbed by means of steps over which ~~the~~ grass had grown. The steps were very wide, , probably about twelve feet. We found the top of the mound to be quite level and to cover a great deal of ground. After overlooking the surrounding country, and descending half way down we were halted by command of the Prophet Joseph. We had taken a shovel with us to the top of the mound, thinking we might have some use for it, and after halting, the Prophet, speaking to the man who had the shovel, told him to throw up the dirt at a certain place to which he pointed, After removing a little more than six inches of soil the skeleton of a man was discovered, from a joint in whose backbone the Prophet drew a flint arrow head which had been the means of taking his life.

The Lord showed the Prophet Joseph that this was the skeleton of a white Lamanite named Zelph, and that he fought under a great chieftain named Onandagus, whose dominion covered an immense body of country. The book of Mormon does not mention the name of this Indian Chief, Onandagus.

On February 22nd, 1893, Dr. James E. Talmage showed to Presi-

dent Woodruff what was purported to be a seer stone, the property of a resident of this city who had possessed it since the early days of the church and who claimed to have been able to use it but had since lost the gift of seeing through it.

The above incident brought forth remarks by President Woodruff in relation to the seer stone known as "Gazelem", which was shown of the Lord to the Prophet Joseph to be some thirty feet under ground, and which he obtained by digging under the pretence of excavating for a wall, as related in <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ history of the Prophet Joseph Smith. This remarkable stone was used by the Prophet. After his death it came into the possession of President Brigham Young, through his brother Phineas, and afterwards it passed into the possession of President John Taylor through Elder Brigham Young, and since the death of President Taylor, into the possession of President Woodruff. Our late President, upon this occasion, also referred to a sacred relic then in his possession, in the shape of an Indian arrow head, of flint, also referred to in the history of the Prophet Joseph as having been the cause of the death of the White Lamanite, Zelph, which relic came into the possession of President Woodruff through Sister Zina Young Card. The President talked freely with Bro. Talmage on this subject, and on the suggestion of Bro. George F. Gibbs, he dictated the following in regard to it by way of a fuller account to that which ~~has~~ is already recorded in relation to it:

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Obtained by RLA Oct. 31, 1986: a xerox of an original typescript in early "blue-indelible" color of ribbon. No evidence of source--adjoining folders have nothing to do with this sequence of entries or this time period. at University of Utah Special Collections Dept. Papers of the Rev. A. Smith family, Ms. B., box 174, id. 126.

History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,  
Vol. 2, (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1904), pp. 79-80.

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BY HIMSELF.

VOLUME II.

AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

B. H. ROBERTS.

PUBLISHED BY THE CHURCH.

DESERT NEWS,  
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH,  
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We had just retired to rest when the picket guard announced Luke S. Johnson. He came into our camp and made his report. He had visited a number of influential men, among the rest a Baptist minister, who expressed great anxiety that our company should be stopped, and went to a magistrate to inquire if there was not some law or pretext for stopping us. He, the priest, said to the magistrate, "That company march and have guns like an army. They pitch their tents by the side of the road; they set out guards, and let nobody pass into their camp in the night; and they are Mormons, and I believe they are going to kill the people up in Jackson county, Missouri, and retake their lands." The magistrate replied, "If you were traveling, and did not wish to put up at public houses, or there were none in the country, would you not camp by the road side in a tent? And if you were afraid that your horses and property would be stolen in a strange country, would you not watch and keep guards?" "Why, yes," said the priest; "but they are Mormons!" "Well, I can't hear but they mind their own business, and if you and this stranger [meaning Luke S. Johnson] will mind your own business, everything will be right." This Bap-

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