

# David White Rogers of New York

*Rogers overcame a mob and physical hardship to aid those whose paths he crossed, including Joseph Smith, Mary Fielding Smith, and the Parley P. Pratt family.*

Naida R. Williamson

“If it is the will of the Lord and the decision of His servants who have the authority to appoint, endow me with the power and let me have your faith and prayers, and I will go and do the business or be found dead trying.”<sup>1</sup> David White Rogers—like Nephi—responded to the calls of his Church leaders with faith and courage when others even flinched from fear. Baptized when he was fifty, Rogers devoted his remaining forty-four years to building the kingdom of God.

## Early Life

David White Rogers was born on October 4, 1787, in Morristown, Merrimack County, New Hampshire, to Samuel Rogers and Hannah Sinclair.<sup>2</sup> Alone as a youth, Rogers began trapping along the northeastern rivers between Canada and the United States. After trapping beaver, mink, and other animals, Rogers prepared the skins and sold the furs in Montreal. It was in Montreal that Rogers met Martha Collins and married her on December 5, 1811. While living in Canada, David and Martha had four children.<sup>3</sup>

Susanna, the oldest child, often accompanied her father as he set traps and collected the animals. She felt it was cruel to kill the animals and pleaded with her father to give up the fur business. He agreed the killing was difficult, but he felt the high profits made up for the distasteful task.<sup>4</sup>

Years later, however, Rogers gave up trapping for homesteading. He cleared some virgin land on the shores of Lake Champlain,

an area that became known as Rogers's Rock. Then, in the early 1820s, Rogers decided to become a carpenter, eventually moving his family to Dunkirk, New York, where four more children were added to the family. After a few years, Rogers temporarily left his family to establish a carpentry business in New York City. The business soon prospered, and a year later, he sent for his family.<sup>5</sup>

### **Conversion to Mormonism**

In 1837 while returning home from church, David White Rogers overheard some preaching in a building where he and some friends had held meetings in the past. Rogers was attracted by the speaker's sincerity and by the apparent truths of which he spoke. He became interested in the scriptures that were quoted and believed the explanation of the scriptures to be correct.

Wanting to know more, David entered the building and sat down to hear the rest of the sermon. The man sitting next to him explained that the speakers were Mormons. As a devoted member of the Methodist sect, David was surprised that Mormons, who had such unfavorable reputations, could explain the scriptures so well.<sup>6</sup>

After their sermon, the elders—Parley P. Pratt and Elijah Fordham—informed the congregation that there would be no more meetings, as few showed interest in their message. When David heard this announcement, he stood up and invited the elders to his home. He stated that the men were speaking the truth, and he thought there were others in the city who would like to hear the elders' message. Rogers's offer helped fulfill the elders' earlier impression that people would be raised up to aid them in the work there.<sup>7</sup>

When the elders arrived at the Rogers home the following afternoon, David's wife, Martha, answered the door and saw two men: "One was large and dark, with a pleasant, intelligent countenance [Parley P. Pratt], while the other was a small man, but very earnest [Elijah Fordham]." The elders asked for her husband, but she informed them that David was not there. They promised to return in the evening, telling her that they had a very important message for him. This visit from the elders startled Martha because she had dreamed earlier about this very event.<sup>8</sup>



A few years before the missionaries' visit, David, like Martha, had had a dream. In the dream, David was "taken by a guide to a point where he was shown a terrible, swift destruction which seemed to embrace the whole face of the land. He was told by his guide that he would learn more about the terrible event when he was fifty years of age."<sup>9</sup>

David was in his fiftieth year when the missionaries sat with the Rogers family and explained the gospel to them. Martha immediately accepted their message, but David needed more time. He retired to his room for four days, reading the Book of Mormon, praying, and fasting. When he read about the terrible destruction that had taken place in the Americas after the Savior's crucifixion, he recognized it as the destruction he had witnessed in the dream. David's seclusion ended with his receiving a testimony by revelation. He later stated that "the room was a blaze of light as the noon day sun. I saw Joseph Smith sitting at a stand in the corner of the room with a Book of Mormon in his hand."<sup>10</sup> Soon after this spiritual confirmation, Parley P. Pratt baptized the Rogers family in New York City's East River on December 19, 1837.<sup>11</sup>

After the Rogers family was baptized, Parley P. Pratt left for a short time and then returned to New York with his wife, Mary Ann Stearns, and her daughter (Mary Ann had previously been widowed). Before the Pratts left New York in April 1838, they spent many evenings around David and Martha's fireplace sharing experiences and teaching the Rogers family the principles of the gospel. Lasting ties developed between the two families.<sup>12</sup>

### **Dedication to the Growing Church**

To provide the elders with a meeting place, David Rogers arranged a large room with chairs from his warehouse. The room filled with interested investigators. Seeing the growth, Rogers joined with another member to rent a small "place" and furnish it for regular meetings. This meeting place, too, was usually crowded. The crowds and the spiritual manifestations experienced by the Rogerses and other converts were seen as fulfillment of the promise to Elders Pratt and Fordham that "His Holy Spirit should give the people visions and dreams concerning us and the

work of the Lord. . . . [C]rowds, who could not get in, should stand in the streets and about the entrance to try to hear us.”<sup>13</sup>

Again, trying to meet the needs of the growing number of Saints in New York, Rogers decided to publish a hymnal since they were so scarce in the “outlying branches of the Church.”<sup>14</sup> Using Emma Smith’s hymnal for a format and a source for nearly half of the hymns, Rogers completed his book with other hymns of Latter-day Saint authorship.<sup>15</sup> The last hymn is David’s dedicatory poem, part of which explains why he published the hymnals:

Father, to Thee I dedicate  
The work that I have done,  
And now, I pray, accept of it,  
Through Jesus Christ thy Son.

For as it was by His command,  
Given to me in dream,  
At first I took this book in hand,  
I now present for Him.<sup>16</sup>

## Joining the Missouri Saints

The following September, David, Martha, and five of their children headed west to join the Saints in Missouri. They shared a wagon belonging to the Wandle Mace family, also of New York City. After passing through the Allegheny Mountains, the two families continued through Ohio and Indiana. They met some travelers headed eastward who warned the families that they could not continue to travel west and survive the conditions. Undaunted, the small party continued and reached Quincy, Illinois, where they met the Saints who had fled from Missouri. David’s daughter Caroline described the scene:

We found a good many teams there loaded with families with just what they could pick up and throw into their wagons and leave in a hurry to get away from the mobs which infested the country. It was a sorrowful sight to see a people turned out of houses and homes in the dead of winter, little babies and aged and sick all turned out without mercy.

Father and Brother Mace went to work to help all they could, but of course, they were obliged to earn their own living as well. They rented a house for both families to live in. Upstairs was a large room that covered the rooms below. Under the lower rooms was a



basement with a large room also. The house was called the committee house.

There was a committee set apart to see after those that came from Missouri. They all came to the Committee House and were cared for. . . . Father was put in charge of the Commissary.<sup>17</sup>

## **The Land Committee**

The Church established a committee to look for an area of land that could be obtained for the settlement of the scattered Saints. The committee was asked to “reconnoitre the upper river country in the State of Illinois and the then territory of Iowa. In order to ascertain if there was any chance for the Saints to find shelter from the inclemency of the season.”<sup>18</sup> The committee members were David Rogers, S. Bent, and Israel Barlow; only Rogers and Barlow were able to complete the assignment.<sup>19</sup>

The committee traveled for nine days locating several potential dwelling sites for the Saints in the Commerce area.<sup>20</sup> They also crossed the Mississippi River into Iowa and found the deserted barracks of old Fort Des Moines.<sup>21</sup> The land had originally been preserved as a reservation for half-breed Sac and Fox Indians and became known as the “Half-Breed Tract.”<sup>22</sup> The committee concluded that the fort could house many families and sought to find how they might purchase the land. Rogers and Barlow located Dr. Isaac Galland, who owned parts of the land,<sup>23</sup> and obtained from him documents listing the terms of sale for the property. Unable to make an immediate purchase without consulting the Church leaders, the committee returned to Quincy to report their mission, which Rogers did formally in a conference held February 1839.<sup>24</sup>

## **Confrontation with a Mob**

The Church authorities in Quincy wanted to send the Galland documents and information to Joseph Smith, who was in Liberty Jail, for a decision. They tried to find someone familiar with the Jackson County area to take the material to Joseph, sell the Church lands in Jackson County, and help the needy Saints move to the Quincy area. No one seemed willing to return to Jackson County, fearing the mobs. Finally, David Rogers was approached by Bishop

Edward Partridge to fulfill the assignment. Rogers agreed, writing in his report:

Although I had heard of the threats that the Jackson folks had made against the Mormons in case they should come there to sell or take possession of their lands, (I was a stranger in Mo. and also to the Saints, having as it were, just arrived from the City of New York, on my way to gather with the Saints), notwithstanding, I was not intimidated and therefore, replied: "If it is the will of the Lord and the decision of His servants who have the authority to appoint, endow me with the power and let me have your faith and prayers, and I will go and do the business or be found dead trying." Accordingly, the necessary power of attorney, directions written out, on the tenth day of March, 1839, I left Quincy, Illinois, for Jackson County, Mo.<sup>25</sup>

### **Selling Land in Missouri**

On March 15, Rogers arrived at Far West and met with the committee on removal, which appointed Charles Bird, who was familiar with Jackson County and had already performed some services for the committee, to assist him. The two men visited Parley P. Pratt and others in the Richmond Jail and Joseph Smith in the Liberty Jail, giving the Prophet some letters and the Galland documents. After the Prophet sanctioned the purchase of Galland's lands in the "Half-Breed Tract," Rogers and Bird traveled to Independence, Missouri, to sell the Church lands. The two men sold a quarter section of land known as the Whitmer farm to a young man named Mason for \$700 and sold other property worth \$100.<sup>26</sup>

The next day, while crossing the public square, Rogers and Bird were surrounded by a posse of about forty men. Soon the square was congested with three hundred people. James King, brother of the sheriff, Thomas King, informed Rogers and Bird that they had to give up the money and property obtained from the sale of the land and leave the county before sunset; otherwise, they would be killed. Rogers replied, "You have pronounced sentence upon me. Can I be allowed the privilege granted to condemned criminals in courts of law? They are asked if they have any cause to show why the sentence of the law should not be executed upon them."



Some men in the posse yelled, "Let him speak! Let him speak!" After a pause, King told him to go ahead but to make it short. Rogers then spoke:

A few years ago the God of Israel sent a few of His servants to settle in Jackson County, Mo. (and He had but few at that time on the earth who would acknowledge themselves His servants to obey). They came forth, and in conformity with the Laws of the United States and the State of Missouri they made selections and entered some twenty thousand acres, upon which they settled some 1400 or 1500 souls in the space of three years, at which time the people of the county arose simultaneously, almost en masse and drove those servants of God from their homes and from the county in violation of the law. Those servants of God then settled in other counties, and subsequently were driven from the State, under the exterminating order of Governor Boggs. Among those servants of God there were some very old, some cripples, some sick, some widows and many orphan children . . . and the Lord will not that they should be exterminated. And, therefore, the God of Israel has ordered that the lands from which his servants were first driven shall be sold, and the means used in helping those helpless ones out of the state. And I am sent here to perform that business, and in the name of the Israel's God, and by His power, I shall accomplish the work. And in no way can I be prevented only by committing wilful, cold-blooded murder.

At this point, Rogers unbuttoned his coat and vest, bared his chest, and said:

And if any one present is prepared for that, now is the best time you can ever have, in the blaze of this beautiful, morning sun and in the presence of this large concourse of witnesses, that the honor and glory of the deed may descend to the latest posterity. That is all I wish to say.

Silence fell over the crowd. Bird had disappeared. One by one, the other people left, leaving Rogers standing by himself. He returned to the business of disposing the land, selling all save one undesirable piece and collecting about \$2,700 over a forty-day period.<sup>27</sup>

Traveling from Jackson County, Rogers stopped in Far West where an apostate, Lael Maynard, presented him with a writ of attachment for \$350 plus five yoke of oxen, three horses, a wagon, and \$300 of dry goods. Though Rogers believed Maynard's claim was groundless, Rogers paid off the attachment with money to retain the use of the property for helping the Saints leave

Missouri. About the same time, a Brother Ripley arrived in Far West to obtain some cash for the Prophet, who was being moved to another prison. Rogers gave him \$150 of the money collected in Jackson County.<sup>28</sup>

### **Traveling to Quincy**

Leaving Far West shortly afterward, Rogers brought with him some Saints who were among the last to leave Missouri, including Parley P. Pratt's family and Brigham Young's daughter Caroline and his mother-in-law. When they were in Paris, Missouri, Rogers met Brigham Young and others of the Twelve, who were traveling to Far West to start their mission to England and to lay the cornerstone of the temple; Rogers gave them \$12.<sup>29</sup>

When Rogers's group reached the Mississippi River, he traveled several miles downstream to find a place where the bottom lands were not flooded and a ferry was available. Once on the river's Illinois side, the group had to ford "a large slough . . . where the water came up to the wagon bed." When they reached the bank on the other side of the slough, Rogers looked back and saw what seemed to be a bundle of clothing floating in the water. He yelled to Sister Pratt, who recognized the clothing to be that of her daughter, Mary Ann. Rogers rescued the little girl, and they were able to revive her. In the meantime, the spirited horses dragged the wagon forward on a full run into the trees, where the wagon became entangled, causing the animals to halt.<sup>30</sup>

After Joseph Smith escaped from Missouri,<sup>31</sup> he reunited with his people and arranged for the first purchase of Commerce lands for the Saints to settle. On the Iowa side of the Mississippi was a small town known as Montrose, the area which David Rogers and the land committee had earlier located. Many of the Saints chose to settle temporarily in the old Montrose area. Caroline Rogers described Montrose and some of its early Mormon settlers:

The river ran on one side of Montrose, the East, the Barracks ran on the three other sides of the town. The buildings were soon occupied by the families of the homeless saints and proved a blessing to the people. They lived in those rooms until they moved to Nauvoo or located elsewhere.<sup>32</sup>



Brigham Young was our nearest neighbor on one side of us and the other side a number of families lived at different times. President Woodruff and Brother A. O. Smoot and Ma Smoot lived there for some months together in the one room. Soon they both moved in the country a few miles away where they lived till they moved to Nauvoo.

. . . In those days there was no Sunday meetings to go to on that side of the Mississippi River but everyone was eager to go to Nauvoo to meetings which were held in a grove on the hill near where the Temple was afterwards built. They did not stay home for rain or anything else. We used to cross the river in all kinds of boats. The river was between one and a half or two miles wide in the summertime and in the winter we went on the ice in sleighs and wagons or on foot. I have walked over the river many a time. We never tired of going to meetings in those days.<sup>33</sup>

## **In Nauvoo**

Early in 1844, David Rogers purchased lots on both sides of Joseph Smith's Mansion House and started building a brick home.<sup>34</sup> Rogers experienced the hardships of post-Martyrdom Nauvoo and was one of the men who guarded the city of Nauvoo by night. Later, in Nauvoo on February 5, 1846, he was set apart as a senior president of the Thirty-Fourth Quorum of the Seventies by President Joseph Young and remained in that position for thirty-four years.<sup>35</sup>

After joining the Church, David and Martha Rogers sent letters via various missionaries to their eldest daughter, Susanna, who had married and moved to England. They told her about the Church, and she expressed great interest, but her husband's disapproval prevented her from joining. Then Susanna learned her marriage was invalid because her husband's first marriage had not been legally annulled. She eventually joined the Church, returned to America with some of the London Saints, and reunited with her parents. Susanna soon married William Pickett, a young widower. After the martyrdom of Joseph Smith, her husband separated from the Church, leaving her to care for her son by her first husband and an unborn child. She moved with the Saints to Council Bluffs, where she gave birth in a damp cave, with her young son and a little girl watching over her.<sup>36</sup>



## Moving West

As the Saints left Nauvoo and moved west, President Young asked David Rogers to delay going west in order to assist those needing help to prepare for the journey. In compliance with the request, David and his son Ross Ransom stationed themselves in Montrose and then in Oskaloosa, Iowa, to assist others moving to Council Bluffs, Iowa. Having worked as cabinetmakers and joiners,



David White Rogers (1787–1881) later in life. Courtesy Naida Williamson.

David and Ross Ransom were able to help the Saints by making ox yokes, ox handles, and wagons.<sup>37</sup> One of the women Rogers helped was Mary Fielding Smith, the widow of Hyrum Smith; he supplied her with oxen so she could make the trip. Because of the kindness shown to the Smiths, “Brother Rogers was ever gratefully remembered by the family.”<sup>38</sup>

After the departure of most of the Saints, a few were left in Nauvoo due to sickness, lack of money, and other problems. One sad occurrence touched the Rogers family at this time. Amelia Rogers Telle, David’s

daughter, was one of those left in Nauvoo. Nauvoo “had become a very lawless place to live in. Almost every night some house was broken into and robbed of money, if there was any. The people were in constant fear for their lives.” One night, as Amelia was walking in her garden, her husband mistook her for an intruder after his money, grabbed the loaded gun from the head of the bed, and shot her; she died four months later from the injuries, leaving three children.<sup>39</sup>



In 1852, David's family and Susanna's family began their long, uneventful trip to Utah. By this time, most of David and Martha's children were married and settled throughout the West.<sup>40</sup>

During the grasshopper siege in Utah, the David Rogers family came close to going without bread, but Martha had been promised by Parley P. Pratt years earlier in New York City that "if she never turned a stranger from her door hungry, she would never want for bread."<sup>41</sup> Because wheat was so scarce in Utah, one hundred pounds of milled flour cost thirty dollars. Martha ran out of flour, but the family had only a five-dollar gold piece, far short of the going price. Nevertheless, Rogers took it to the mill, where the miller exchanged one hundred pounds of flour for the cash.<sup>42</sup>

### **Rogers's Mission and Journey Home**

David Rogers turned sixty-five the year he settled in Provo, Utah. Two years later he was called on a mission to New Hampshire and Canada, serving from 1854 to 1856. During his mission, Rogers traveled through many cities, locating his parents, brothers, sisters, and other family members who had not heard of Mormonism. Rogers was able to collect a great deal of genealogical information through his mission travels.<sup>43</sup>

On his journey home, Rogers joined the Jesse Bigler Martin wagon company somewhere west of Iowa City in June 1857; two other missionaries also traveled with the company. During this trip fraught with problems, seventy-year-old Rogers often took a turn standing guard during the night to prevent the oxen from being scattered by vindictive apostates and Indians traveling through the area; as it was, the company lost eleven head of cattle because of a stampede. Also, when one young man fell under the wheel of a wagon and suffered a broken arm, Rogers set the bones, easing the boy's pain. On another occasion, Rogers spent two days with a group of men searching for lost cattle.<sup>44</sup> In September 1857, when the Martin wagon company arrived in Salt Lake, Rogers returned to his family in Provo. At the Church's October conference, he reported briefly on his mission.<sup>45</sup>

## **“Doctor Rogers”**

Rogers worked for the Provo Water Company and carried out other city responsibilities. Many of the residents of Provo called David “Doctor Rogers” because of his expertise in helping those with health problems. Rogers demonstrated his medical knowledge even when treating himself. While on a trip to the mountains with two young men, Rogers nearly severed his foot. He sent one boy to get help while instructing the other to pour cold water on the injury until help arrived. He also told the boy to instruct his rescuers not to cut off his foot. When help arrived, they wanted to amputate the foot, due to the seriousness of the wound. Rogers had passed out, but the boy kept his promise, telling the men that Rogers didn’t want them to amputate. They obeyed, sewing up the foot; Rogers completely recovered from the injury. On another occasion, Rogers was at the lumber mill and broke his leg. He instructed some men to help reset his leg, which he did successfully.<sup>46</sup>

## **Later Years**

As one of the Saints who practiced polygamy, Rogers married Ellen Bennett sometime in the 1860s; she bore him five children, two of whom survived.<sup>47</sup> In a letter to Brigham Young, Rogers mentioned a third wife, Elizabeth Anderson Bent, but exact details of this marriage are not known.<sup>48</sup> He was also set apart by Wilford Woodruff in 1873 to serve as a patriarch in the Provo area, and he continued to serve as senior president of the Thirty-Fourth Quorum of the Seventies.<sup>49</sup>

As the years passed, David White Rogers corresponded with his children, though it became difficult for him to write. His right hand became unsteady, so he would place his left hand over the right one to steady it. In one letter to his oldest daughter, Susanna, he offered her one or two hundred dollars for a trip she and her son Horatio planned to southern Arizona, although he advised against them traveling alone. In a letter to his grandson Joseph Knight Rogers, the son of Ross Ransom, he encouraged Joseph to be faithful and prayerful in his work as a representative in the Arizona



legislature. The affection he felt for his children is demonstrated by his greeting to Susanna—"My dearly and beloved daughter."<sup>50</sup>

In the summer of 1881, Rogers felt too poorly to work. His wife Martha was also very ill and died in June of that year. At one point, Rogers was sick for several nights with pain so severe he could not eat, sleep, or talk. Some visiting priesthood brethren asked if he wanted a blessing. He replied, "I would if *you* have faith." After the blessing, the pain went away and did not return.<sup>51</sup>

David White Rogers died at the age of ninety-three in September 1881 at the residence of his daughter Hester Beebe, in Provo, Utah.<sup>52</sup> Although he was not introduced to the gospel until his fiftieth year, he had devoted the rest of his life, some forty-four years, to building the kingdom of God.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>David White Rogers, Report, p. 1, typescript copy, Archives Division, Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter cited as LDS Church Archives). There are two typescript copies of Rogers's report in circulation. The report cited here is in the LDS Church Archives and titled "copy."

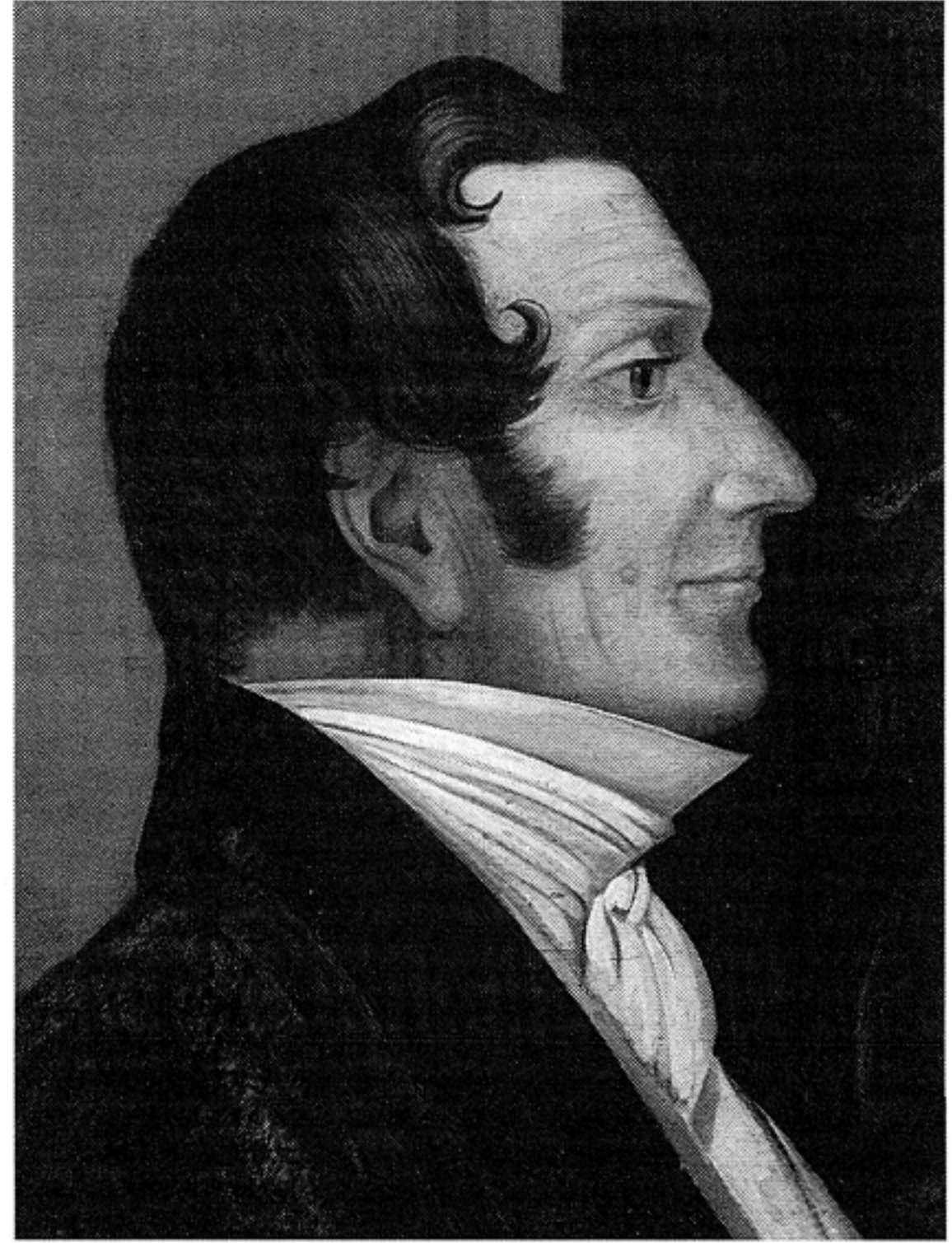
<sup>2</sup>For generations the family of David White Rogers has declared that Rogers kept a sketchbook and painted Joseph Smith. As others have been credited for some of Rogers's experiences, this article strives to show that he knew many of the early Church leaders and helped them as the need arose. I personally believe that Rogers painted the Prophet because a report of an early party declares that the profiles of Joseph and Hyrum shown in the reproductions below (now located in the Museum of Church History and Art) were the work of "David Rogers of New York" ("Returned Missionaries' Party in the Social Hall," *Deseret News*, November 29, 1855). This statement agrees with what the Rogers family has always claimed. Although Brigham Young was not present at the party, he has been attributed as the source of the information about the artist. Jules Remy and Julius Brenchley also attribute the profiles of Joseph and Hyrum to "D. Rogers, pinx. Nauvoo 1842" (pinx.: the original painter) in their book, *A Journey to Great-Salt-Lake City*, 2 vols. (London: W. Jeffs, 1861), frontispiece. (The caption states the engraving, done by "W. Edwards sculp." [engraver], was based on "the original painting in the palace of Brigham Young.") There is a question as to



whether David White Rogers of New York and David Rogers of New York are the same person. I am continuing to research these issues; my final conclusions are forthcoming.



Joseph Smith Jr.



Hyrum Smith

<sup>3</sup>Martha was born to Ebenezer Collins and Ann Stow on August 22, 1793, in Berkshire, Vermont. She died on June 18, 1881, in Provo, Utah. Susanna Mehitable Rogers was born July 5, 1813, in Montreal, Quebec. Her first husband was Benedetto San Giovanni; she died January 9, 1905, in St. George, Utah. Edward William Rogers was born December 5, 1814, in Montreal, Quebec, and died September 9, 1815. Charles Addison Rogers was born July 28, 1816, in Queenstown, Ontario, married Rebecca Keen, and died November 29, 1845. Amelia Ann Rogers was born April 21, 1818, in Queenstown, Ontario. She married Josiah Lewis Telle and died November 29, 1847. After David and Martha moved from Canada to the United States, they had seven more children. Ross Ransom Rogers was born February 11, 1821, in Pomfret, New York. His first wife was Helen Moffett Curtis; he died March 13, 1897, in Pima, Arizona. Glezen Filmore Rogers was born December 2, 1822, in Dunkirk, New York, and died as an infant. Esther (Hester) Ann Rogers was born March 23, 1825, in Dunkirk, New York, and married George Beebe. She died June 25, 1885, in Provo, Utah. Hannah Caroline Rogers was born March 20, 1827, in Dunkirk, New York. She first married Aaron Daniels and later Abraham O. Smoot. She died March 14, 1915, Salt Lake City, Utah. David Preston Rogers was born July 7, 1829, in Dunkirk, New York, and died December 13, 1832, in New York City. Sally Maria Rogers was born January 10, 1832, in New York City and died October 23, 1832. Henry Clay Rogers was born October 19, 1833, in New York City. He married Emma Higbee and died March 7, 1902, in Lehi, Arizona. Family Ancestral File, Family History Library, Salt Lake City.



<sup>4</sup>Ethel J. Bennett, "An Interesting Little Biography from the 'Rank and File,'" 3, copy in possession of the author.

<sup>5</sup>Bennett, "Interesting Little Biography," 4; "Treasury of Pioneer Stories," in *Our Pioneer Heritage*, comp. Kate B. Carter, 20 vols. (Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1958-77), 4:192; Jane Rae Fuller Topham, *In Search of Living Water* (Bountiful, Utah: By the author, 1995), 7, 9; F. T. Pomeroy, "Mormon Pioneering and Settlements in the Salt Lake River Valley," *The Genealogical and Historical Magazine of Arizona* 4 (January 1927): 32.

<sup>6</sup>Caroline Rogers Daniels Smoot, Autobiography, 3, copy in possession of the author; Ross Ransom Rogers, Autobiography, 5, copy in possession of the author.

<sup>7</sup>Parley P. Pratt Jr., ed. *The Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*, 4th ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 145; Ross Ransom Rogers, Autobiography, 5.

<sup>8</sup>Pomeroy, "Mormon Pioneering and Settlements," 34.

<sup>9</sup>Pomeroy, "Mormon Pioneering and Settlements," 34.

<sup>10</sup>Smoot, Autobiography, 4.

<sup>11</sup>Smoot, Autobiography, 5.

<sup>12</sup>Smoot, Autobiography, 3-4.

<sup>13</sup>Pratt, *Autobiography*, 146.

<sup>14</sup>Peter Crawley, "A Bibliography of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in New York, Ohio, and Missouri," *BYU Studies* 12 (summer 1972): 525.

<sup>15</sup>Crawley, "Bibliography," 525. Rogers's hymnal was brought into question when his family moved to the Nauvoo area. During general conference in October 1839, it was decided "that a new edition of Hymn Books be printed immediately, and that the one published by D. W. Rogers be utterly discarded by the Church." Joseph Smith Jr., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d ed., rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 4:14 (hereafter cited as *History of the Church*). Though this firm action was taken against Rogers, publishing a hymnal and "selling it as the one compiled and published by Sister Emma Smith" was one of three charges considered in the April 1840 general conference. The other two charges were "writing a private letter to New York City, casting reflections on the character of Elder John P. Greene" and "administering medicine unskillfully, which had a bad effect." He was "forgiven" and "the hand of fellowship . . . continued towards him." *History of the Church* 4:105-6.

<sup>16</sup>*A Collection of Sacred Hymns for the Church of the Latter Day Saints* (New York: C. Vinton Printer, 1838), 118, Special Collections and Manuscripts, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. Only stanzas one and two are reproduced in this article.

<sup>17</sup>Smoot, Autobiography, 5-6.

<sup>18</sup>Rogers, Report, 1.

<sup>19</sup>Rogers, Report, 1. S. Bent became ill and was unable to fulfill the assignment. Though Rogers's report does not give a full first name for Brother Bent, it is likely that S. Bent was Samuel Bent, a prominent figure in the settlement of Nauvoo. Andrew Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia: A Compilation of Biographical Sketches of Prominent Men and Women in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830-1848*, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: Andrew Jenson History, 1901-36), 1:368.

<sup>20</sup>Rogers, Report, 1.

<sup>21</sup>The *History of the Church* indicates that Israel Barlow had previously met Isaac Galland when Barlow lost his way while leaving Missouri in the fall of 1838 (*History of the Church* 3:265). In "Isaac Galland-Mormon Benefactor," *BYU Studies* 19 (spring 1979): 267, Lyndon W. Cook blends some of the experiences of the land committee with Barlow's earlier misadventure.

<sup>22</sup>Cook, "Isaac Galland," 267.

<sup>23</sup>Galland's ownership of the land was disputable because of the "questionable legality of the land transactions in the Half-Breed Tract." For a detailed explanation of Galland's purchase of the "Half-Breed Tract," see Cook, "Isaac Galland," 264-65.

<sup>24</sup>Rogers, Report, 1; *History of the Church* 3:260. Some confusion can arise because Rogers inexplicably begins his written report with the date February 1, 1839, implying that that is the date of the report. However, the dates within the report are later and are consistent with the conference date listed in the *History of the Church*.

<sup>25</sup>Rogers, Report, 1.

<sup>26</sup>*History of the Church* 3:262, 263; Cook, "Isaac Galland," 269; Rogers, Report, 2.

<sup>27</sup>Rogers, Report, 2-3.

<sup>28</sup>Rogers, Report, 3.

<sup>29</sup>Rogers, Report, 3; Clark V. Johnson, ed., *Mormon Redress Petitions: Documents of the 1833-1838 Missouri Conflict* (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center; Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1992), 95. Parley P. Pratt states that the man who helped his family was David W. Rogers of New York, a descendant of the martyr John Rogers of Smithfield, England.

<sup>30</sup>Rogers, Report, 4. Parley P. Pratt's version of this account differs from Rogers's eyewitness report. Pratt notes that Sister Pratt left the wagon to cross the "swollen stream" on a "foot bridge." Upon reaching the other side, she looked back at the wagon to see if it had arrived safely. Sister Pratt saw a child's bonnet floating in the water and discovered her daughter was no longer in the wagon. She then yelled to Brother Rogers, who leaped into the water to rescue the child. Pratt also notes that the child's hands caught the wagon spokes, which brought her to the surface. Although she survived, "the marks of the wheel were distinctly seen on both her thighs, which were seriously injured and nearly broken." Pratt, *Autobiography*, 208.

<sup>31</sup>Joseph Smith escaped while being taken from Liberty Jail to another county for trial. Joseph had a change of venue from Liberty to Gallatin and then another change of venue from Gallatin to Columbia in Boone County, Missouri. It was while traveling from Gallatin to Columbia that Joseph made his escape.

<sup>32</sup>Smoot, *Autobiography*, 7.

<sup>33</sup>Caroline Rogers Daniels Smoot, "Testimony of Knowing Joseph Smith," 1-2, copy in possession of the author. Others who lived in the barracks included Orson Pratt, John Taylor, Erastus Snow, Jacob Yates, Bates Noble, and the Elder Fordham David Rogers had known in New York.

<sup>34</sup>On February 6, 1844, David Rogers bought lot pt. 4, blk. 146. This purchase was recorded on June 4, 1847, in the *Hancock County Land Records*, Book S, p. 194. On April 2, 1847, Rogers sold blks. 146 and 148. This sale was recorded



on March 28, 1848, in the *Hancock County Land Records*, Record Book U, p. 119. He built his home either on blk. 146 or on a small portion of blk. 148; a foundation located on blk. 146 may be from that home. As early as 1843, Rogers's daughter Amelia reported that her father was making bricks for the house that was being built in Nauvoo. Amelia Rogers, note to her sister Susanna, appended to Martha Rogers's letter to Susanna dated Nauvoo, November 18, 1843, copy in possession of the author.

<sup>35</sup>"The Biography of David White Rogers," Records of the Seventies Quorums, 34th Quorum, vol. 2, p. 19, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>36</sup>Topham, *In Search of Living Water*, 81. "Treasury of Pioneer Stories," 4:194.

<sup>37</sup>Topham, *In Search of Living Water*, 111; Ross Ransom Rogers, Autobiography, 6.

<sup>38</sup>*The Heroines of "Mormondom": The Second Book of the Noble Women's Series* (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1884), 26.

<sup>39</sup>Smoot, Autobiography, 11-12,

<sup>40</sup>Ross's and Caroline's families had preceded their parents west. Ross settled in Provo as did David eventually. Caroline, Hester, and Susanna stayed in Salt Lake City for a while. Henry Clay Rogers, the youngest, moved to Springville, Utah. Charles A. was in New York when he heard of Joseph and Hyrum Smith's death. He knew that the Saints had traveled west but was unable to contact his family for several years. After his mission, Charles located his family when he finally came to Utah.

<sup>41</sup>Ross Ransom Rogers, Autobiography, 6-7. An addition to the Ross Ransom Rogers Autobiography, pages 6-7 were written by David John Rogers and his sister Caroline Rogers Watkins as they retell memories of their parents and grandparents.

<sup>42</sup>Ross Ransom Rogers, Autobiography, 6-7.

<sup>43</sup>David White Rogers, letter to his wife Martha, Lock-port, June 18, 1855, 1-4, copy in possession of the author.

<sup>44</sup>Jessie Bigler Martin, Diaries, 1853-1857, 96-97, 99, 106-107, Special Collections and Manuscripts, Brigham Young University. The *Deseret News* reported on August 19, 1857, that "Elder Jesse B. Martin's wagon company was traveling on the Northside of the Platte, and was about 36 miles below Laramie on the 3d of this month. They . . . were pursuing their journey at the rate of 15 miles a day. Elders Charles R. Dana, David W. Rogers, and James Carrigan were in Elder Martin's company" (p. 188). The Martin company record in the Journal History of the Church states the "only unpleasant feature" of the journey was the "loss of 11 head of cattle in a stampede," and all members of the train arrived safely in Salt Lake City. Andrew Jenson, Journal History of the Church, September 12, 1857, 3.

<sup>45</sup>"Minutes of the Semi-Annual Conference . . . October 6, 1857," *Deseret News*, October 14, 1857, 255.

<sup>46</sup>Ross Ransom Rogers, Autobiography, 7. He was the attending physician when Col. William Madison Wall passed away. Provo City Cemetery, Book 1.

<sup>47</sup>The two daughters, Mary Elvira and Martha Ella, grew to maturity, but John David and the twin boys, Samuel and Lemuel, died in infancy. Family Group Record-208, LDS Ancestral File.

<sup>48</sup>David White Rogers, letter to President Brigham Young, undated but after his mission, copy in possession of the author.

<sup>49</sup>Wilford Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal, 1833-1898, Typescript*, ed. Scott G. Kenney, 9 vols. (Midvale, Utah: Signature Books, 1985), 7:140. David White Rogers was one of five patriarchs ordained at a stake conference in Provo.

<sup>50</sup>David White Rogers, letter to Susanna, Provo, May 3, 1881, copy in possession of the author; David White Rogers, letter to Mr. Joseph K. Rogers Esquire, Provo, February 22, 1881, copy in possession of the author.

<sup>51</sup>David Rogers, letter to Susanna; italics added.

<sup>52</sup>"Biography of David W. Rogers"; Family Ancestral File.