

The Mormon Experience in the Wisconsin Pineries, 1841–1845

Dennis Rowley

The genesis and rapid growth of Nauvoo, Illinois, between 1839 and 1846 is a vital and intriguing part of early Mormon history. When Joseph Smith first visited the future site of Nauvoo in the spring of 1839, he saw only a few poorly built log cabins and shanties and only one stone house.¹ By the time of the exodus west seven years later, Nauvoo was a city with an estimated population of about 12,000 people.² They had built or were building over 2,500 homes, many business establishments such as stores and mills, and numerous Church and public buildings.³ The latter included the magnificent Nauvoo Temple, a hotel, an armory, and a masonic hall. Such rapid growth required enormous amounts of labor and building materials. The steady influx of immigrant converts filled the need for labor. In 1841 it was reported that “a small cottage could be built in four to six weeks,”⁴ and four years later two hundred builders were working on the Temple, requiring six hundred support workers to supply them with lumber and stone.⁵

The need for materials, particularly lumber, was not as easily met. Lead was readily available in nearby Galena, and nails, paint, glass, bricks, and hardware could be purchased in St. Louis and Chicago. Lumber products could also be purchased, but they were scarce and expensive.⁶ Because Nauvoo was situated on the western edge of “the treeless prairies of Illinois . . . [which] did not furnish . . . the wood . . . needed for . . . buildings” and because “the limited stands of timber . . . [which had been there] had virtually disappeared before 1840,”⁷ the early settlers of Nauvoo had to make do with

Dennis Rowley is a senior librarian at Brigham Young University. He expresses appreciation to the Harold B. Lee Library and the Brigham Young University Research Office for the time and funds that made possible the on-site research for this article.

scarce, locally harvested timber or to purchase eastern lumber. The first cabins and shanties in Nauvoo were built almost entirely of logs and poles, and as late as June 1840 only a small segment of the 250 houses were of frame construction.⁸ Demand for lumber continued to outstrip local supply, and the Latter-day Saints and others continued to purchase eastern lumber until the broader opening of the Wisconsin pine forests in the early 1840s.

Lumber supplies were also inadequate in some parts of southern Wisconsin. For example, in 1836 settlers in Belmont who needed lumber for the construction of the territorial capitol had to transport it "from a tributary of the Allegheny River in Pennsylvania down the Ohio and up the Mississippi to Galena, and from there by ox team."⁹ This action was necessary because logging in Wisconsin in the 1830s and earlier was a local, small-scale enterprise, pursued with inadequate equipment and mostly inexperienced labor. The small amounts of timber sold at various points down the Mississippi were harvested by enterprising fur traders and farmers in need of an extra cash crop. These nascent lumbermen were able to move their harvest with relative ease because of their proximity to several large rivers with abundant tributaries. Those rivers in turn were tributaries of the upper Mississippi. Once the logs were afloat, they found a ready market in such riverfront settlements as Prairie du Chien and Fort Madison, where the need for lumber was constant and increasing. Some early lumbermen originated from such settlements. Joseph Rolette, a French trader living in Prairie du Chien, was such a man. In 1818 he established a mill at the falls of the Black River in order to acquire lumber for construction in the settlement. All of the earliest mills on the Wisconsin and the Black rivers, like Rolette's, were established for the express purpose of supplying Fort Crawford (Prairie du Chien) and Fort Madison with lumber. Not until 1853, however, was the annual output of Wisconsin pine sufficient to eliminate the need for eastern-grown lumber in the Mississippi Valley.¹⁰

As a result of the decision to build the Temple and the Nauvoo House simultaneously, the need for lumber in Nauvoo increased markedly early in 1841. Because of the large amounts of lumber required for these and other public buildings, the relative lack of currency in Nauvoo's barter economy with which to purchase eastern lumber, the prospects of financing part of the cost of both structures through the sale of surplus lumber in Nauvoo to individuals for personal use,¹¹ the ready supply of excess labor from newly arrived

immigrants (some with logging and milling skills), and the reports of Wisconsin lumber available virtually for the taking in the relative wilderness of the pineries, the Church decided to establish sawmills there and harvest the lumber directly.

Church leaders believed mills could be established at virtually no cost other than for mill equipment. They formed a committee to handle the fundraising and the construction of the Temple and another committee for the hotel. Lyman Wight, a convert from Ohio, and George Miller, a convert from Illinois, were principal members of both the Temple Committee and the Nauvoo House Association. Appointed to serve with them were Alpheus Cutler and Peter Haws. The costs of the pinery enterprise were to be shared equally by the two committees, which were entitled to equal shares of the harvested lumber.

For four winters, commencing in the fall of 1841 and ending in the spring of 1845, the Latter-day Saints worked the pineries, harvesting an estimated one-and-a-half million board feet of milled lumber, over two hundred thousand shingles, and an undeterminable number of loose logs, hewed timbers, and barn boards.¹² This was enough lumber to build about 215 three-bedroom houses of our day.¹³ The harvest from the pineries was floated to Nauvoo on at least a dozen rafts beginning in the spring of 1842.

To accomplish these feats, the committees operated four different mills and maintained about six logging camps to supply the mills. Their first mill was at the confluence of the Black River and Roaring Creek, about twelve miles south of the falls. Several camps supplied it. They operated three mills at the falls, two they purchased from Jacob Spaulding and one they constructed on a foundation begun by another party. Four known camps supplied these mills. Three were near the present city of Neilsville and one was southwest of Greenwood. A fourth may have been at McCleans Falls about ten miles north of the three mills, but the present name and exact location are unknown.¹⁴ All of the lumber harvested for Nauvoo was logged within approximately a forty-mile section of the Black River, stretching from the Roaring Creek confluence twelve miles south of the Black River Falls to a spot two miles southwest of Greenwood, approximately thirty miles north of the falls. The four main camps that supplied the bulk of the logs to the three mills during the two most successful seasons of 1843 and 1844 were located within a fifteen-mile stretch of river beginning about ten to twelve miles above the falls.

The two key figures in both the initial involvement of the Saints in the pineries and their subsequent success as lumbermen were Jacob Spaulding and George Miller, both of Adams County, Illinois. Spaulding's role as the principal founding father of Black River Falls, Wisconsin, has long been known; the details of his early involvement there as carpenter, millwright, promoter, entrepreneur, and wheeler-dealer make him an interesting contributor to early Wisconsin history. However, Miller's contribution to both Wisconsin and Mormon history has not been fully appreciated, especially his role as a prime moving force behind the success of the pinery experiment.

The foundation for the first meeting of the two men, establishing the nature of the initial Mormon experience in the Wisconsin pineries, was laid in 1837 in Hancock and Adams counties, Illinois, a full year before Miller, then a prosperous farmer in Adams County, converted to Mormonism; nearly a year before Joseph Smith's final departure from Kirtland, Ohio; and two years and two months before he first set eyes upon the future site of Nauvoo. In February 1837, Daniel S. Witter and John D. Mellon, business partners in Warsaw, Hancock County, Illinois, contracted with Spaulding to build a combination flour- and sawmill and to place it into successful operation in Warsaw. If the mill failed to work, Spaulding was to repair it until it did or pay the damages. On September 1, 1838, Spaulding finished work on the mill. However, Witter and Mellon filed suit in Hancock County Circuit Court in Carthage.¹⁵ Spaulding was arrested and judged to be in breach of contract, since the mill apparently had failed to function "by reason of his want of skill." Witter and Mellon felt that Spaulding had been neither consistently industrious nor attentive to his duties. They claimed \$4,000 damages in lost customers and added expense. When Spaulding agreed to repair the mill by March 1839, yet failed to perform to Witter's satisfaction a second time,¹⁶ he was found liable by a jury in October 1840 and ordered to pay \$2,500 damages plus court costs and interest. When the Adams County sheriff attempted to collect the fine, however, he was unable to find Spaulding or any of his property to attach.

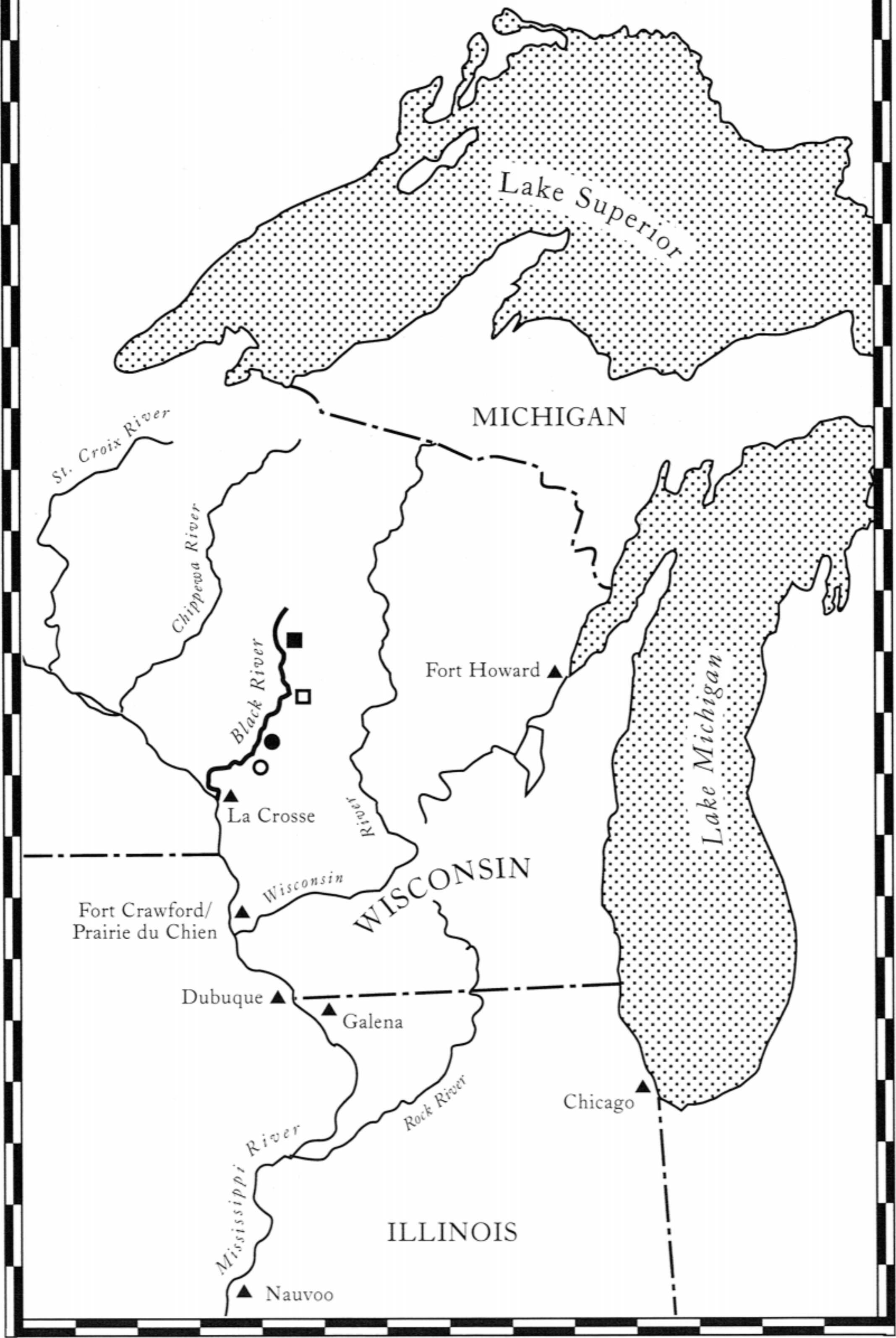
Apparently undaunted by his experience with Daniel Witter, Spaulding formed a partnership with Andrew and Robert S. Wood of Adams County, Illinois, in July 1839.¹⁷ They agreed to establish a sawmill at the falls of the Black River in Wisconsin with the Woods putting up \$500 each to buy mill irons and provisions and Spaulding contributing labor worth \$500 to build the mill at the rate of \$5 a day. Each was to own a one-third interest in the mill, and once it was

operational, Spaulding was to receive \$75 a month to manage and run it. By January 1840, Spaulding had built only a house and had returned to Illinois. In his absence, men hired independently by the Woods built a sawmill but had little success with it, later giving the cause as Spaulding's negligence, bad management, and ill-treatment of the men. In the spring, the Woods hired a new millwright and men and built a second, smaller mill near the first one. Because of dissatisfaction with Spaulding, they dissolved and disavowed the partnership. Spaulding brought suit in Prairie du Chien and charged that on June 22 they had forcibly ejected him from the larger mill, taking possession of the premises and all the books. Spaulding was reinstated by Judge James H. Lockwood.

With this litigation began nearly twenty years of suits and countersuits in which Spaulding and the Woods contended for the ownership of the mills.¹⁸ Ultimately, Spaulding won and became one of the revered founding fathers of Black River Falls, but not without successes and failures and fits and starts on both sides. In the winter of 1840–41, for example, both the Woods and Spaulding operated their mills and floated a raft of lumber downriver to Prairie du Chien, only to have the sheriff attach both rafts to satisfy suits filed by the opposite party and by some of Spaulding's numerous creditors.¹⁹ Such legal embroilment seems to have been characteristic of the way Spaulding did business. He appears to have been a man "of enterprise but generally without money," as were so many other pioneer lumbermen in Wisconsin in the 1830s.²⁰ He borrowed freely, paid back slowly, and used promissory notes as currency.²¹ From 1839 to 1850, he was involved in over thirty lawsuits in Prairie du Chien, most of the time as the defendant. He was sued by his employees, his partners, his competitors, his suppliers, and even his attorney. In Spaulding's defense, however, it must be noted that his *modus operandi* was not substantially different from that of most other pioneer lumbermen. Their employees, the individual loggers, were willing to work for food, clothing, and tools with the understanding their wages would be paid along with the operating debts when the rafts were sold in the spring. Given the conflicts with Indians and other lumbermen over timber claims, the ever-present risk of a dry year making it impossible to market the lumber, the inefficiency and breakage rate of poorly constructed early mills, the dangers of the actual river run with the raft, and buyers who did not always pay, it is a wonder any of the early lumbermen survived to enjoy more prosperous times.²²

MORMON SAWMILLS & LOGGING CAMPS
WISCONSIN PINERIES, 1841-45

- Roaring Creek
1 Mill
- Black River Falls
3 Mills
- Neillsville
3 Camps
- Greenwood
1 Camp



The Woods-Spaulling mills of 1840 were not the first built on the Black River. Joseph Rolette, a French trader of Prairie du Chien, built the first mill on the Black in 1818, and he and James Lockwood constructed a second in 1822. Colonel John Shaw also built a mill in 1819.²³ All three were located at the falls and were burned within a year by Indians, who had not yet ceded away their timber land by treaty as they did later in 1834 and 1838. Between August 1839, when Spaulding first arrived on the river, and the spring of 1845, when the Saints left the Black, at least eleven mills were built by various people at all of the sites available below and above the falls.²⁴ The Black was a popular stream very early because it was shorter and straighter than its southern neighbor, the Wisconsin. Because its mouth was eighty miles further north, the distance to the best pine country was significantly less. The Black also had fewer rapids and falls, making it a safer and easier stream for rafting.²⁵ In retrospect, given the extreme difficulty of logging on the Chippewa and the Wisconsin and the greater distance to the Chippewa and the St. Croix, the Black was the near-perfect location for the Latter-day Saints to obtain lumber in a timely and efficient manner, given their experience and background.

Beginning with a small work party of thirty-two in September 1841,²⁶ the Latter-day Saint crews working the mills and camps ranged from one hundred to possibly as high as two hundred during each of the two seasons of 1843 and 1844.²⁷ For the first group that went upriver in 1841, provisions and equipment were issued in Nauvoo. The two committees paid the bills, and Peter Haws kept the books. Both in Nauvoo and in the pineries, Haws's ledgers—simple day books with summary accounts largely missing—read like the accounts of a company store.²⁸ Workers drew provisions, supplies, equipment, and occasionally cash as needed, all of which were charged against their account. At the end of the season or whenever workers left the pineries, they were usually paid in tithing credit, temple credit, and Nauvoo House stock certificates. On rare occasions, a worker was paid in cash.

Three types of workers were employed in the pineries: semipermanent settlers (those who stayed more than one season, such as George Miller and Allen Stout), seasonal workers, and single-trippers. Joseph Holbrook was one of the latter. On May 25, 1843, he left Nauvoo with George Miller for the Black River to help bring down lumber. The day he arrived he started down the Black with Henry W. Miller on a raft. On the lake near LaCrosse, they met

Elijah Cunningham bringing a boatload of provisions upstream. Holbrook took an empty keel boat attached to the raft and transferred to Cunningham's party to help them. He returned to Nauvoo on a raft with George Miller on July 8.²⁹ Hiram W. Mikesell and his wife were examples of seasonal workers. They were employed in the pineries from October 25, 1842, to July 8, 1843, meaning that they probably returned to Nauvoo on the same raft as Joseph Holbrook. At the end of the season, they owed \$44.84 for goods drawn from the committee store. They settled their bill on March 26, 1844, and the balance due them was credited to Hiram's tithing in the amount of \$205.16 and to his wife's in the amount of \$62.50. Among the supplies they used during the eight months were three shirts; one and a quarter buckskins; sixty yards of fabric including calico, cotton flannel, and lindsey; two pairs of boots; six pairs of shoes; two pairs of mocassins; one cap; one almanac; and one dollar cash.³⁰ All of the workers drew clothing in similar amounts. In addition, many of the men were issued lead, powder, and axes.

By the time the first group from Nauvoo arrived on the river in September 1841, much had been accomplished that would contribute to the success of their four-year experience in the pineries. As a whole the Saints could draw upon their considerable logging and milling experience in New England and Ohio.³¹ Individual members of the expedition were highly skilled. Alpheus Cutler and George Miller, for example, were accomplished carpenters, Miller having worked on the construction of the University of Virginia as a young man. Henry W. Miller had owned a mill in Adams County, Illinois.³² The Saints also had some familiarity with Wisconsin. Prior to his conversion to Mormonism in Kirtland, for example, Newel K. Whitney had worked as a trader in Green Bay with the resident trader, Daniel Whitney (relationship unknown), who dealt in furs and ran a sawmill.³³ What they did not know from firsthand experience could be read in the newspapers of the region³⁴ or could be learned at least sketchily by word-of-mouth from other settlers in the area who had been to Wisconsin.

Two such men were Horatio Curts and George Crane, who lived about twenty miles from Nauvoo in Warren County, Illinois. On August 11, 1840, they struck an agreement with Jonathan and Hudson Nichols of Black River, Wisconsin Territory, to erect, operate, and improve a mill on the Black at the mouth of Roaring Creek. Each of the two parties was to put up \$100 and to share

further expenses and profits on a fifty-fifty basis.³⁵ Their site was one of the best in the lower pineries (below the falls), and their mill, though in poor condition, was a general success, still operating in 1845. In November 1841, Nathan Myrick, the trader at LaCrosse who was then on his maiden voyage to establish his trading post, met and shared a boat with a "Mr. Kurtz, a Mormon from Nauvoo" going upriver with supplies.³⁶ There is no other evidence that Curts was a Mormon, and, given Myrick's advanced age when he wrote his reminiscences and the absence of any reference to Curts's being a Mormon in Myrick's account books and other records kept at the time, it is possible that he confused Curts with members of later groups or assumed Curts was a Mormon because he lived near Nauvoo and was most likely selling lumber there.³⁷

Both the Nauvoo House Association and the Temple Committee became officially involved in the pineries sometime during the late spring or early summer of 1841 when the decision was made to buy the Crane-Curts mill.³⁸ On September 9, 1841, Alpheus Cutler, Reynolds Cahoon, Elias Higbee, George Miller, Lyman Wight, and Peter Haws signed three promissory notes, promising to pay \$1,400 by April 14, 1843, in three equal installments plus interest to John Curts and Michael Crane (who apparently had inherited the half-interest in the mill belonging to Horatio and George) in exchange for part-interest in the Roaring Creek mill, which was only twelve miles below Black River Falls.³⁹ The Saints, along with Jonathan Nichols, worked the mill during the 1841–42 season with limited success. They established several logging camps with "shanties" five miles "above"⁴⁰ (with "above" meaning either up the creek or up the river or both) and apparently scouted both Spaulding's and Woods' mills and a mill site above them at McCleans Falls. They cut and milled enough timber to send down a small raft at the close of navigation in 1841 and a larger one in October 1842,⁴¹ but they ended the season \$3,000 in debt.⁴²

They failed to pay the amount due on the promissory notes in April 1843 as scheduled, paying a total of only \$280 in 1842. As a result, Curts and Crane brought suit in Prairie du Chien on May 11, 1844, petitioning for the return of the mill. Judge Charles Dunn so ordered, but by that time, as we shall see, the Saints had traded their interest to Jacob Spaulding and had been logging above the falls in the upper pineries for two winters. They were within a year of departing from the pineries—and for some of them, from Wisconsin—for good. The experience with the Roaring Creek mill left the Saints



George Miller,
supervisor of the LDS lumbering operations in Wisconsin
(Church Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints)

much wiser about the realities of lumbering on the Black. They had learned that the best and most efficiently harvested pine was above the falls, that the Roaring Creek mill was in poor condition (and, of course, they were entitled to only half the mill time, or, if they logged together with Nichols, half the production), and that better mill sites were available farther upstream.

While the group at the Roaring Creek mill had “made but little or no lumber”⁴³ during 1841 and 1842, another year had passed and with it the need for lumber in Nauvoo had increased. In addition, their debt had to be paid. Because of his leadership abilities and his business expertise, George Miller was assigned to go to the pineries and personally oversee the operation of the mill and logging camps. Accordingly, on August 6, 1842, Daniel S. Witter gave George Miller power of attorney to collect the \$2,912 due him from Jacob Spaulding as a result of the 1840 court case in Warsaw, Illinois.⁴⁴ Detailed sources do not exist, but apparently Miller and Witter had known one another earlier in Adams County, and perhaps Spaulding’s reputation was also known to Miller, so when the discouraging report came in from the Roaring Creek mill, it was reasonable to look for a way to strike a better deal with Spaulding. In any case, armed with this claim and with the power of attorney, Miller organized and outfitted a large group of workers for the pineries. Apparently, the plan was to proceed to the Roaring Creek mill and then move provisions and equipment to Black River Falls, where they would present their claim to Spaulding and strike a deal for his mill or establish a new mill, while, at the same time, retaining possession and legal control of half-interest in the Roaring Creek mill as a backup. While the expedition was being outfitted, Miller proceeded upriver on a steamer in advance of the company. He stopped at Prairie du Chien to confirm his claim on Spaulding in the October term of the circuit court. After reaching an agreement with Spaulding for the sale or trade of his mills, Miller settled in to await the arrival of the main group from Nauvoo, who were coming up the Mississippi under the leadership of Henry W. Miller. Two weeks later the company had not arrived, so Miller left his wife in Prairie du Chien and caught a ride downriver on a large lumber raft from the St. Croix mills.⁴⁵

After meeting the company at Fulton, Illinois, on the Mississippi River, George Miller took from November 2 until December 5 to move them and most of the gear and provisions from Fulton to the mill at Roaring Creek. They proceeded first by keelboat and later

by foot and sled when the river froze. Not until December 12 was the balance of the provisions moved to the mill. The move was a bitterly cold experience with two feet of snow to walk through most of the way. Miller made two round trips on foot and despite the hardships was so deeply impressed by the beauty of the country that he wrote in his diary:

Monday, November 21: We started early—in many places, where the snow had drifted, it was almost too much for our strength to breast [*sic*] our way through it. We crossed this day a range of mountains, or rather knobs, from which, when the snow, which was occasionally falling, would permit, we could see the course of the Black River meandering its way through the hills. We fell on a beautiful valley of Prairie and dwarf timber, interspersed with occasional quaking Asp groves towering high, having conical tops and white trunks, imparting to the beautiful scenery which surrounded us that imposing grandeur so peculiarly calculated to captivate and lead the mind of the beholder to the author of our existence, and Great Architect of the universe. We made our way down this valley near the margin of a beautiful, clear, running brook, until we reached a spot near its junction with a larger stream, which stream, with its numerous tributaries which we could behold from the hills, presented one of the most beautiful prospects I ever beheld. It was the prospect of a country well suited in all respects for the various pursuits of the husbandman and also of the manufacturer, combining as it did much waterpower such as will not freeze. We took up camp on the bank of the former brook in a thick wood.⁴⁶

On December 19, Miller and eight other men journeyed upriver from Roaring Creek to Black River Falls to make “a bargain with Mr. Spaulding for half of his mills, as before agreed upon.”⁴⁷ After some hesitation on Spaulding’s part and the necessity of showing him, as Miller put it, that they “would not be trifled with” by making plain their intent to build a mill at McCleans Falls if Spaulding failed to sell, the bargain was struck on December 22 for sole ownership of both mills. Seven days later they had moved some families to the falls and were repairing and building shanties to house them. On December 31, 1842, they began preparing logs for the mills. The next day they started the new year by formally taking possession of the mills and the premises. Twelve days later they sent men and teams to move Spaulding to their old site, having sold (or traded) their half-interest in the Roaring Creek mill to him.⁴⁸

Such a rapid and relatively smooth transfer of ownership raises the question of why Spaulding, who apparently battled so fiercely with the Woods for possession of the mills, so readily sold out to the Mormons and seemingly allowed himself to be out-maneuvered.

Actually, he did not own the Black River Falls mills outright, so he could not legally convey a clear title. Since May 1841, by order of the circuit court, the Wood brothers had held a lien against the mills. Spaulding was to pay off the lien at the rate of 40,000 feet of lumber every May first.⁴⁹ He had made the first payment and was due to pay the second one four months after Miller and the others took possession. Spaulding also gained because, as a part of the sale, Miller signed a statement that he had received full satisfaction for the Witter debt and the Mormons agreed to pay Spaulding \$20,000 in addition,⁵⁰ payable in lumber, which he could use to pay off his debt to the Wood brothers. Spaulding also got rid of two poorly built, poorly functioning mills, which had apparently never paid the expense of operating them. He lacked the Saints' sense of mission, and had he refused to sell, he would have had to face the additional difficulty of upstream competition from these intense, purposeful people. Moreover, he received their interest in the Roaring Creek mill, almost in exchange, so he was still in business. This mill was also under a cloud because the Mormons did not own their share outright, owing Crane and Curts a balance of \$1,118 plus interest to remove their lien. Given such conditions, it is not surprising that apparently neither party to these two transactions registered the sale and exchange in Prairie du Chien. And finally, given his experience, Spaulding was probably more aware of the legal status of the land in the pineries than were the Mormons, who believed the Indians when they said the timber still belonged to them.⁵¹

On balance, it would appear that Spaulding was not outmaneuvered and that he may have succeeded in "trifling" with the Saints after all. They obtained the lumber needed in Nauvoo, but as with all other lumber harvested in large amounts at that time, it was acquired under questionable legal circumstances. The land in the pineries had not been surveyed and offered for sale. Hence it was illegal to cut and mill large amounts of timber unless, under the 1820 preemption law, one intended to settle permanently on the land.⁵² Both the Mormons (by at least the fall of 1843) and Spaulding had such intentions.⁵³ But they undoubtedly cut lumber on more acreage than was legal under the law. In this infraction they were no different in their attitude and actions than most other Americans of the time who believed they had a right to timber on public land. Robert Fries wrote, "No westerner regarded trespass as a serious crime. To take trees from the public domain was no more immoral than it was to float a canoe on a public river. Agricultural settlers and lumbermen

of undoubted integrity had no scruples whatever about 'visiting Uncle Sam' to get some wood."⁵⁴

The first concern of the Latter-day Saints after arriving at Black River Falls was to sustain life of both man and beast. Oxen and horses were vital to successful lumbering. They were used to drag logs to the streams on which the logs could be floated to the mills. It was imperative that the animals be properly fed and sheltered, especially in the winter months. The Saints had no oats, but hay was plentiful in meadows to the north and south, although it had to be cut and hauled, placing additional strain on the stock. If frequent trips were to be avoided, the hay had to be stockpiled in stacks. A crude barn was available, which the men repaired and expanded to protect the stock from the freezing temperatures. The winters of 1842–43 and 1843–44 were severe, and three oxen died from exposure the first winter.⁵⁵

The people also required substantial amounts of nourishing food in order to live and work in such severe conditions. Because they were a great distance from their main source of supply and the winter snows were heavy, according to Miller, they had to "draw on sleds, and carry by back loads the principal supplies for men and animals."⁵⁶ This need increased the value of the animals, without which it would have been impossible to transport sufficient provisions and equipment to sustain the operation. Even with the help of the stock, the Saints were barely able to sustain life through the winter. Miller wrote that "it was all we could do to keep our families and cattle from perishing for want of food."⁵⁷ When the Saints could get through the snow, they could purchase some supplies in LaCrosse from trader Nathan Myrick in exchange for lumber, but even with Myrick's help they experienced difficult times.⁵⁸ Elmira Pond Miller, wife of Henry W. Miller, who was there through the winter of 1842–43 with her five children, remembered those times:

Before spring opened our provisions gave out and we had only potatoes and salt for several weeks. It would have been a great trial to me to hear my children cry for bread and have none to give them, but I was spared that, for the Lord over-ruled their minds insomuch that when told we had no bread and no flour to make any they did not even ask for it. The baby was only fourteen months old, but when the flour came he could not wait for it to be baked, but wanted a piece of dough. One of our daughters never ate a potato before in her life, and when she came to the table, she would look so sorrowful but never uttered a word of complaint.⁵⁹

Allen Joseph Stout, a carpenter, remembered similar experiences from the 1843–44 season: “About the last of Mar. [1844] our provisions gave out, so as to leave us quite hungry. Some ate an ox after he had been dead three weeks, and I cut of [*sic*] a piece and salted it and set it away but it stank so that it made me sick, and just as I was done fixing my stinking meat, two sled loads of flour hove in sight, so I did not eat any of that old carcas [*sic*].”⁶⁰

The common fare and mainstays in their diet were salt pork, flour, and potatoes. They augmented that diet with game and fish whenever possible and with fruits, nuts, berries, and maple syrup in season. Life improved after the first season, when those who stayed planted gardens. They sowed winter wheat in 1843 and harvested 500 bushels the next summer.

If Miller and that first crew were going to survive and be able to work, shelter and adequate clothing were as essential as food. Several crude shanties constructed of logs, mud, and rocks were standing when they arrived. These they immediately and steadily improved, adding lumber floors and partitions. They also built additional shanties and cabins, some of them two stories with relatively large amounts of milled lumber used in their construction. By the 1843–44 season, Allen Stout’s main job was “building houses for the company to winter in.”⁶¹ Some clothing was issued before the group left Nauvoo, but some of the men were not prepared to work in the snow and cold. Along with his frequent diary entries about the subzero temperatures, Miller makes frequent reference to the need for shoes. Beginning on December 6, 1842, and for many nights thereafter, Miller was up all night making shoes for the men, presumably using some of the hide from those oxen that had died. By the end of the first season at the falls, he had constructed a shoe factory next to his living quarters. He worked regularly to keep the men supplied with footgear and also did some sewing (a common practice among lumberjacks of that time and later). The women joined him in sewing, mending, and washing.

In some aspects, the pineries settlement was an early example of Mormon communal living. Provisions and equipment were issued in Nauvoo, with Peter Haws keeping the books. After arrival in the pineries, Haws continued to run a type of “company store” from which the members of the company could draw as needed.⁶² Allen Stout described the communal aspects in a letter to his brother Hosea on September 13, 1843:

We hav gon in to the whole law of God on Black river that is every man has given a scedule of his property to the bishop and we have all things common according to the law in the book of covenants every man has his own goods to do what he pleases with the thing is we are all on an equality eve man fars alike labours alike eats drinks wares alike but at the same time he lives to himself and what he has he has to himself and at his own controll I have bin thus perticular because of the many falce reports gon out.

Hosea when you transcribe the above give my respects to our conexion in general and make out a full letter with such teachings as will be beneficial and sign my name to it time and paper fails see brother Hawley for further information send me some sage if you can and garden seeds.⁶³

Practically as soon as the first group from Nauvoo arrived at the falls, and even concurrent with efforts to sustain life, men were put to work cutting trees, hauling logs, and repairing the mills. The condition of the buildings and equipment at the falls supported the opinion of Spaulding's ability as a millwright held by Witter and Mellon in 1838. Excerpts from Miller's diary tell a story of hard work and hardship:

Jan. 3, 1843. This morning the mercury is at 22 degrees below zero. All of us were engaged as before. The pitman of our saw mill broke today.

Jan. 4, 1843. I proposed to make a move to get all the logs that we could with part of the hands to stock the mills, and four or five of us set to work and put the two mills that have been sawing in thorough repair, they having been so badly constructed, in the application of water, that they had never paid the expense of running them. We also proposed to complete the third mill, which was already in a state of forwardness, but Brother Henry Miller opposed me so arbitrarily that I gave way. Nevertheless, Brother Pawkit and I began to get timber to complete the mill partly erected. The others were engaged as yesterday, except one man, who started on a new pitman for the mill. Weather moderating.

Jan. 5, 1843. This day we were severally engaged as yesterday. Two men, however, worked on the pitman and got it in, but the mill would scarcely saw at all. We had Mr. Avery commence work with us today. Brother Abraham Monseer and myself are engaged of evening tailoring and shoemaking.

Jan. 6, 1843. We were engaged as before, except four of us, who are at work in putting all three mills in thorough repair. We also keep one man sawing.

Jan. 21, 1843. We all worked on the tail race, which had become filled with stones falling in by the abrasion of the water, and also put the flutter wheel of our new mill into its place.

Jan. 23, 1843. Yesterday the head-gate gave way, letting the water in on the works of our new mill, the river having risen over two feet. We fixed in a temporary head-gate and partially repaired the water-gate, which was badly made and out of repair. We put one team and sled to hauling logs, and started the small mill to sawing. This has been frozen up ever since we bought the mills. We find it a poor concern, but will, however, run it until we get time to overhaul it. Two hands are engaged in piling lumber and working on the railroad.⁶⁴

Feb. 2, 1843. Part of the men began repairing the dam of the small mill, which was erected over a brook and was so injured by the winter frost that it became necessary to make many repairs on it before letting the water in from the river, which we are nearly ready to do, it being necessary to keep up a head, the brook not being sufficient.⁶⁵

These early mills were mostly opened-sided shanties, with a long up-and-down saw blade called a gate or mulay saw.⁶⁶ Circular saws, which had ten percent more output, did not come into general use in Wisconsin until the 1850s.⁶⁷ The wheel, rotated by the moving water, turned an offset shaft (much like those which cause merry-go-round horses to rise and fall), which alternately lifted and dropped the long, half-inch thick saw blade. The blade, held straight and rigid in a ponderous and heavy frame, cut only on the downstroke. Nonetheless, such a mill had a capacity of 4,000 to 5,000 feet of lumber a day. Since the Saints had four saws going at one time, they were capable, despite the primitive conditions and their relative inexperience, of turning out large amounts of lumber in a short time. Their daily output in the spring of 1843 was over 12,000 feet.⁶⁸ They supplied the mills by working four known logging camps, three near the present city of Neilsville and one southwest of Greenwood. Because they were among the earliest loggers on the river, they could easily fill their needs by cutting only the largest and choicest pines growing closest to the streams, some of which "were large enough to produce from four to five thousand board feet of lumber." Compare this size to that of trees harvested thirty years later when "three hundred board feet was considered average."⁶⁹ They were proud of their productivity. When George Miller arrived in Nauvoo on July 18, 1843, with a raft of 157,000 feet of lumber and 13,000 feet in shingles, Willard Richards reported the event in a letter to Brigham Young:

He says it was all sawed in two weeks and brought down in two more; says he has bought all the claims on those mills for \$12,000 payable in lumber at the mills in three years, one third already paid for. Two saws did this job. Chance for as many mills as they may have a mind

to build, and every saw can run five thousand feet per day, year round. Two saws now running, can deliver 157,000 every fortnight.⁷⁰

Such success was not without its price in frustration, mishap, injury, and death. On January 24, 1843, Miller recorded some typical difficulties in his diary:

Brother Pawkit came down from McClean's Falls, having injured a cross-cut saw by falling a tree on it. He came down to have it repaired. He informed us that the team at McClean's Falls had run out of hay, and that the ice on the river, where it has not broken up, is not sufficient to bear the oxen, they being on the opposite side from, and 10 miles above, our house, and that there was no road by which we might haul hay to them at the falls. We shall, therefore, have to bring them down and swim them across at the falls to the side of the hay, until we can do better.⁷¹

Later that spring, while driving logs in preparation for rafting on the creek that would ever after bear his name, Elder Elijah Cunningham "got in a whirl in the river and was seen no more."⁷² Such a drowning was typical of the dangers encountered by early loggers: "Even the most skillful riverman fell from his perch occasionally, and if he was caught under a mass of logs or in a whirlpool, his comrades were helpless to save him; he drowned before their very eyes."⁷³

In addition to such tragedies and in spite of success, the pinery Saints were frustrated by Nauvoo's rapid growth. At the end of the second season, they were not keeping up with the demand for lumber. On April 27, 1843, Miller wrote to Newel K. Whitney that a Mr. Thomas Weston had 55,000 feet of lumber that they could purchase for \$12 per thousand.⁷⁴ Later, in the summer of 1843 and the spring of 1844, the company had produced so much lumber there seemed to be a temporary surplus; their frustrations took on a different note when they learned that the lumber they had sacrificed to produce as virtual building-missionaries for the Temple and the Nauvoo House was being used to build houses in Nauvoo. Despite their own use of lumber to build houses in the pineries, they perceived the private use of the lumber in Nauvoo as misuse. In the spring of 1844, they expressed their dissatisfaction in person and in several letters to the leading authorities of the Church.⁷⁵

The hard work of the pineries was not limited to logging and milling. Once harvested, the lumber had to be transported to Nauvoo. Transport was accomplished by constructing large rafts, made entirely of milled lumber or timber or, in some cases, of logs and floating the rafts down the Black and Mississippi to Nauvoo.

Although rafting had been a common practice in New England for years, it was a relatively new experience for the Latter-day Saints and for most Wisconsin lumbermen. According to Robert Fries, "Several methods of constructing log rafts were devised. In the early days a raft that was to travel only a short distance was held together by a rope fastened with half hitches to plugs driven into holes in the logs. If the trip was a longer one, the raft was locked together by poles laid across its width and wedged into holes in the logs."⁷⁶

Steering oars or rudders were fastened to both ends of the raft, enabling the crew to maneuver it in the current. To steer the raft one direction or the other, the operator dipped the oar by swinging it over his head and then, "as he walked in a short arc, surged upon it at every step until the stroke was completed. The raft was brought to a stop by means of a heavy rope, one end of which was secured to a tree on the riverbank. With the aid of a snubbing device set up on the deck, the rope was gradually paid out at diminishing speed until the raft had been carried to the shore."⁷⁷

Temporary lumber shanties were built on board the rafts to shelter the crew from the weather. There was also a cook shack. The larger rafts, usually several hundred feet in length, a hundred or more feet in width, and an acre or more in area, were not easy to get downstream and were potentially hazardous to those on the raft and the shore alike, not to mention other river travelers in small crafts such as skiffs and keelboats. "Every rapids, every dam, every pier and boom below a mill was a potential danger to . . . [the raft] on the way to market."⁷⁸ Depending on the weather conditions, the trip to Nauvoo took a week or two with stops at night to snub the raft to a tree or two. Even though Lyman Wight described the Black as "rapid and unnavigable" in an 1844 letter to Joseph Smith, there is no record of any loss of life, lumber, or rafts by the the Saints while engaged in rafting.⁷⁹

Once the mills were running smoothly and life's necessities were provided, the pinery Saints directed their attention to the permanence of their settlement and the finer things of life. From the first Sunday of their arrival in the pineries, they began holding Church services and fast days, inviting the Indians and other loggers to attend, and doing missionary work whenever possible. Creature comforts were also important. Upon arrival at the Roaring Creek mill in December 1842, Henry W. Miller, who had a wife and five children to worry about, immediately went to work constructing bedsteads.⁸⁰ After a good season, while he was returning to the

pineries the following July, George Miller traded sixty-two dollars' worth of pine lumber to Mr. H. McNeal of Prairie de Chien for "a lot of feathers . . . to make beds for our lumbermen."⁸¹ By the fall of 1843, Joseph Smith had decided to make the mills a permanent establishment. Accordingly, Miller procured a herd of cattle, including oxen, milk cows, and calves, and drove them up the river from Nauvoo. The following spring, Lyman Wight sent a man to Nauvoo to get a herd of sheep.⁸² Partly as a result of the new spirit of permanence, people at the pineries began living more normal, fuller lives, including getting married and having children. One pair of honeymooners, Allen and Elizabeth Stout were in the 1843–44 company,⁸³ and three of Lyman Wight's children, a son and two daughters, were married in a triple wedding on February 6, 1844, one of the daughters marrying George Miller's son.⁸⁴ The following letter, written by Allen Stout to his brother Hosea in Nauvoo on September 10, 1843, is reproduced here in full because it gives remarkable insight into the full breadth of the pinery experience, including social life. It is a common man's uncommon view of a distant time and place.

Wisconsin Territory Black River

Sept. 10, 1843

Dear brothers, sisters, and friends:

We are all well and in the best country between the Alegany and Rockemountains or Atlantic and Pacific oceans this country is extreamly varied with rich and poor land some sandy planes with all most no vegetation some covered with pine popler huckel and crambury oak dogwood &c. Some high mountains with immense quantities of stonne scrub pine hemlock seeder and some rich planes as any in Handcock or Adams counties with scatteren pine oak &c. Some bottom land with immense quantities of large pine hard mapel white and black walnut cherry oak elm ash goosbury plums choak cherry grapevine prickly ash alder and shewmake some good oak barren land. Black river runs a west course and some places is very raped others excedingly deep the water black but pure her tributaries clere as crystel this is the greatest water privilege I ever saw the rive has the rapidest kind of a fall and the dam is at the head of the falls and there is a natchrel race cut a round rock that forms the foar bay at the loer end of which the mill stands from thence there is a race cut ryart on down to the foot of the rapids there is a small creek empties in rite opesite the race of the big mil on which there is a small saw and grist mill turning lathe and grinstone this creek is as good and as cold water as any spring and soft to wash in the big mill runs 2 saws and there is water pour anuff to run all creation the river being navigable

for keals at low water we have 2 or 3 acres of good potatoes some turnips capbages tomates pumpkins squashes and are now sowing wheat and are like to get in 30 or 40 acres.

I have bin at carpenter work all the time and expect to continue every man lives to himself we have one boarder I have got me a frame house one story and a half high sixteen feet square with two loos floors and a petition and a most half sealed I work every od moment on my house I live rite by the railroad which runs from the mill to the foot of the rapids on both sides of which the slabs are piled up as high as a house I have lengthned the railrodd 2 bents since I came and expects to put 2 more on soon

Hezekiah and me are on one lot Sires Danels and me are the principle carpenters so far I will make room for any of you if you wil come I have lots of house room and I can make more in 3 days any time lumber is plenty timber is no object here brother Hawley and Bird are bishop Millers council they have taken a schedule of every mans property to make a general distrabution brother Liman works like a slave as fat as he is he has ritten an epistel which you wil likely see and you may see a letter from Siras Danels to Turley for furthe instruction if Benj Hoseas or uncle Jim Pace thinks they can go the caper of concecration and equality we wish you to come by all means and bring all the tools you can the law of black river is he that will not work shal not eat I and Siras are a going to build us a shop to work in we live on joining lots.

the 2 saws will cut ~~out~~ 10000 feet in 24 hours we are a going to put up 2 more mills Bare are plenty and deer elk and buffalow are to be found and no end to fish you may think that I exgerate but just ask brother Geor Miller Elizabeth sends her respects to uncle jim aunt Loucinda and all the rst of her friends She is well satisfied tel newberries girl and Elizabeth Meeks that we would like to see them here tel them to write to us and tel us if they are married tel David and Eliza and Sarah Taylor and Joseph that there is a good chance to get married here Hosea I want you to copy of the foregoing togeher with the description of this country and of the mills and as much doctrial pints as you can get in a letter and direct it to Louis Kirkpatrick Cerce Post., White Co Ack (imediately.

I need some tools the worst way I wish you would spare me a smoothning plane if you have 2 as there is not one her we have no match plains nor rasp tools but I think you wil come and bring them for this wil surely be a general place of gethren for it is an easy place to get to from europe being only 100 miles to green bay.⁸⁵

Most of the Saints left the pineries at the death of Joseph Smith, but the mills were retained and operated during the 1844–45 season. At the end of that season, Spaulding purchased the mills for “a few hundred thousand feet of pine lumber,” a “mere trifle” according to George Miller.⁸⁶ A group of pinery Saints under Lyman Wight’s

leadership settled temporarily south of LaCrosse in 1845 and did some lumbering for Nathan Myrick, but as indicated earlier, their story is more a part of Wight's apostasy from Mormonism under Brigham Young than it is of the pinery experience.⁸⁷ Various members of the pinery expedition formed such strong attachments to either Wisconsin or to their leaders—George Miller, Alpheus Cutler, Lyman Wight—that they later severed their ties with the main body of the Church and settled in Wisconsin or Texas. This additional product of the pineries—apostasy—was also important. But its overall development and outcome as a story lie outside the limits of this study of how the Saints became involved in the pineries and the kinds of experiences they had there.

Viewed in retrospect, the pinery expedition fulfilled its purposes. The lumber needed by the Church was harvested at a fraction of what it would have cost in Illinois. The pinery Saints contributed to the upbuilding of Nauvoo and established relatively congenial relations with residents of Wisconsin. To be sure, there were some mild confrontations with the Indians, with Indian traders selling whiskey, and with speculators attempting to preempt and sell timber claims. George Miller was summoned to court in Prairie du Chien in 1843 and 1844 as a codefendant with Spaulding in the Woods' continuing effort to wrest the mill site at Black River Falls from Spaulding's—and during 1843–45, the Saints'—control.⁸⁸ But the Saints were gone long before this twenty-year lawsuit was finally laid to rest. Given all of the above, no contemporaneous source supports the story of armed conflict in a so-called "Mormon War" which exists most prominently in the folklore of Black River Falls and Jackson and Clark counties.⁸⁹ It is likely a tale that Spaulding told and retold in his old age (and that others augmented) in order to aggrandize himself and his role in the origin and development of Black River Falls. That way he could sweeten the sometimes bitter memory of the three seasons when those Mormon "sharpies" did him out of so much prime timber that he could have sold at a profit, especially if he could have devised a way to convince hundreds of people to log and mill and raft for a "holy cause" with little more to show for their efforts than the assurance that they were stockholders in the Nauvoo House Association or the satisfaction of having tithing and temple credit in a ledger book in Nauvoo.

APPENDIX

This list of names of known pinery workers and their families was compiled from various sources, including a manuscript history of the Nauvoo Temple by Earl Arrington in the LDS Church Archives and in the Arrington Papers, Archives and Manuscripts, Harold B. Lee Library; records compiled by the Jackson County Historical Society in Black River Falls, Wisconsin; the Peter Haws Pinery Account Books in the LDS Church Archives; The Historical Record; and various other manuscript sources. The list is not complete and the spelling of some of the names is uncertain. It has not yet been possible to determine with any precision the period each person worked in the pineries.

Adams, Henry	Curtis, Mitchell
Adams, John	Curtis, Stephen
Allaby, John	Curtis, William
Allen, O. M.	Cutler, Alpheus
Allred, Preserved	Cutter, William S.
Alred, Riley	Dale, Timothy
Anderson, Blakely	Daniels, Cyrus
Avery, Mr.	Davis, David
Baly, Amos	Davis, Mr.
Bird, Charles	Dunlap, Joseph
Bird, George	Durfee, Jabez
Bird, Phineas R.	Egbert, Robert
Black, James M.	Evans, Horace
Brown, James	Everett (Everts), Milo
Brown, William	Fife, John
Cankins, Truman W.	Flack, J. M.
Carter, Matilda	Flack, James M.
Chase, Ezra	Flemm, B.
Chase, George W.	Follet, William A.
Child, Mrs. N.	Franklin, William
Child, Nathaniel	Gaylord, Mr.
Childs, Miss	Gaylord, Mrs.
Clarks, Bohan	Gibbs, D. S.
Clayton, David	Goodale, Joseph D.
Clyde, George W.	Goodelle, Joseph
Cockings, Numan H.	Hawley, Grover
Coltrin, P.	Hawley, Pierce
Conover, Peter W.	Haws, Alpheus
Coray, George	Haws, Peter
Culett, Sylvester	Head, William
Cunningham, Elijah H.	Heath, R. F.
Curtis, Eliza	Hicks, Robert T.
Curtis, Marcham	Higbee, E.

Hoffman
 Houston, James
 Huffman, Andrew
 Hulett, Sylvester
 Jenkins, Ralph
 Jenkins, Samuel
 Jenkins, Thomas
 Jenkins, William Johnson
 Jones, David
 Jones, M. A.
 Kite, John
 Lake, Elisha
 Larkins, Luman H.
 Lent, Henry H.
 Lewis, James
 Lewis, Tarleton
 Menelds
 Mikesell, Mrs. H.,
 Mikesell, Hiram W.
 Miles, Ira T.
 Miller, Alma
 Miller, Elizabeth
 Miller, Mrs. Elmire P.
 Miller, George
 Miller, Henry William
 Miller, John
 Miller, Joshua
 Miller, Lucy
 Miller, Mary
 Miller, Mrs. Mary Catherine
 Miller, Rosina Minerva
 Miller, Ruth Ann
 Miller, William Henry
 Monroe, David
 Monseer, Abraham
 Moor, Esther A.
 More, Ethen A.
 Morris, Jacob
 Names, John
 Oaks, Reuben
 Olmstead, Asa
 Outhouse, John
 Outhouse, Joseph
 Owens, Horace B.
 Pawkett, Octavus

Pern, Albert
 Pew, Albert
 Pew, Alfred
 Plumb, Aaron
 Potter, Martin
 Ralph, Ianthus
 Ralph, James
 Rockwell, Horace
 Rogers, Noah
 Rogers, Prussel
 Rogers, Russell
 Shotwell, James
 Sloan, Albert
 Smith, Anna C.
 Smith, Moses
 Smith, Spencer
 Southwick, Noah
 Spaldin, David
 Sprague, Harry
 Standing, John
 Steward, A. F.
 Steward, L. L.
 Stewart, R. R.
 Stuard, Bard
 Stuart, Franklin
 Taylor, John
 Teasdale, Joseph A.
 Thompson, Henry
 Thorn, Richard (Jr.)
 Umstead, Asa Olmsted
 Walker, Hugh
 Wight, Anna Christina
 Wight, Mrs. Harriet
 Wight, Laomi Lemhi
 Wight, Levi Lamoni
 Wight, Lyman
 Wight, Lyman Lehi
 Wight, Matilda Darter
 Wight, Orange Lysander
 Wilcox, S. A. (Silas)
 Willings, Edwin
 Willson, Henry H.
 Wilson, Hardin
 Woodworth, Lucian
 Young, John

NOTES

¹ Joseph Smith, Jr., *The History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1956), 3:375; hereafter cited as *HC*.

² This figure is based on census information of the state of Illinois and the Church's as well as Joseph Smith's personal estimate in January 1843, as cited and developed in Susan Easton Black, "New Insights Replace Old Traditions: Membership of the Church in Nauvoo, 1839–1846" (Paper delivered at the Nauvoo Symposium, Provo, Utah, 1989).

³ *Daily Missouri Republican*, October 2, 1846, cited in Cecil McGavin, *Nauvoo the Beautiful* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1946), 255–56.

⁴ *Millennial Star*, cited in Robert Bruce Flanders, *Nauvoo: Kingdom on the Mississippi* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965), 74–75.

⁵ McGavin, *Nauvoo the Beautiful*, 43. See also MSS. 1374, Archives and Manuscripts, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, for original Ann Pitchforth letter of April 23, 1845.

⁶ An indication of the scarcity of fence rails as well as lumber can be seen in the five cases of wood and timber theft that were tried before the Nauvoo High Council between April 1840 and July 1841; Theodore Turley was convicted for "taking the lumber from the boat without leave" (Nauvoo High Council Minutes, Archives Division, Church Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City [hereafter cited as LDS Church Archives], April 12, May 2, and August 8, 1840, and February 6 and July 4, 1841). See also Joseph Smith to Edward Hunter, Nauvoo, December 21, 1841, in which he states that lumber had to be "brought twenty miles" and that many more new buildings "would have arisen, if brick and lumber could have been obtained" (*HC* 4:481–82).

⁷ Robert F. Fries, *Empire in Pine: The Story of Lumbering in Wisconsin, 1830–1900* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1951), 5.

⁸ Flanders, *Nauvoo*, 50–51.

⁹ Fries, *Empire in Pine*, 8.

¹⁰ Fries, *Empire in Pine*, 22. See also n. 12 below.

¹¹ Flanders, *Nauvoo*, 152–55, is the only source I have found to hold that the surplus lumber was intended for sale to individuals in the Nauvoo trade. Compare the strong negative reaction of George Miller and Lyman Wight in 1843 and the spring of 1844 over the diversion of lumber to private construction (*HC* 6:255–60; and *Correspondence of Bishop George Miller with the Northern Islander*, comp. Wingfield Watson [Burlington, Wis., 1916], June 27, 1855, 15 [hereafter cited as *Miller Correspondence*]; originally contributed to the *Northern Islander*, August 9–October 18, 1855). If private use of lumber was part of the original plan, apparently Miller and Wight were not so informed. But, in a seeming paradox, they used milled lumber in the pineries to build private dwellings. Admittedly, they took this action in part to keep from freezing to death, but log cabins probably would have been warmer. Allen Stout's description of two-story framed lumber dwellings suggests plans for a permanent settlement and a "free enterprise" attitude, at least partially incongruous with Miller's and Wight's status as building missionaries for the Temple (Allen Stout letters to Hosea Stout, July 25, September 10 and 13, 1843, in Hosea Stout Diary, Supplement, typescript, MOR/M270.1/St76/V.5, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; hereafter

cited as Allen Stout letters). Stout's references to framed lumber dwellings are in the September 10 letter.

¹²These figures are based upon a conglomeration of sources including diaries, letters, and various Church publications. At best, the figure is an educated guess.

¹³Estimates from Al Jenkins, carpenter, Utah Timber and Coal Co., and Steve Soderquist, carpenter, both of Provo, Utah.

¹⁴According to several early sources, there is general agreement on the existence of the following thirteen mills during the time period the Saints were in the pineries. Many others are not listed here because their existence was not certain, their location is not known, their date of establishment is not clear, or they lasted only a short time (such as those built by Joseph Rolette, James Lockwood, and Colonel John Shaw in 1818, 1822, and 1819 respectively and burned by Indians within a year). All dates are drawn from Hotchkiss, 445 (see below), and Amos Elliott to Ellis Usher (see below), or from the Diary of George Miller in H. W. Mills, "De Tal Palo Tal Astilla," in *Annual Publications*, vol. 10 (Historical Society of Southern California, 1917); hereafter cited as Miller Diary, and Records of the Circuit Court, Crawford County Court House, Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, various cases, as noted later. The mills are listed as they appear going up the Black starting from its confluence with the Mississippi at La Crosse.

1. William and Thomas Douglas, twenty-five or thirty miles upstream on the west side.
2. Jonathan and Hudson Nichols, twelve miles below the falls on the west side on Nichols Creek, also called Roaring Creek, 1840. The Nichols may have been former employees of Spaulding or the Woods brothers. They established the mill on Roaring Creek in partnership with Horatio Curts and George Crane of Warren County, Illinois. The Church purchased half-interest in this mill in September 1841 from a John Curts and Michael Crane (relationship to former partners of same surname unknown) and worked it in partnership with Jonathan Nichols during 1841 and 1842. They traded their half-interest in this mill to Jacob Spaulding in December 1842.
3. Andrew Shepard and John Valentine, three miles below the falls, 1841.
4. James O'Neil, just above Shepard and Valentine on the east bank.
5. Jacob Spaulding, at the falls, two mills, 1840 and 1841. Ownership contested by Andrew and Robert S. Wood until 1861. Spaulding sold his interest in these mills to the Church in December 1842 and bought them back in late 1845.
6. George Miller and company, at the falls, January 1843. They completed this mill, which had been started by someone else—probably Spaulding or the Woods brothers—and sold it to Spaulding in late 1845.
7. John Levy, on Levy's Creek just above the falls, 1845.
8. Thomas and Peter Hall, on Hall's Creek, 1842.
9. John Morrison, on Morrison's Creek, 1845(?).
10. Myrick and Miller, on the West Fork of the Black, a mile above the fork itself, 1846.

11. H. McCollins, Cunningham Creek, 1845(?).
12. James O'Neil, O'Neil Creek (Perry Creek); 1839–40.

See Nathan Myrick, Reminiscences written in a letter to F. A. Copeland, January 28, 1892, MS/F902L14/MY, SHSW; George W. Hotchkiss, *History of the Lumber and Forest Industry of the Northwest* (Chicago: George W. Hotchkiss, 1898); Minnie Jones Taylor, "History of Black River Falls to 1940," typescript, River Falls SC82, 6; and Amos Elliott to Ellis Usher, May 1913, MS/F902B62/El. All of these sources are located in the Division of Archives and Manuscripts, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison; hereafter cited as SHSW. For the locations of the Mormon mills and camps, see the map accompanying this article.

¹⁵Records of the Circuit Court, Crawford County Court House, Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, Case S-16. The details of the *Witter v. Spaulding* case in Hancock County discussed in this and the following paragraph are taken from depositions found in this case file; hereafter cited as Circuit Court Records. Photocopies of the circuit court records consulted for this article are available in the Wisconsin Pineries Manuscript Collection, MSS. 1602, Archives and Manuscripts, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University. The originals are housed in the SHSW.

¹⁶At Spaulding's second trial, his attorney claimed that the plaintiffs failed to provide a house for Spaulding and an 18-cents-a-day tool allowance as promised in the September 1838 revised contract and, therefore, he was justified in not keeping his end of the bargain. He also charged that the court lacked jurisdiction since the agreement was made in Adams County. The site of the mill is not given, although the context suggests Warsaw, where Witter had an operating steam mill in the fall of 1839 (see *HC* 4:470–71).

¹⁷The details of the Woods–Spaulding partnership and legal suits are drawn primarily from Circuit Court Records, cases S.29 and W.64, MSS. 1602.

¹⁸Circuit Court Records, the 1848 depositions in case S.29; and George Gale, "When the Mormons Settled in Jackson County," *Black River Falls Banner Journal*, June 21, 1939, both in MSS. 1602.

¹⁹Circuit Court Records, cases W.17, S.24, W.16, and W.56, MSS. 1602. These rafts are sufficient evidence to invalidate the loose claims made by some that the Latter-day Saints pioneered rafting on the Black River—at least not if *pioneered* means they were the first to use rafts to move logs and lumber to market. The Saints clearly were members of the pioneering generation of rafters on the Black, but they were not the first. See Fries, *Empire in Pine*, 55; and Malcolm J. Rohrbough, *The Trans-Appalachian Frontier: People, Societies, and Institutions, 1775–1850* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 339–40. John Shaw also rafted lumber on the Black in 1820. See John Shaw, Manuscript Biography, Wis/MSS/M, p. 4, SHSW; see also a primary source for this biography, Col. John Shaw, "Shaw's Narrative," in *Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin*, ed. Lyman Copeland Draper, vol. 2 (Madison, Wis., 1903), 197–232; hereafter cited as John Shaw biography.

²⁰Fries, *Empire in Pine*, 11.

²¹Circuit Court Records, cases W.64 and C.23, MSS. 1602. For example, in the October 1841 term, Spaulding was sued for failure to pay a \$679 bill for provisions and equipment he had purchased in Quincy, Illinois, prior to leaving on his first trip to the pineries.

²²Fries, *Empire in Pine*, 13–16.

²³Peter L. Scanlan Papers, Platteville MSS. D, box 7, folder 5, SHSW; John Shaw biography; and Taylor, "History of Black River Falls to 1940," 6. See also n. 14.

²⁴ See n. 14.

²⁵ Taylor, "History of Black River Falls to 1940," 22; and Fries, *Empire in Pine*, 17–18.

²⁶ I have found no record of how many people left Nauvoo in September. The Wisconsin Territorial Census of 1842, taken in June and July, lists forty-one people at Roaring Creek. Family head Jonathan Nichols accounted for eight white males and one white female. The Nauvoo party, listing N. Childs as their family head and specifically listing Cutler, Haws, and Miller as members, accounted for thirty white males and two white females.

²⁷ A list of names of some of the people who went to the pineries is in the appendix to this article.

²⁸ For the Haws Account Books, see LDS Church Archives, MS/d/781/6, C4989/L.C. and C4743. From an analysis of the Haws accounts, one could almost make a case that the pineries settlement was a company town with the company or firm being the combined committees. The nature of the pineries community as a type of Mormon communitarianism is a topic for a separate essay. For information on company towns, see James B. Allen, *The Company Town in the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966).

²⁹ See *The Life of Joseph Holbrook 1806–1871*, typescript, 1942, 56–59, Mor/M270.1/H694, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library.

³⁰ See "Bill of Sundrey [*sic*] Articles rec. by Br. Mikesell & Wife in Pine Cuntry [*sic*]," Newel K. Whitney Papers, box 6, folder 56, vault MSS. 76, Archives and Manuscripts, Harold B. Lee Library; hereafter cited as Whitney Papers.

³¹ For example, Stephen Mack owned part interest in a sawmill at Rochester (Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith*, ed. Preston Nibley [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954], 23–25); Josiah Stowell operated sawmills on the Susquehanna River and employed Joseph Smith (Larry Porter, "The Colesville Branch and the Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon," *BYU Studies* 10 [Spring 1970]: 367–69); and Frederick G. Williams worked his father's sawmills in the Cleveland area. The Williams farm and sawmills became a stronghold for the Church in Kirtland (Frederick G. Williams, "Frederick Granger Williams of the First Presidency of the Church," *BYU Studies* 12 [Spring 1972]: 243–61). Contrast to Flanders, *Nauvoo*, 183, who maintains the Saints had "but small knowledge of lumbering."

³² Biography of Henry W. Miller, typescript, in possession of Dean K. Fuhrman, a descendant, of Provo, Utah.

³³ See Daniel Whitney Land Records, Green Bay MSS. 9, SHSW, and compare HC 1:145; B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930), 1:242; and Edward W. Tullidge, *The Women of Mormondom* (New York: Tullidge and Crandall, 1877), 34–35.

³⁴ Fries, *Empire in Pine*, 12–14; and John Plumbe, Diary, SHSW. Plumbe was a sometime lumberman and raft scavenger in Sinipee, Wisconsin (near Dubuque, Iowa), who recorded the following in his diary for March 12, 1839: "This p.m. I walked down to Burn's cabin to borrow a Peoria paper, containing an account of pine land in Wisconsin."

³⁵ See this agreement, dated August 11, 1840, labeled "Copy of Articles [of Agreement] Mill," in Newel K. Whitney Papers, box 5, folder 24.

³⁶ Myrick, *Reminiscences*, 7.

³⁷ Additional evidence against Curts's being a Mormon is the suit Crane and he filed against the Saints in Prairie du Chien, May 1844.

³⁸ *Miller Correspondence*, June 26, 1855, 8–9.

³⁹ For the details of this agreement and a copy of the notes, see Circuit Court Records, Case C-12, MSS. 1602.

⁴⁰ Miller Diary, December 8, 1842, 99.

⁴¹ HC 5:169–70. The 1842 raft was about 90,000 feet of lumber and 24,000 feet of timber—the result of a winter and summer of work—and “covered an acre” according to Flanders, *Nauvoo*, 156. Compare the May 1, 1843, raft of 50,000 feet harvested and milled in less than four months.

⁴² *Miller Correspondence*, June 26, 1855, 9.

⁴³ *Miller Correspondence*, June 26, 1855, 9. This comment seems an exaggeration in light of the October 1842 raft.

⁴⁴ Circuit Court Records, Case S.16, MSS. 1602.

⁴⁵ Miller Diary, October 13–25, 1842, 92–93. Apparently, Miller’s wife was with him at Prairie du Chien. See also Circuit Court Records, Case S.16, MSS. 1602. The suit in Witter’s behalf was presented by A. Brunson, attorney—and at one time Spaulding’s attorney—of Prairie du Chien. Spaulding moved to quash the writ of attachment on his mills on the grounds that the affidavit was insufficient, the writ was insufficient and void, and the service was insufficient, irregular, and void. Also presented was an affidavit from H. G. Sherwood, who held the power of attorney from Witter jointly with Miller, stating that Spaulding had property on Black River and that it ought to be attached for the debt. See also *Miller Correspondence*, June 26, 1855, 10, in which he describes reaching an agreement with Spaulding.

⁴⁶ Miller Diary, November 21, 1842, 96.

⁴⁷ Miller Diary, December 19, 1842, 100. The phrase “as before agreed upon” is an obvious reference to the oral agreement reached in Prairie du Chien a few weeks earlier.

⁴⁸ Miller Diary, January 1–13, 1843, 102–3.

⁴⁹ See Circuit Court Records, Case S.29, MSS. 1602.

⁵⁰ “Jacob Spaulding,” WPA Biography File, Wis/MSS/MM, p. 3, SHSW. Compare to HC 5:512, where Miller says \$12,000.

⁵¹ *Miller Correspondence*, June 27, 1855, 18–19. The timberland had been ceded to the U.S. government by treaty in 1838.

⁵² Fries, *Empire in Pine*, chapters entitled, “Failure of the Land Laws,” “The Land Problem,” and “Vanguard of Conquest.”

⁵³ For the Mormon attitude, see *Miller Correspondence*, June 27, 1855, 14. See also Allen Stout letters, September 10, 1843, wherein Stout refers to the pineries as “a place of general gethren.” The presence of women and children, the construction of framed two-story dwellings, and the planting of crops all confirm that the Saints planned to stay awhile rather than just quickly rape the woods for available timber and then leave.

⁵⁴ Fries, *Empire in Pine*, 187.

⁵⁵ *Miller Correspondence*, June 26, 1855, 12–13. See also Autobiography of Hannibal Lugg, Parkside SC11, 7, SHSW; and *Historical Atlas of Wisconsin* (Milwaukee, Wis.: Snyder and Van Vechten, 1878), 18.

⁵⁶ *Miller Correspondence*, June 26, 1855, 11.

⁵⁷ *Miller Correspondence*, June 26, 1855, 11.

⁵⁸ Myrick, *Reminiscences*, 16.

⁵⁹ The Life of Elmira Pond Miller: An Autobiography Written in 1890, typescript copy in possession of descendant Dean K. Fuhrman of Provo, Utah.

⁶⁰ *Autobiography of Allen Joseph Stout*, copied by Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, 1954 (MOR/ M270/M82/V.17), 17–18.

⁶¹ *Autobiography of Allen Joseph Stout*, 17.

⁶² See Peter Haws, Financial Account Book, 1841, and Day Book, MS/d/781/6, LDS Church Archives.

⁶³ Allen Stout letters, September 13, 1843.

⁶⁴ The term *railroad* apparently refers to some sort of track, trough, or frame for feeding the logs to the saw or for getting logs or sleds loaded with logs to the mill. If the latter, such a track (railroad) could have been constructed of packed snow and ice, as in later years.

⁶⁵ Miller Diary, January 3–6, 21, 23, and February 2, 1843, 102–5.

⁶⁶ Hotchkiss, *History of the Lumber and Forest Industry*, 445; Amos Elliott to Ellis Usher; and Fries, *Empire in Pine*, 38, 60–61.

⁶⁷ Fries, *Empire in Pine*, 61.

⁶⁸ *Miller Correspondence*, June 26, 1855, 13. “In 1848 a mill capable of cutting from nine to twenty thousand board feet a day was considered a large establishment” (Fries, *Empire in Pine*, 122).

⁶⁹ Fries, *Empire in Pine*, 29.

⁷⁰ HC 5:512.

⁷¹ Miller Diary, January 24, 1843, 104.

⁷² The Life of Joseph Holbrook, 63.

⁷³ Fries, *Empire in Pine*, 44.

⁷⁴ Whitney Papers, box 1, folder 29. The letter is badly deteriorated. The man’s name appears to be Weston. If so, Weston’s Rapids on the Black River may have been named by or for him.

⁷⁵ *Miller Correspondence*, June 27, 1855, 15; and HC 6:255–60.

⁷⁶ Fries, *Empire in Pine*, 56.

⁷⁷ Fries, *Empire in Pine*, 65.

⁷⁸ Fries, *Empire in Pine*, 16.

⁷⁹ HC 6:257.

⁸⁰ Miller Diary, December 13, 1842.

⁸¹ Authorization to Pay: George Miller to Joseph Smith, Whitney Papers, box 3, folder 17.

⁸² *Miller Correspondence*, June 27, 1855, 14; and HC 6:230.

⁸³ *Autobiography of Allen Joseph Stout*, 17.

⁸⁴ H. H. Smith, “The Lyman Wight Colony in Texas, 1846–1858,” typescript, 62, in MSS. 1602. See also a related typescript in Lyman Wight, “Mormon Colonies in Texas, 1845–1858,” MSS. SC 162, folder 2, Archives and Manuscripts, Harold B. Lee Library.

⁸⁵ Allen Stout letters, September 10, 1843.

⁸⁶ *Miller Correspondence*, June 28, 1855, 23.

⁸⁷ For information on the group of people who followed Lyman Wight, see Davis Bitton, “Mormons in Texas: The Ill-fated Lyman Wight Colony, 1844–1858,” *Arizona and the West* 11 (Spring 1969): 5–26.

⁸⁸ See Circuit Court Records, Case S.29, MSS. 1602.

⁸⁹ See especially Judge Gales’s account, “When the Mormons Settled in Jackson County,” which is the most exaggerated. See also Hotchkiss, *History of the Lumber and Forest Industry*, 445. Contrast these with the cooperative spirit reflected in George Miller’s diary.