

An Anti-Mormon in Montrose: David W. Kilbourne

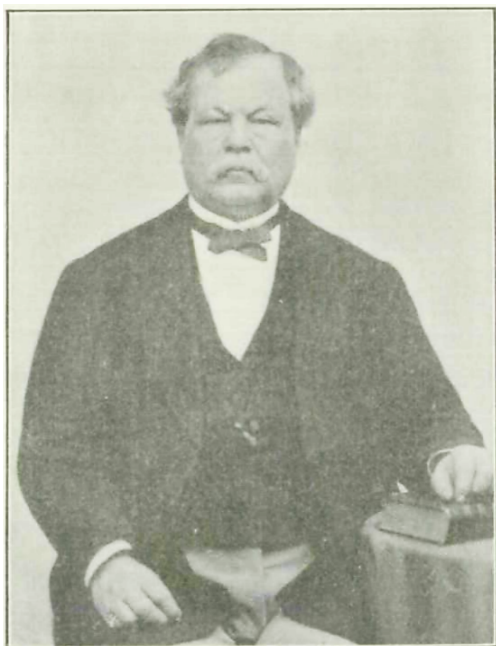
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Abstract

In 1841, when Joseph Smith called all Saints to come and settle near Nauvoo, the two counties designated for settlement were Hancock County, Illinois, and Lee County, Iowa. The relationships that the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had with their neighbors during the Nauvoo period are important to understand and informative of the events that transpired during that time. Much research has been devoted to studying the main anti-Mormons in Hancock county, such as Thomas Sharp, but less research has examined those anti-Mormons in Lee county. One of the primary opponents to the Church in Lee County was a man named David W. Kilbourne, who lived in Montrose, a town directly across the river from Nauvoo. This paper attempts to trace the relationship between Kilbourne and the Saints, both in how animosity developed and how compromise was reached. In so doing, a story is told which brings more understanding to both the situation of the Church in Iowa and the Nauvoo period generally.

Immediately following the passing of David Kilbourne, a friend said, "I have known this man in business and social relations for fifty years, and I never knew a better man or a better friend. It was

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D. W. Kilbourne

From a tintype, at the age of sixty-five.

Image of David Wells Kilbourne, from "The Mason-Remey and the Kilbourne Collections," *The Annals of Iowa* 15, no. 4 (1926): 307–313.

always a pleasure to be with him."¹ David Wells Kilbourne was a prominent figure in early Iowa history and is credited by some for much of the prosperity in Southern Iowa during and following his life.² However, most contemporary Latter-day Saints would likely have a quite different opinion of this man than those expressed by his friends and by many Iowan historians.

Kilbourne's relationship with the Latter-day Saints was turbulent. During the short time that the Saints lived in and around Nauvoo, Illinois, Kilbourne went from being a sympathizer, to a public and

outspoken critic and opponent, to a strained acceptor. He would eventually make peace with his Latter-day Saint neighbors, but his personal correspondences show that despite his outward attempts at toleration, he was consistently denunciatory of Joseph Smith and the Latter-day Saint community. Drawing primarily from a biography written by his son, this paper will attempt to understand the complicated relationship that Kilbourne had with the Latter-day Saints.

1. George E. Kilbourne, "David Wells Kilbourne," in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 442.

2. *History of Lee County, Iowa*, vol. 2 (Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1914), 434; George E. Kilbourne, "David Wells Kilbourne," found in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 540.

Kilbourne's Life Before 1840

David W. Kilbourne was born in Marlborough, Connecticut, on 12 April 1803.³ His family had lived in Connecticut for as many as eight generations.⁴ Kilbourne finished his education at Amherst, Massachusetts, and became a teacher there for a short time. Unsatisfied with his life as a teacher, he set out for Albany, New York.⁵ He quickly became a very successful commission merchant, and in 1827, he married Harriett Rice. In 1830, he moved his business and his family to New York City.⁶ However, because of the great fire of 1835, and the subsequent failure of the insurance company, Kilbourne lost everything.⁷ In deciding how to proceed following his loss, Kilbourne was "importuned by men who had great confidence in him, and who had invested in Iowa," to move out to that area and become the General Agent for the New York Land Company.⁸

Near the end of 1836, along with his wife and three children, Kilbourne traveled three weeks to arrive at Fort Des Moines early in 1837 and helped lay out the town of Montrose.⁹ That year, he also superintended the laying out of Keokuk, a city he would later become mayor of.¹⁰ Kilbourne's brother, Edward, moved to Montrose in 1839,

3. Editorial Department, "The Mason-Remey and the Kilbourne Collections," *Annals of Iowa* 15 (April 1926): 310.

4. George E. Kilbourne, "David Wells Kilbourne," in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 433–435.

5. George E. Kilbourne, "David Wells Kilbourne," in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 435–437.

6. George E. Kilbourne, "David Wells Kilbourne," in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 437–439; *History of Lee County, Iowa*, vol. 2 (Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company 1914), 434.

7. For more information on the fire, see Stephen F. Ginsberg, "The Police and Fire Protection in New York City: 1800–1850," *New York History* 52, no. 2 (April 1971): 133–150.

8. George E. Kilbourne, "David Wells Kilbourne," in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 441.

9. George E. Kilbourne, "David Wells Kilbourne," in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 443–445, 453.

10. D. W. Kilbourne, "Inaugural Address of D. W. Kilbourne, Esq., Mayor of the City of Keokuk. Delivered at Concert Hall, April 10, 1855" (Keokuk: Gate City Print, 1855), 3.

and the two of them owned a store there.¹¹ As the General Agent of the New York Land Company, he made extensive land purchases and adjudicated many claims and titles to the Half Breed Tract, an area of 119,000 acres between the Des Moines and Mississippi rivers. The land had been set aside for half-breeds of the Sauk and Fox who, under the original treaty, could occupy but not sell the land. That provision was repealed in 1834 and any half-breed with a valid claim could sell their land there.¹² Kilbourne was one of many land agents who came during that time to seize the opportunity; others included Isaac Galland and Henry Austin.¹³

Life was quite different in the rural “far west.” Kilbourne’s son later wrote that the “move [to Iowa] he always considered the great mistake of his life.”¹⁴ Part of the reason this transition was difficult was the adjustment in lifestyle. The family had previously lived in densely populated urban areas with all technological and societal benefits of such cities. Their lifestyle was very different, as well as their society. Ruffians and criminals were common, and Kilbourne was appointed Justice of the Peace for Lee County in 1839.¹⁵ As small towns often had few men able to fulfill different positions, he was also appointed postmaster in Montrose in 1839.¹⁶

There was also a significant Native American population and Kilbourne established many positive associations with this group. The area had been previously occupied by Sauk chief, Black Hawk, and his party, before their establishment at Rock Island.¹⁷ After his defeat in the Black Hawk War of 1832, Black Hawk was imprisoned

11. Editorial Department, “The Mason-Remey and the Kilbourne Collections,” *Annals of Iowa* 15 (April 1926): 311.

12. George E. Kilbourne, “David Wells Kilbourne,” in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 446–447; B. L. Wick, “The Struggle for the Half-Breed Tract,” *Annals of Iowa* 7 (1918): 17, 20.

13. Mark Goodmansen, *Conspiracy at Carthage* (Springville, UT: Cedar Fort, 2016), 119–121.

14. George E. Kilbourne, “David Wells Kilbourne,” in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 441.

15. George E. Kilbourne, “David Wells Kilbourne,” in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 448–449.

16. George E. Kilbourne, “David Wells Kilbourne,” in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 450–451.

17. George E. Kilbourne, “David Wells Kilbourne,” in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 452.

for a time and taken on a tour throughout the east before returning home.¹⁸ On his return, Black Hawk was stripped of any chiefly authority and instructed to submit to the counsel of Keokuk, the Sauk chief who had opposed Black Hawk's decision to fight against U.S. control. Because Black Hawk spent much time camped about two miles north of Montrose and Keokuk two miles south, Kilbourne interacted much with both chiefs during 1837 and 1838. Early in 1837, both chiefs met in Kilbourne's house and reconciled their differences, such that they became good friends.¹⁹ Following that reconciliation, "the two chiefs . . . were almost constant guests at Mr. Kilbourne's table, and often remained all night, sleeping in the same room with Mr. K. and his family, stretched out on the carpeted floor," with George, Kilbourne's son, often sleeping between the two men.²⁰ Kilbourne also attended the funeral, along with Edward Kilbourne, Thomas Gregg, and other citizens of Montrose, of an eighteen-year-old Native American girl named Kalawequois, whose death and mourning mother inspired such sympathy that a stone marker was later placed to commemorate the girl.²¹ Eastern settlers were not always able to establish this kind of supportive relationship with Native Americans in the area.

Mormon Influx

In late 1838, Israel Barlow, one of the members of the Church sent early to scout out an area for the Saints to move to, contacted Isaac Galland, an eastern land speculator who claimed most of the available land near Montrose.²² Galland was a trustee for the New York

18. Kerry A. Trask, *Black Hawk: The Battle for the Heart of America* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2006), 294–303.

19. George E. Kilbourne, "David Wells Kilbourne," in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 457–458.

20. George E. Kilbourne, "David Wells Kilbourne," in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 458–459.

21. George E. Kilbourne, "David Wells Kilbourne," in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 455; Mrs. Russell Hancock, "Stone Marker Above Montrose is Testimony to Mother Love," *Montrose in Retrospect* (Montrose, IA: TELCON, 1969), 14–16.

22. Stanley B. Kimball, "Nauvoo West: The Mormons of the Iowa Shore," *BYU Studies* 18, no. 2 (1978): 134.

Land Company who had purchased large tracts of land in his own name on both sides of the Mississippi: in Commerce, Illinois, and in the Half-Breed Tract.²³ The Church, through land agents Oliver Granger and Vinson Knight, purchased a large section of the Half-Breed Tract. Land records indicate this purchase was 17,937.78 acres for \$49,662.26, an area which included the towns Ambrosia, Nashville, and part of Montrose.²⁴ Since that purchase, many have claimed that Galland did not hold the legal title to those lands in the Half-Breed Tract. There is no evidence to verifiably support that claim. Titles to the Half-Breed tract during that time generally were complicated, since the tract “was still entangled in litigation” and issues concerning ownership were not completely solved until 1850.²⁵ Many Latter-day Saint families first occupied the abandoned barracks from Fort Des Moines while their homes were being built, either elsewhere in Iowa or across the river in Nauvoo.²⁶ He interacted with these Saints frequently and sold land to several of them.²⁷

Latter-day Saints were moving to this area to escape persecution that they were experiencing in Missouri. After an extermination order was issued by the governor of Missouri, several battles, and the capture and imprisonment of Joseph Smith and other Church leaders, the Saints were forced to leave their homes, often with great financial loss.²⁸ In seeking to redress their losses in Missouri, many Latter-day Saints wrote affidavits to send to Washington. Kilbourne, as Justice of the Peace, helped by signing at least eleven of these

23. Lyndon W. Cook, “Isaac Galland—Mormon Benefactor,” *BYU Studies*, 19, no. 3 (1979): 265.

24. Lyndon W. Cook, “Isaac Galland—Mormon Benefactor,” *BYU Studies*, 19, No. 3 (1979): 271–276.

25. Lyndon W. Cook, “Isaac Galland—Mormon Benefactor,” *BYU Studies*, 19, No. 3 (1979): 282–283.

26. Stanley B. Kimball, “Nauvoo West: The Mormons of the Iowa Shore,” *BYU Studies* 18, no. 2 (1978): 132–134.

27. Wilford Woodruff and Joseph Bates Noble are two identified by Wilford Woodruff. See *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal: 1833–1898*, vol. 1, edited by Scott G. Kenney (Midvale, UT: Signature Books, 1983), 333–334.

28. For more information regarding the Mormon war in Missouri, see Stephen C. LeSeur, *The 1838 Mormon War in Missouri* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1987).

affidavits during the first week of January 1840.²⁹ Many of these included vivid explanations of the persecution they had faced. One such affidavit that Kilbourne assisted with, a man by the name of Jedediah Owen, recorded that in Far West, Missouri, the local militia broke into his house and stole money, clothing, deeds and notes, and cooking utensils. He stated, “in consequence of the cruel and inhuman treatment which I and others have received from these troops, we are reduced to a state of almost absolute starvation,” and that as a result, he and others were forced to “go out and beg corn and meal or any thing we may obtain.”³⁰ Another affidavit that Kilbourne signed was for John Smith, Joseph Smith’s uncle, who became the President of the Iowa Stake and would develop an important relationship with Kilbourne. It is likely that helping with these affidavits aroused sympathy in Kilbourne. He later wrote, “they came among us in a destitute and suffering condition, a condition that called into lively exercise all the benevolent feelings of our natures.”³¹

However, Kilbourne’s relationship with the Saints quickly changed. He later recorded that as early as March 1840, just a few months after assisting them with their affidavits, he became suspicious of these newcomers.³² This change likely occurred in part because of his position as General Agent for the New York Land Company. As such, Kilbourne found himself in the midst of the mess of legality of the Half-Breed Tract claims.³³ His son, George,

29. “History, 1838–1856, Volume C-1 [2 November 1838–31 July 1842],” p. 1005, The Joseph Smith Papers, <http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-c-1-2-november-1838-31-july-1842/177>.

30. “History, 1838–1856, Volume C-1 [2 November 1838–31 July 1842],” p. 1010, The Joseph Smith Papers, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-c-1-2-november-1838-31-july-1842/182>.

31. David W. and Edward Kilbourne, “Latter-Day-Isms: Number One,” *Warsaw Signal* 2, no. 22, October 6, 1841.

32. “Latter-Day-Isms: Number 3,” *Hawkeye and Patriot* 3 no. 20, October 14, 1841.

33. Dr. Galland would later publish a pamphlet entitled, “Villainy Exposed,” in which he accused Kilbourne of “fraud and deception” in selling titles to his family relations. Kilbourne published his own pamphlet emphatically refuting Dr. Galland’s claims. See David W. Kilbourne, “Strictures, on Dr. I. Galland’s Pamphlet, Entitled, “Villainy Exposed,” with Some Account of His Transactions in Lands of the Sac and Fox Reservation, Etc., in Lee County, Iowa” (Fort Madison: Printed at the Statesman Office, 1850).

recorded, "Large numbers of [Latter-day Saints] crossed the river into Iowa and became squatters upon the Half Breed tract. The advent of this element was the beginning of Mr. K.'s real troubles."³⁴ As he attempted to sort out the legality of claims on the Half-Breed Tract, the Latter-day Saint settlers could have become upset when he questioned their claims. Many of them had just been driven from their land in Missouri and were plausibly sensitive to anything that might appear as a threat to do the same. William Clayton, a Latter-day Saint who settled in Montrose late in 1840, had such an experience where his claim was questioned, although not directly by Kilbourne. Clayton had purchased land from Hyrum Smith, but in the spring of 1841, a man named William Miller came with a constable and "a notice to quit the land."³⁵ Miller said he had a claim on the land, and Clayton spent the next couple of days over at Nauvoo sorting out the problem until it was determined that Clayton did indeed have the legal claim to the land.³⁶ It would have been frustrating for both Kilbourne and the Saints to sort out this legality.

To add to the tense situation, many of the Saints living in the Territory of Iowa were not necessarily good neighbors. William Clayton recorded of his move to Montrose in November of 1840, "The saints [in Nauvoo] frequently told us that the devil was over the river. . . . We found things in some measure as was told viz the saints to be in a very bad state and having no meetings, full of envy, strife and contention."³⁷ The minutes of the Iowa Stake, organized in October 1839, show that as early as December 1839, members brought up complaints against other Saints in their meetings, "for insulting and

34. George E. Kilbourne, "David Wells Kilbourne," in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 462.

35. *Manchester Mormons: The Journal of William Clayton 1840-1842*, edited by James B. Allen and Thomas G. Alexander (Santa Barbara and Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1974), 203.

36. *Manchester Mormons: The Journal of William Clayton 1840-1842*, edited by James B. Allen and Thomas G. Alexander (Santa Barbara and Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1974), 203-204.

37. *Manchester Mormons: The Journal of William Clayton 1840-1842*, edited by James B. Allen and Thomas G. Alexander (Santa Barbara and Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1974), 201-202.

abusive language”³⁸ and “for breaking the word of wisdom, for lying, for trespass, for doging his hogs & for slander & personal abuse.”³⁹

Another problem among the Iowa Saints was pointed out criticizingly by *The Warsaw Signal* in 1841: “The Saints do not get drunk at home, but they have only to cross the river to Montrose, and there they can revel to their heart’s content, in *spiritual* luxuries.”⁴⁰ The Iowa Stake minutes confirm that alcohol was a problem. Several times, starting in February of 1840, the leaders of the Iowa stake discussed problems with members who would “persist in keeping tipling shops.”⁴¹ Additionally, many Saints were extremely antagonistic towards anyone who opposed their beliefs. An anti-Mormon lecturer presenting at Montrose in 1841 reported, “The Mormons in this place are infinitely worse than any thing I have ever before seen or heard.”⁴² In this environment, it is not hard to see how hostility grew between Kilbourne and the Saints.

“Two Sides to the Story”

Although the first couple of years passed evidently peacefully, tensions erupted during 1841. The first documented case showing animosity between Kilbourne and the Saints occurred on September 1, 1841. William Harris, an anti-Mormon lecturer traveling through the area, stopped at Montrose at the invitation of some of the older citizens. During his lecture, a crowd of Latter-day Saints gathered and created a disturbance by “howling, cursing and swearing,” and throwing objects into the listening crowd.⁴³ As the protesting escalated, “they made an effigy . . . and burning it before the congregation, crying, as it was consuming, “thus may old Kilbourn burn. . . . After this, they procured rotten eggs, and besmeared Mr. Kilbourn’s store door.”⁴⁴ Harris also reported that many of the Saints were extremely intoxicated.

38. Iowa Stake Record, Dec. 7, 1839, p. 12.

39. Iowa Stake Record, Jan 3, 1840, p. 14.

40. “Temperance Among the Mormons,” *The Warsaw Signal* 2, no. 20, July 14, 1841.

41. Iowa Stake Record, February 7, 1840, p. 86.

42. “Mormonism at Montrose,” *The Warsaw Signal* 2, no. 20, September 22, 1841.

43. “Mormonism at Montrose,” *The Warsaw Signal* 2, no. 20, September 22, 1841.

44. “Mormonism at Montrose,” *The Warsaw Signal* 2, no. 20, September 22, 1841.

Several weeks after the incident with Harris, contention arose again during a military exercise at Montrose. The *Warsaw Signal*, under the title “Difficulty at Montrose,” reported of a military training in Montrose where “the Mormons and citizens united indiscriminately.”⁴⁵ The *Signal* further explained, “after the troops were paraded Joe Smith and Gen. Bennett came over from Nauvoo and attempted to inspect them. Upon this Mr. Kilbourn invited the citizens to withdraw from the ranks—which was accordingly done. The Mormons then insulted them, causing much excitement, and at the time our informant left a row was anticipated.”⁴⁶

Other sources documented the event with further details. On October 1, the *Times and Seasons* reprinted the article published by the *Warsaw Signal* and gave five statements which refuted the claims made by the *Signal*. These included, “Generals Smith and Bennett did not attempt to inspect the troops. . . . The citizens did not leave the ranks on the invitation of Mr. Kilbourn. . . . The Mormons did not insult the other citizens, and there was no excitement, and . . . No row occurred, or was anticipated, between the Mormons and other citizens.”⁴⁷ W. W. Phelps, the author of the article, then explained that Joseph and Hyrum Smith, along with John C. Bennett, had been invited to attend a military parade by General Swazey and Colonel Fuller of the Montrose Regiment, and that the parade had gone well “excepting a disturbance which the Messrs. Kilbourn’s attempted to get up.” Phelps then included the proclamation that Kilbourne had read to the gathered people; “Citizens of Iowa. The laws of Iowa do not require you to muster under or be Reviewed by Joe Smith or General Bennett And should they have the impudence to attempt it, it is hoped that every person having a proper respect for himself will at once LEAVE THE RANKS.”⁴⁸ Phelps claimed that the *Signal* had printed their article out of a desire to divide the citizens of Hancock County.

Joseph Smith’s history gives even more details. It reports, in accordance with Phelps, that on September 13, Joseph and Hyrum Smith, and John C. Bennett received invitations. On the 14th, the men were “courteously received,” but then, “D. W. Kilbourn attempted to get

45. “Difficulty at Montrose,” *The Warsaw Signal*, 2, no. 19, September 15, 1841.

46. “Difficulty at Montrose,” *The Warsaw Signal* 2, no. 19, September 15, 1841.

47. “Falsehoods Refuted,” *Times and Seasons* 2, no. 23, October 1, 1841.

48. Falsehoods Refuted,” *Times and Seasons* 2, no. 23, October 1, 1841.

up an ill feeling by reading the following proclamation at noon, during the recess of exercise, to a considerable number of persons collected round his store,” and the proclamation was included exactly as it was in the *Times and Seasons*.⁴⁹ The history reports that after the exercise was over, Joseph “went to Mr. Kilbourn’s store, and desired to have some conversation with him, but was peremptorily ordered out of doors.” Joseph claims that Kilbourn’s friends “upbraided Kilbourn with his ungentlemanly conduct.”⁵⁰

Kilbourn’s biography tells an even different version of the story. Although Kilbourn’s biography gives no account of Kilbourn reading a proclamation inviting the militia to leave the ranks, it claims that when Joseph and Hyrum came to the store, that “Joe sat up on the counter with one foot resting upon a wooden bottomed chair, and commenced abusing Mr. K. . . . [Kilbourn] told Joe, if he did not behave himself he would put him into the street. Joe became very violent, shaking his fist and making threats, and he brought his foot down upon the chair with such force as to split the bottom entirely across.” The biography explains that Kilbourn “attacked” Smith, and physically removed him from the store. “Both parties had their friends and lackeys . . . the Smiths went off making great threats.”⁵¹

This is a great example of the type of inconsistencies between the histories kept by the Saints and those kept by anti-Mormons. Although they each have potential for bias, the facts presented in both are likely accurate, only construed to portray the faults of the other party. Most likely, Joseph, Hyrum, and Bennett *were* invited by the officers in command. Most likely, Kilbourn *did* read the proclamation recorded by Joseph’s history. Most likely, Joseph *did*, to some extent, lose his temper and broke a chair in Kilbourn’s store. By examining records from both sides, we see that, most likely, both parties were in part responsible for the dispute.

49. “History, 1838–1856, Volume C-1 Addenda,” p. 19, The Joseph Smith Papers, <http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-c-1-addenda/19>.

50. “History, 1838–1856, Volume C-1 Addenda,” p. 19, The Joseph Smith Papers, <http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-c-1-addenda/19>.

51. George E. Kilbourn, “David Wells Kilbourn,” in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 466–468.

“Latter-Day-Ism”: Kilbourne Publishes Against the Saints

After this physical confrontation with Joseph Smith, Kilbourne had had enough. On September 20, just days after removing Joseph from his store, Kilbourne and his brother, Edward, sent the first of three articles to the *Hawkeye and Patriot* in Burlington, as well as to Thomas Sharp to be published in the *Warsaw Signal*. Because the language is consistent with language in David Kilbourne’s later letters, it is possible he was the primary author, but all three articles were signed and by both brothers. The first article, titled, “Latter-Day-Ism: Number One,” began by saying it was “with extreme reluctance that the undersigned are induced to intrude upon the public.”⁵² They claimed that they were writing out of “a sense of duty” and that they hoped to prevent “some individuals from making shipwreck of their fortunes and character,” and that they would only give undeniable facts. The Kilbourne’s explained that when the Saints first arrived, they extended benevolence and kindness because “we believed that they had been persecuted for their religious sentiments,” but that their opinion changed because of the “abuse of the men that have opened their doors to them and ever treated them kindly.”⁵³

The primary concern in this article was a significant number of recent robberies that the two brothers had been victims of. The Kilbourne’s listed out 13 specific robberies which they attributed to the Saints. Examples of these robberies were, “Ware house broken open and robbed of one barrel of pork, two barrels sugar, and five kegs lard,” “1 saddle, bridle and martingale stolen from stable,” and “60 bushels wheat, in sacks, stolen from Granary.” The Kilbournes explained that when the Saints learned of these robberies, the thefts were “justified and surprise expressed that we don’t lose more than we do, because we oppose the swindling schemes of their Prophet.” The brothers claimed that Joseph had approved stealing “by citing the example of Christ while passing through the corn field.” To provide further evidence that the Saints were behind these robberies, they related an experience where, when attempting to track down some robbers,

52. “Latter-Day-Ism: Number One,” *Warsaw Signal*, 2, no. 22, October 6, 1841.

53. “Latter-Day-Ism: Number One,” *Warsaw Signal*, 2, no. 22, October 6, 1841.

Joseph Smith stepped in and pinned the robbery on a young man who was helping the Kilbournes with the search. "That this malicious prosecution was instigated and set on foot by Joe Smith, it is useless for him to deny;" the brothers claimed, "he said previously that he would have us arrested, and afterwards boasted that he had." The article concluded with a reference to the feared "Danite band," with the question posed, "Would it be . . . too much to believe, that [Smith] . . . would for a moment hesitate to employ desperadoes to commit any or all the acts of outrage with which we have been visited?"⁵⁴

Kilbourne was not the only neighbor of the Nauvoo Saints to accuse them of theft. In 1844, following the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum, in response to criticisms of the mob violence at Carthage, some anti-Mormons formed a committee with the purpose of documenting theft by the Saints. They published articles in the *Warsaw Signal* with lists of citizens of Hancock county and what was stolen from them.⁵⁵ Hallwas and Launius in their book, *Cultures in Conflict*, explain the reaction of many non-Mormon neighbors, such as Kilbourne, in response to the thefts: "Many non-Mormons . . . were initially disposed toward tolerance because they sympathized with the Saints as refugees from oppression in Missouri" This is precisely what the Kilbourne brothers stated in the beginning of their article. "That view, however, soon began to change. Some of the Mormons, embittered against Gentiles because of their recent experience and impoverished because of their forced abandonment of homes in Missouri, stole food, livestock, and other things from farms in the Nauvoo area." Hallwas and Launius continue, "The amount of Mormon theft is impossible to determine, since some stealing by others was undoubtedly blamed on the Saints, nor can Joseph Smith's involvement be established with any certainty. . . . In any case, the evidence of Mormon theft is substantial."⁵⁶ At least one non-Mormon contemporary agreed that not all thieving was done by the Saints. Hawkins Taylor, a Sheriff of Lee County, Iowa, and an acquaintance of the Kilbournes, wrote, "no matter what crime was committed in

54. "Latter-Day-Isim: Number One," *Warsaw Signal*, 2, no. 22, October 6, 1841.

55. John E. Hallwas and Roger D. Launius, *Cultures in Conflict: A Documentary History of the Mormon War in Illinois* (Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 1995), 70-71.

56. Ibid. 67.

Missouri, anywhere near Nauvoo, it was charged to the Mormons and without stopping to enquire.”⁵⁷

Despite this, evidence shows that much thieving was in fact done by the Saints. There is even evidence to support that it was particularly a problem in Montrose. During an April 6, 1843 church conference in Nauvoo, Hyrum brought up some rumors about Mormon thieving, particularly that there was a group of men who believed it was “right to steal from any one who does not belong to the church if they gave $\frac{1}{4}$ part to the temple.”⁵⁸ Hyrum read a statement condemning the theft, after which a man, James Dunn, told of an experience when a Mormon man he knew, David Holman, after confessing to his thieving and promising to change, promptly “went to Montrose. & stole & run away.”⁵⁹ Knowing that even Church members were aware of thieving in Montrose, as well as the condition of the Saints there, gives some credibility to the Kilbourne brothers’ accusations.

The second letter, “Latter-Day-Isms: Number Two,” was published several weeks later. Much shorter than the first, it primarily addressed the land titles to the Half-Breed tract, which is likely an original point of conflict between the Saints and Kilbourne. In this article, the Kilbournes discussed the history of the Half-breed tract, and of Isaac Galland’s connection to them. They explained how Galland came to claim “to be the sole proprietor” of the tract, and that in reality, he was only entitled to “a small, undefined, undivided portion.” After explaining Galland’s “scheme of swindling,” they explained; “Our object is not so much to draw the portrait of Galland—for his character is too well known to require an extended notice here—as to show the connection between him and the swindling leaders of the Mormon Society.” Kilbourne claimed that

57. Hawkins Taylor Autobiography, 39. An example of this can be found in Hawkins Taylor, “A Mysterious Disappearance and Timely Discovery,” *Annals of Iowa* 11, no. 2 (1873): 472.

58. “Journal, December 1842–June 1844; Book 2, 10 March 1843–14 July 1843,” p. [62–63], The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed September 18, 2018, <http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/journal-december-1842-june-1844-book-2-10-march-1843-14-july-1843/70>.

59. “Journal, December 1842–June 1844; Book 2, 10 March 1843–14 July 1843,” p. [63–64], The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed September 18, 2018, <http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/journal-december-1842-june-1844-book-2-10-march-1843-14-july-1843/71>.

these men set up a system so that when individuals came here, they would exchange “their valuable possessions” for “worthless land titles.” They concluded with the question, “what further evidence, we ask, is wanted, of the baseness and rascality of [Galland] and his confederates?”⁶⁰ David Kilbourne and Isaac Galland continued to publish articles and pamphlets, each accusing the other of fraud.

The third article, “Latter-Day-Isms: Number 3,” was not published in the *Warsaw Signal* but only in the Burlington *Hawkeye and Patriot*. This one continued discussing the claims to the Half-breed tract and Isaac Galland but focused less on Galland and more on the legality of the Mormons’ claims, particularly in regard to a Latter-day Saint town called ‘Zarahemla’. According to Joseph Smith’s history, the land there was purchased on about June 1839, and on July 2, 1839, Joseph Smith visited the area and “advised that a town be built there, and to be called Zarahemla.”⁶¹

On October 5, 1839, a stake was organized in Iowa, with John Smith, Joseph Smith’s uncle, as stake president and Alanson Ripley as Bishop.⁶² Ripley moved to Nauvoo, however, likely in part to fill his appointment to survey the city of Nauvoo.⁶³ On December 6, 1839, the Iowa stake Council requested that Ripley move to Iowa to fulfill his duties as Bishop, but Nauvoo records show that he remained in Nauvoo.⁶⁴ In February of 1840, at a council meeting where Ripley was present, John Smith again requested Ripley to move to Iowa, but he responded that “he could not come back till he had finished his job of surveying the City of Nauvoo” and that if they could not wait, they should appoint a different man to be bishop in his stead.⁶⁵ The

60. “Latter-Day-Isms: Number Two,” *Warsaw Signal* 2, no. 25, October 27, 1841.

61. “History, 1838–1856, Volume C-1 [2 November 1838–31 July 1842],” p. 957, The Joseph Smith Papers, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-c-1-2-november-1838-31-july-1842/139>.

62. Iowa Stake Record, October 5, 1839, p. 5.

63. Cannon, Donald Q., and Lyndon W. Cook, eds. *Far West Record: Minutes of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830–1844* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 285.

64. Iowa Stake Record, December 6, 1839, p. 10; “Nauvoo City Council Minute Book, 3 February 1841–8 February 1845,” p. 15, The Joseph Smith Papers, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/nauvoo-city-council-minute-book-3-february-1841-8-february-1845/21>.

65. Iowa Stake Record, February 7, 1840, p. 17.

council determined to wait for Ripley. Minutes from a meeting later that same day showed that a significant reason they wanted Ripley to come to the Iowa side had to do with “some measures . . . in order to advantageously cultivate the soil for the coming season.”⁶⁶ Likely they wanted to utilize Ripley’s skill as a land surveyor. The Kilbourne brothers wrote in their third article, “Early one morning in March last, the quiet citizens of Montrose were surprised by a visit from some of Joe Smith’s scullions from Nauvoo . . . headed by Alanson Ripley.”⁶⁷ The group apparently went about “with compass and chain” to lay out the lots for the city of Zarahemla, and in so doing, gave no regard to which land was being occupied by non-Mormons, driving stakes within established enclosures.

It is easy to see how confusion arose regarding land ownership in Iowa. Even disregarding the legal mess of the Half-breed tract, land titles were frequently moved between church leaders and given to individuals and families. For example, at the Iowa stake council meeting on 6 December 1839, it was proposed by a bishop from Nauvoo that a significant number of titles for Lee County be transferred to Ripley as the Bishop of Iowa.⁶⁸ Members and non-Members often challenged each other regarding the legality of titles. It is possible that Ripley, after more than a year of being requested to do so by the council in Iowa, was hasty in his surveying instead of taking time to carefully sort through the confusion regarding land ownership. The Kilbourne brothers wrote that Ripley said, “as to the technical niceties of the law of the land, he does not intend to regard them; that the kingdom spoken of by the prophet Daniel has been set up, and that it is necessary every kingdom should be governed by its own laws.”⁶⁹ The Kilbournes claimed that Ripley threatened physical violence to an individual who removed one of the stakes that had been unwittingly put within the bounds of his enclosure.

The Kilbournes continued by discussing a conference which occurred shortly after the laying out of Zarahemla, at which a revelation was read, and “Joe Smith then stated that, ‘in accordance with this revelation,’ a city had been surveyed, and the Saints desirous of

66. Iowa Stake Record, February 7, 1840, p. 86.

67. “Latter-Day-Isim: Number 3,” *Hawkeye and Patriot* 3, no. 20, October 14, 1841.

68. Iowa Stake Record, December 6, 1839, p. 10.

69. “Latter-Day-Isim: Number 3,” *Hawkeye and Patriot* 3, no. 20, October 14, 1841.

purchasing lots could now do so.”⁷⁰ The Kilbournes claimed that Joseph Smith then said, “The people over there are very much opposed to it . . . they needn’t be scared; we don’t want their improvements without paying for them; we expect to pay them a good price for their possessions, and if that don’t satisfy them, *we’ll have them any how*.”⁷¹ The Kilbournes then asked, “Is the title to land hereafter to be settled by revelation through Joe Smith?”⁷² They listed several more robberies that had happened to them and their neighbors since their last articles, as well as raised the question regarding whether the Mormons were driven out of Missouri only for “righteousness’ sake,” or if, perhaps, it was because they “disregarded all law.”⁷³ The Kilbournes, through these three articles, had made it abundantly clear that they believed themselves to be victims of many crimes at the hands of the Latter-day Saints, and that they did not intend to allow it.

A Peace Treaty

By early 1842, conditions in Montrose had become dangerous. One local non-Mormon explained, “From 1839 until the Spring of 1842 the feelings between the two parties were so angry and belligerent, that there was constant danger of civil war on the Half-Breed Tract of no small proportions.”⁷⁴ Kilbourne, perhaps using his previous experience in facilitating a peace between the chiefs Keokuk and Black Hawk, eventually helped to create a peace treaty between the Saints and the anti-Mormons. From Kilbourne’s biography, we learn that sometime during the spring of 1842, Daniel F. Miller, a local attorney, was traveling through Montrose and he was stopped by Kilbourne.⁷⁵ Kilbourne asked him to be a witness to a treaty between himself and John Smith, Joseph Smith’s uncle. Kilbourne, Miller, Smith, and two Latter-day Saint bishops, met in the room above the Kilbournes’ store. “Kilbourne related to Miller the terms of the

70. “Latter-Day-Is: Number 3,” *Hawkeye and Patriot* 3, no. 20, October 14, 1841.

71. “Latter-Day-Is: Number 3,” *Hawkeye and Patriot* 3, no. 20, October 14, 1841.

72. “Latter-Day-Is: Number 3,” *Hawkeye and Patriot* 3, no. 20, October 14, 1841.

73. “Latter-Day-Is: Number 3,” *Hawkeye and Patriot* 3, no. 20, October 14, 1841.

74. George E. Kilbourne, “David Wells Kilbourne,” in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 472–473.

75. *History of Lee County Iowa*, vol. 2 (Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1914), 270.

treaty, which in substance were that Kilbourne and those whom he influenced should on their part cease hostility to the Mormons, and the Mormons should cease hostility to them.”⁷⁶ Smith stepped forward, took Kilbourne by the hand, and said, “Mr. Kilbourne, you have stated the terms of the treaty correctly, and while grass grows, and water runs, and stars twinkle in the firmament of Heaven, so long will the Mormons observe the treaty.” He continues by turning to Miller and saying,

“Mr. Miller, Mr. Kilbourne first wished the treaty to be written and signed, but I objected, because I wanted a witness in the land of immortals against the violator of this pledge of conciliation. And I now summon you as a witness to the judgement at the great day in the hereafter, and if I and the Mormons violate this treaty, bear then testimony against him and them; and may the Lord preserve us all in concord.”⁷⁷

From then on, David and Edward Kilbourne were apparently both treated with “kindness and courtesy” by the Saints.⁷⁸

As evidence of this courteous relationship, the Kilbourne brothers attended a meeting in the temple grove on July 15, 1842 with many of the Nauvoo leaders. The purpose of their presence was to address a rumor that had circulated, which claimed the Kilbourne brothers were conspiring with John C. Bennett to bring a mob upon the Mormons. Joseph explained the rumor, and then turned it over to Kilbourne to address it. Kilbourne asked Joseph who Bennett had told this rumor to. Joseph said Bennett had told himself, as well as others. Kilbourne asked where this mob was supposedly to come from, and Joseph replied, “From Galena.”⁷⁹ Kilbourne then explained, “I was going to Galena about 2 weeks ago. The Boat I was on stopped at the upper Landing place and I came ashore a little while. The first

76. George E. Kilbourne, “David Wells Kilbourne,” in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 475. An account of this is also found in “The Anti-Mormon War in Iowa,” *Salt Lake City Herald*, January 2, 1887.

77. George E. Kilbourne, “David Wells Kilbourne,” in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 476–477.

78. George E. Kilbourne, “David Wells Kilbourne,” in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 478.

79. “Journal, December 1841–December 1842,” p. 128, The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed September 28, 2018, <http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/journal-december-1841-december-1842/33>.

person I saw was Bennett; we entered into conversation, but there was no mention made of mobs. I have not seen him since. I always regarded Bennett the same as I regard you (Joseph) and thought you were pretty well matched. If any one says that I have conspired to bring a Mob upon you it is false.”⁸⁰ The comment that Kilbourne regarded Joseph and Bennett as “pretty well matched” could be an indication that Kilbourne still privately harbored ill-feelings towards Joseph and the Saints. However, if Joseph did perceive this comment as a slight, there is no indication given in his history. Instead, it is recorded that the meeting was “peaceably dismissed.”⁸¹

Kilbourne’s Correspondences

The fact that Kilbourne did secretly remain opposed to the Mormons is evidenced by many of his correspondences from 1842 to 1845. On May 14, 1842, Kilbourne wrote a letter to Governor Reynolds, the current governor of Missouri, about the attempted assassination of Lilburn Boggs, the previous Missouri governor.⁸² Kilbourne supported the idea that the attempt was instigated by the Saints in Nauvoo, claiming that “every Mormon here rejoices over it . . . and one leading Mormon remarked that he had no doubt but a Mormon had done it.”⁸³ He further explained, “Their city Nauvoo is directly opposite this. We look upon them as a *Banditti*; called together for the purpose of forming a more perfect organization, to carryout their swindling & treasonable plans.”⁸⁴ Although it is possible that this letter was

80. “Journal, December 1841–December 1842,” p. 127–128, The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed September 28, 2018, <http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/journal-december-1841-december-1842/33>.

81. “Journal, December 1841–December 1842,” p. 128, The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed September 28, 2018, <http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/journal-december-1841-december-1842/33>.

82. Boggs is infamous for his role during the Mormon Missouri war, and for issuing an extermination order for the Mormons. For more information, see Stephen C. LeSeur, *The 1838 Mormon War in Missouri* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1987).

83. D. W. Kilbourne to Governor Reynolds, May 14, 1842, in Warren A. Jennings, “Two Iowa Postmasters View Nauvoo: Anti-Mormon Letters to the Governor of Missouri,” *BYU Studies* 11, no. 3 (1971): 277.

84. D. W. Kilbourne to Governor Reynolds, May 14, 1842, in Warren A. Jennings, “Two Iowa Postmasters View Nauvoo: Anti-Mormon Letters to the Governor of Missouri,” *BYU Studies* 11, no. 3 (1971): 277.

written before the peace treaty was made with John Smith, it is not unlikely that it was written afterwards. Despite an outward appearance of peace, Kilbourne held onto his anti-Mormon beliefs. Several months later, on August 12, 1842, Kilbourne wrote to Laban Fleak, who lived just south in Keokuk and was a known anti-Mormon, regarding the attempts to arrest Joseph by the Missourians for the attempted assassination of Boggs. In the short letter, he expressed his desire “for the good of the country & the peace of Society” that Joseph be arrested and brought to justice.⁸⁵ Fleak would later write an autobiography in which he told of an instance where, according to Fleak, a man was sent by Joseph Smith to kill several anti-Mormons, including Kilbourne, but the man could not get to Kilbourne because of “two enormously large and savage bull dogs.”⁸⁶

Starting in October of 1842, Kilbourne began a correspondence that would last for several more years with a reverend in England, named T. Dent. The reverend had written to Kilbourne, requesting information about the Latter-day Saints. In the opening of his letter, Kilbourne expressed, “I have long felt that if I could be the means of preventing a single individual from joining this wretched community thereby save them that I have lived to some purpose.”⁸⁷ It seemed Kilbourne’s primary goal in writing was to provide evidence that Joseph Smith was swindling converts out of their money. He explained the situation with the Half-Breed Tract, and said that converts will often trade their material goods for land titles on the Half-Breed Tract, only to come and find that “others are occupying the land” which was deeded to them.⁸⁸ He explained other way methods that Joseph employs in swindling and said, “English Mormons have suffered here beyond description.”⁸⁹ He accused Joseph Smith of drunkenness and of giving into lust. Kilbourne told of a story

85. D. W. Kilbourne to Laban B. Fleak, August 12, 1842, in Warren A. Jennings, “Two Iowa Postmasters View Nauvoo: Anti-Mormon Letters to the Governor of Missouri,” *BYU Studies* 11, no. 3 (1971): 281.

86. Laban Fleak, “L. B. Fleak,” found in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 460.

87. D. W. Kilbourne to Rev. T. Dent, October 20, 1842,, in David W. Kilbourne papers, 1818–1914, Special Collections, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines.

88. D. W. Kilbourne to Rev. T. Dent, October 20, 1842, in David W. Kilbourne papers, 1818–1914, Special Collections, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines.

89. D. W. Kilbourne to Rev. T. Dent, October 20, 1842, in David W. Kilbourne papers, 1818–1914, Special Collections, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines.

where Smith, at a public meeting, related that he had heard someone say that it was a pity that Joseph's wife, Emma, had not broken her neck in a recent carriage accident. In response to this rumor, Joseph publicly threatened the unknown individual, saying that "if he ever crosses my threshold I will send him to hell."⁹⁰ Near the end of his extensive letter, Kilbourne advises, "If their desire to get land leads them to join - tell them to come out before joining & they can get land of the best quality for 2½ to \$5 an acre."⁹¹

The correspondence between these two men continued for several more years and Kilbourne continued to update Dent about events in Nauvoo and conditions with the Saints. During 1843, Kilbourne sent Dent two letters, one in February and one in December. In the February letter, Kilbourne recommends some literature about the Saints for Dent to read, and tells of Joseph's recent trip to Springfield, Illinois, where he was brought on charges of being involved in the attempted assassination of Missouri's previous governor, Lilburn Boggs, and was discharged.⁹²

During 1844, Kilbourne sent Dent several letters about the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, which occurred on June 27, 1844. The first was on June 15, in which he told of William Law, saying, "The eyes of some among the most honest of the leaders have been opened to see Joe's true character."⁹³ Law had previously been a member of the First Presidency, but became disaffected and helped start the *Nauvoo Expositor*, a newspaper which criticized Smith for his teachings regarding plural marriage.⁹⁴ Kilbourne outlined the destruction of the printing press for the *Expositor* and told of Law leaving Nauvoo, concluding that "sooner or later bloodshed must take place."⁹⁵ His next letter, written on June 29, told of the fulfilment

90. D. W. Kilbourne to Rev. T. Dent, October 20, 1842, in David W. Kilbourne papers, 1818–1914, Special Collections, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines.

91. D. W. Kilbourne to Rev. T. Dent, October 20, 1842, in David W. Kilbourne papers, 1818–1914, Special Collections, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines.

92. D. W. Kilbourne to Rev. T. Dent, February 24, 1843, in David W. Kilbourne papers, 1818–1914, Special Collections, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines.

93. D. W. Kilbourne to Rev. T. Dent, June 15, 1844, in David W. Kilbourne papers, 1818–1914, Special Collections, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines.

94. See Lyndon W. Cook, "William Law, Nauvoo Dissenter," *BYU Studies* 22, no. 1 (1982): 47–72.

95. D. W. Kilbourne to Rev. T. Dent, June 15, 1844, in David W. Kilbourne papers, 1818–1914, Special Collections, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines.

of this conclusion. He began his letter by saying, "I hasten to inform you of the wonderful events which have taken place at Nauvoo," and continued by explaining, "The work of death has commenced. The Mormon Prophet Joe Smith & his brother Hyrum are no more. I have just returned from Nauvoo & I this day looked upon the lifeless remains of these two men. . . . Their work of infamy is finished."⁹⁶

Kilbourne's own actions during the time of the martyrdom are interesting. On Thursday morning, knowing that Joseph and Hyrum Smith were in prison in Carthage, he decided to go to Carthage "for the purpose of seeing for myself and learning the true state of the case."⁹⁷ However, when he crossed the river, he decided to go to Nauvoo instead. He found Governor Thomas Ford, who was in Nauvoo encouraging the Saints to not engage in any violent retaliation. After the speech, he started out with Governor Ford towards Carthage, but when messengers met them on the road and informed them that Joseph and Hyrum had been killed, Kilbourne left the group and returned to Nauvoo. Keeping his knowledge of the martyrdom to himself, Kilbourne stayed at the Mansion House, which was where Joseph Smith's family lived at the time. In the morning, after the news had arrived, he went downstairs to observe the state of the Smith family, stating that he saw "no manifestations of grief on the part of any one save Joe's mother."⁹⁸ It is possible that, because of his decision to go to Carthage on the day of the martyrdom, Kilbourne had inside information about the ensuing mob. Irregardless, staying in the Mansion house shows that he was comfortable enough around the Saints to be in their midst with no fear of being connected to the activities in Carthage. Kilbourne's biography, written by his son, explained, "When the war broke up between the Mormons and Gentiles . . . the Kilbournes bore charmed lives and went and came as they pleased through Nauvoo and its suburbs to witness the movements of the contending armies."⁹⁹

96. D. W. Kilbourne to Rev. T. Dent, June 29, 1844, in David W. Kilbourne papers, 1818–1914, Special Collections, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines.

97. D. W. Kilbourne to Rev. T. Dent, June 29, 1844, in David W. Kilbourne papers, 1818–1914, Special Collections, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines.

98. D. W. Kilbourne to Rev. T. Dent, June 29, 1844, in David W. Kilbourne papers, 1818–1914, Special Collections, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines.

99. George E. Kilbourne, "David Wells Kilbourne," in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 478.

Kilbourne wrote to Dent again a month later, on July 29, giving him some detail about the aftermath of the martyrdom. He explained, "There have been no further hostilities. . . . They have been taught a lesson which I think they will not soon forget."¹⁰⁰ In December of 1845, Kilbourne wrote to Dent again, telling of the increasing violence between the Saints and their neighbors. He told of thieving and murders which were connected to the Saints, and then explained, "the Mormons made up their minds that they could not remain here. They accordingly decided to leave the county - & they are now getting ready to leave for California in Mexico on the 1st of April next."¹⁰¹ Kilbourne related specifics about their preparations, and stated, "It will be a glorious deliverance for all this section of country when they turn their backs upon it."¹⁰²

Conclusion

According to Kilbourne's biography, in about 1873, Kilbourne and his wife stopped in Salt Lake City on their way to California. They visited with some of those whom had lived on the Half-Breed Tract, who "called upon him in numbers and showed him every mark of respect."¹⁰³ David Wells Kilbourne's relationship with the Latter-day Saints in Lee County, Iowa, and in Hancock County, Illinois, was complicated, to say the least. Kilbourne eventually managed to maintain a relationship with the Saints which afforded him the ability to interact with his neighbors on peaceful terms. He was welcome in their city, even during times of great contention between the Saints and the anti-Mormons, but he always maintained a private disdain for the Saints and especially for Joseph Smith.

100. D. W. Kilbourne to Rev. T. Dent, June 29, 1844, in David W. Kilbourne papers, 1818–1914, Special Collections, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines.

101. D. W. Kilbourne to Rev. T. Dent, December 16, 1845, in David W. Kilbourne papers, 1818–1914, Special Collections, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines.

102. D. W. Kilbourne to Rev. T. Dent, December 16, 1845, in David W. Kilbourne papers, 1818–1914, Special Collections, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines.

103. George E. Kilbourne, "David Wells Kilbourne," in Caleb F. Davis Collection, Iowa State Historical Society, 479.