

The horse may starve, waiting for the grass to grow, and your store may grow lean if you wait until you are ENTIRELY READY to advertise it adequately.

DESERET EVENING NEWS.

If you are building a house to sell don't wait until it is finished before advertising it. You might as well have the first cash payment in hand by the time painters and decorators are through.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

PART TWO.

SATURDAY, JULY 1, 1905. SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.

FIFTY-FIFTH YEAR.

BIRTHPLACE OF JOSEPH SMITH THE PROPHET

(By Junius F. Wells.)

had visited Sharon, Windsor county, Vermont, in 1834, in company with Hon. Spencer Clawson and his daughter, and became somewhat familiar, at that time, with the facts concerning the birthplace of the Prophet. It was, however, early in the present year that attention was drawn more particularly to it and the desirability of acquiring and marking it for its historical interest.

At the request of the First Presidency of the Church, I undertook an inquiry into the identity of the location and as to the title of the property.

Starting with the statement contained in the "Life of Joseph Smith," by his mother, that he was born on the 23rd of December, 1805, in Sharon, Windsor county, Vermont, on a farm rented from her father, Solomon Mack, my effort was to establish the location of this farm from the records, and of the house from the testimony of living witnesses, and physical conditions, that would go to establish it.

We began with the town land records

of Sharon, as all transfers and mortgages of lands are recorded in each town by the town clerk, who is custodian of the records. Mr. D. E. Parkhurst, the present incumbent of the office—who is also a shoemaker—accompanied every facility for the search.

It was found that Solomon Mack purchased from Samuel Shepherd, 2nd, a farm of about one hundred acres on the 27th of August, 1804, as shown by the following deed:

SAMUEL SHEPARD 2ND TO SOLOMON MACK.
Know all men by these presents that I, Samuel Shepherd, 2nd, of Sharon, in the county of Windsor, state of Vermont, for the consideration of eight hundred dollars received to my full satisfaction of Solomon Mack of Fairbridge in the county of Orange, state above said, have and hereby do give, grant, bargain, sell, release, alien, convey and confirm unto him the said Solomon Mack, his heirs and assigns, the following parcel of land in Sharon above described as follows, being the whole of the farm I now live on, and seven acres of land belonging to the right that Moses Perkins was the grantee of, being last division, which land is laid out between the two lines of sd Sharon against Ebenezer Dewey's farm in Royaltown, it being the northerly end of sd lot so laid out, the whole of sd land supposed to be about one hundred acres be the same more or less.

To have and to hold the above granted and bargained premises, with all the privileges and appurtenances thereon or thereunto belonging to him the sd Solomon Mack, his heirs and assigns to his and their own proper use, benefit and behoof forever. Hereby covenanting for myself, my heirs, executors and administrators, with the sd Solomon Mack, his heirs and assigns, that until the sealing hereof I am the sole owner of the premises and that I will warrant and defend the same against all lawful claims whatsoever. In witness whereof I here unto set my hand and seal this 27th day of August, 1804.

SAMUEL SHEPARD 2ND.
(H. E.)

In presence of Joel Marsh, Joseph Smith.

State of Vermont, Windsor co., Sharon, August 27, 1804, read, and recorded. In tracing the title back from the description contained in this deed, it was interesting to discover that Sharon town was granted by King George III upon the advice of his well beloved Governor Benning Wentworth, of his majesty's province of New Hampshire to his loyal and loving subjects, residents thereof, by charter dated Aug. 17, 1761. The survey disclosed in said town about 21,400 acres, besides reservations for highways and public uses, which was to be equally divided among 43 grantees. Among the latter the names with which the title sought was con-

ected were John Downing, Esq., Joseph Parkhurst and Moses Perkins.

In the original allotment drawings were made of the first 100-acre lots, then of the first 40-acre lots, then of the second 100-acre lots, then of a further division, and finally a fourth or last division, which was accomplished by those who still held or had acquired by purchase the rights of the original grantees, "pitching" upon or surveying such remaining pieces, usually adjoining the lots already owned, as had not been divided.

In this way it appeared that the Solomon Mack farm of about 100 acres had been made up of 72 acres, the western part of the original hundred acre lot that John Downing was the grantee of. Also of a strip about 25 rods wide running between the old and new lines of the towns of Sharon and Royaltown. This strip adjoined the 72 acres on the west, and 26 acres of it was accredited to the right that Joseph Parkhurst was grantee of and 7 acres to the right that Moses Perkins was the grant-

tee of.

The above three pieces making nearly 100 acres were consolidated in the name of Samuel Shepard 2nd in 1794. The other transfers of this farm, which became the Mack farm and was for years afterwards so known are shown in the brief abstract which follows:

SHARON TOWN LAND RECORDS.
George III By Benning Wentworth, Governor.

To 68 Grantees.
The Town of Sharon, Aug. 17, 1761.
21,400 acres.

John Downing Esq., Grantee Lot 8 Beginning at a Beech tree marked 7 and 8, thence North 40 degrees East, 127 Rods to a Birch tree marked 8; thence South 57 degrees East 160 rods to a maple marked 8; thence South 40 degrees West 127 rods to a beech tree marked 7 and 8; thence to the first mentioned bound.

David Morse to Samuel Shepard, 2nd, 7 Nov., 1794.

Samuel Shepard 2nd, to Daniel Gilbert, 22 Sep., 1800.

Daniel Gilbert to Sam'l Shepard, 2nd, 27 Aug., 1804.

Samuel Shepard, 2nd, to Solomon Mack, 27 Aug., 1804.

Solomon Mack to Truman Miller, 21 March, 1807.

Truman Miller to Solomon Mack, 14 May, 1807.

Solomon Mack to Jacob Mack's Heirs, 20 March, 1810.

Solomon Mack to Daniel Gilbert, 11 May, 1811.

Lydia Gilbert to Chester Baxter, 26 Apr., 1821.

Chester Baxter to Solomon Downer, 21 May, 1828.

Solomon Downer to Asahel P. White, 1 April, 1839.

Asahel P. White to Solomon Downer, 1 April, 1839, Mts.

Solomon Downer to Harvey White, 1 Feb., 1848.

Harvey White and Solomon Downer to Bela Durkee, 5 Feb., 1859.

Bela Durkee to Gustavus A. Cady, 6 Oct., 1859.

Gustavus A. Cady and wife to Isaac J. Russ, 2 April, 1860.

Isaac J. Russ to John A. Lesure, 7 Nov., 1869.

John A. Lesure and wife to Benj. C. Latham, 1 Dec., 1868.

B. C. Latham and wife to Maria E. Kent, 23 Aug., 1892.

J. H. Kent and Maria E. Kent to C. H. Robinson, 3 Nov., 1905.

C. H. Robinson and wife to Jos. P. Smith, Trustee in Trust, 23 May, 1905.

It appears that the western boundary of the Mack farm was the Sharon and Royaltown town line and part of it adjoining the farm of Ebenezer Dewey in Royaltown. A peculiar feature of the latter, marked by the old stone wall and the custom of maintaining the div-

Story of the Purchase of a Historic Spot—Record of Land Title to the Solomon Mack Farm—Testimony of Living Witnesses as to the Identity of the Site—Plans for the Erection of Splendid Shaft to Commemorate the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Prophet's Birth—To be Dedicated in 1905.

ision fence is that a corner 21 rods by 20 rods is taken out of it, a corresponding jog is marked above the northwestern corner of the Mack farm, by the old stone wall, indicating that the town line was not the real division of farms on the west, though the records back of Bela Durkee's purchase in 1859, do not provide for this.

In running our survey we took the center of the wall on the town line 2,093 feet to the southward and ran north, bearing 44 degrees. In minutes east, this brought the town line about four feet east of the southeast corner of the house in which the Prophet was

born. This throws the whole of the foundation in Royaltown, while the tradition is that the line ran through the house and Joseph was born in the east room on the Sharon side of it. I asked our surveyor what effect, allowing the bearing N. 46 E. described in the original survey would have upon the line at the house and he replied as follows:

"If we were to extend the town line we used up to the southerly side of the 65 acre lot then set on the bearing N. 46 degrees E., it would strike the old house foundation a little west of the center and thus confirm the tradition you mention, and at sometime during the past 100 years that may have been done, without making any account of variations."

THE ROYALTOWN PART.
The search of the records at Royaltown where Mr. William Skinner, town clerk rendered valuable assistance, showed the title back to the original grantee in the county of Cumberland, province of New York. The division

line between the towns of Sharon and Royaltown was also the dividing line between the provinces of New York and New Hampshire. There was only time to transcribe the records from John Coy who deeded to Bela Durkee, 2nd September, 1859:

By this deed to Durkee and the deed of Harvey White and Solomon Downer to Durkee it is shown how the lands in Royaltown and in Sharon came together in one farm joining the old Coy and Mack farms together.

It is interesting to know that this Bela Durkee married Eliza Baker, whose sister Zina Baker, was the wife of William Huntington, and mother of Aunt Zina D. Huntington Young.

The record of transfer from the above

farm exactly provides for this, so we began our survey there and ran far enough northward so that the north boundary would be sure to include the farm house and barn foundations of what was known as the Solomon Mack place on the brook, and old Sharon road. This line was run to the east boundary of Robinson's land, which was also the east line of the Mack farm, thence to the southeast corner and back on the southerly boundary of the Robinson land to the place of beginning. It was found that these lines embrace 65 1/2-100 acres.

As the old Sharon road has for years been abandoned and there is no approach to the above from the Royaltown highway, it was desirable to provide for this, by including in the purchase a tract two rods wide, running along the line of the McIntosh corner by the Ebenezer Dewey farm and the old Dewey cemetery from the highway to the westerly boundary of the 65 acre tract, comprising one and one-tenth acres.

her signed statement. The Ebenezer Dewey family for four generations all named Ebenezer, are buried in their private cemetery, adjoining our roadway. The first and second, aged 82 and 80, were deacons. The other two were aged 50 and 52. The four died respectively in the years 1794, 1829, 1834, 1871.

The following was given to me while sitting on the stone doorstep of the Joseph Smith birthplace, on the 19th of May, 1905.

TESTIMONY OF BENJAMIN C. LATHAM.

I, Benjamin Cole Latham, son of Alsep Latham and Sally Cole, daughter of Benjamin Cole, who cleared the first acre on the old Haynes place, a mile down the highway from here, was born in 1824, in this neighborhood, and except for about 15 years between 1849 and 1868 have always lived here.

I knew Asahel White, who used to live on the Mack place in the White hollow, and I knew Ebenezer Dewey the third, who died in 1843, aged 89 years,

The ancient farm is a natural park. By clearing out dead timber, making a roadway and some paths, it will be converted into a beautiful summer resort. The White brook flowing through it, hidden by trees, abounds in trout. The native Vermont deer run wild over the glades and hill tops. The Maple Sugar industry is at its best here. In early spring when the sap begins to flow, and before the winter's snow has entirely gone, it is the delight of the people, old and young, to attend the syrup boilings and "sugaring off." There is to be erected a cottage for the use of a caretaker and accommodation of visitors. This will afford a pleasant resting place for a day or two to missionaries enroute to and from their foreign mission fields.

to the present ownership is as follows:

Bela Durkee to Gustavus A. Cady, Oct. 6, 1859.

Gustavus A. Cady to Isaac N. Russ, April 9, 1860.

Isaac N. Russ to John A. Lesure, Nov. 8, 1869.

John A. Lesure and wife to Benj. C. Latham, Dec. 1, 1868.

Benjamin C. Latham and wife to Maria E. Kent, Aug. 16, 1892.

J. H. and Maria E. Kent to C. H. Robinson, Oct. 15, 1902.

C. H. Robinson and wife to Joseph P. Smith, Trustee-in-Trust, May 23, 1905.

The place or tract selected out of the Robinson farm of 200 acres, comprises about 68 acres of the old Solomon Mack farm in Sharon and 22 of the Coy farm in Royaltown. This was arrived at by the desire to possess the site of the house in which Joseph Smith the Prophet was born and enough to the westward in Royaltown to take in the entire hill on which it stood. The corner referred to above as having come out of the Ebenezer Dewey

and Ebenezer Dewey fourth, who died in 1871, aged 82 years, both of whom were born on, occupied and lived on the farm adjoining to the west and south the Joseph Smith farm, which I owned for over 23 years, 1863 to 1892. I have often heard the latter Dewey, recollect also to have heard his father speak familiarly of the place as being the home of Joseph Smith, and the birthplace of Joseph Smith, the Prophet. The cellar and foundation now standing on the hill, a few rods from the old Dewey farm, was always pointed out by them as the ruins of the house in which he was born. They also referred to the farm as the old Mack farm, and the elder Dewey often spoke of Solomon Mack as being of a fine family. The Ebenesers Dewey were always considered the best people, and the bodies of four generations of them lie in the old cemetery along the line of my old farm. There is not the least doubt about this old cellar being the place where Joseph Smith was born. I have always known it and so have the people all about here. I heard the elder Dewey say that Mack lived there before and after Joseph Smith lived in it, and I have heard Lieut. Harrison Dewey, who was born and lived in the old Dewey place for 90 years, (he died in 1899) speak of the Smiths and Macks living in the place on the hill. He had a wonderful memory, and told many things about these people whom he knew about from the common talk of his own family and neighbors. If you had seen him 10 years ago when you were here he could have told you many things.

I bought the farm from Lesure in 1868 and lived on it in peaceable possession until 1892, when I sold it to Kent. It was formerly owned by Bela Durkee, who was my wife's father. His wife was Eliza Baker, sister to Zina Baker, who had a twin sister, Lina, who was the wife of Wm. Huntington and the mother of Zina D. Dimick B. and the other "Mormon" Huntingtons.

I remember when Bela Durkee bought the Mack farm from White and Downer and that he lived on the Royaltown part in the same house that I occupied. He took the White house and barn down. The latter is Robinson's horse barn now, being the same as I rebuilt it. I always supposed that the apple orchard was planted by Solomon Mack, the trees were old when I came on the property, Burbank, who married a Dewey, lived on the west on the old Dewey farm, now Mackintosh's, (since last fall) on the North Drex, then Sherbrook, and Doublyne, who had it of Hale to the east, on the southeast (Carl Jones and Morrie).

IDENTITY OF THE PROPHET'S BIRTHPLACE.
The foundation stones of the farm-house are still in place, also the walls of the cellar and the hearthstone and door stone. Some of the stable foundation and much of a stone wall that enclosed the barnyard and extended far beyond to fence off the orchard, and the old well, now filled with boulders, is still visible, and contains water. The orchard of apple trees was quite extensive and many of the old trees, the trunks of some of them two feet in diameter, are standing and bearing fruit. The blossoms were just beginning to burst forth from the most forward while I was there. Dimly marked on the hillside is the grass covered road that formerly led down from the farmhouse to the old Sharon road, along the right bank of the White brook, a beautiful little stream, abounding in trout, that flows through the property, and about equally divides the land of the old Mack farm.

The hill, so largely covered with apple trees in bloom, surrounded by the ruins of the farm house, is very picturesque, and beautiful. It is an isolated, quiet, lovely spot, surrounded by some of the most charming scenery of the Green Mountains, of which varied and extensive views are obtained from many points of vantage on the premises. It is probable that the place has not changed in its physical appearance for at least 80 years. It has been known to persons still living for that time as the foundation of the house in which Joseph Smith, the Prophet, was born. They derived their knowledge of it from other members of their own families, and neighbors who spoke familiarly and commonly of it as such. I interviewed and took down the testimony of some of these and have arranged to preserve that of others, and to have their testimony recorded, and perpetuated according to the Vermont law.

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I remember when Bela Durkee bought the Mack farm from White and Downer and that he lived on the Royaltown part in the same house that I occupied. He took the White house and barn down. The latter is Robinson's horse barn now, being the same as I rebuilt it. I always supposed that the apple orchard was planted by Solomon Mack, the trees were old when I came on the property, Burbank, who married a Dewey, lived on the west on the old Dewey farm, now Mackintosh's, (since last fall) on the North Drex, then Sherbrook, and Doublyne, who had it of Hale to the east, on the southeast (Carl Jones and Morrie).

IDENTITY OF THE PROPHET'S BIRTHPLACE.
The foundation stones of the farm-house are still in place, also the walls of the cellar and the hearthstone and door stone. Some of the stable foundation and much of a stone wall that enclosed the barnyard and extended far beyond to fence off the orchard, and the old well, now filled with boulders, is still visible, and contains water. The orchard of apple trees was quite extensive and many of the old trees, the trunks of some of them two feet in diameter, are standing and bearing fruit. The blossoms were just beginning to burst forth from the most forward while I was there. Dimly marked on the hillside is the grass covered road that formerly led down from the farmhouse to the old Sharon road, along the right bank of the White brook, a beautiful little stream, abounding in trout, that flows through the property, and about equally divides the land of the old Mack farm.

The hill, so largely covered with apple trees in bloom, surrounded by the ruins of the farm house, is very picturesque, and beautiful. It is an isolated, quiet, lovely spot, surrounded by some of the most charming scenery of the Green Mountains, of which varied and extensive views are obtained from many points of vantage on the premises. It is probable that the place has not changed in its physical appearance for at least 80 years. It has been known to persons still living for that time as the foundation of the house in which Joseph Smith, the Prophet, was born. They derived their knowledge of it from other members of their own families, and neighbors who spoke familiarly and commonly of it as such. I interviewed and took down the testimony of some of these and have arranged to preserve that of others, and to have their testimony recorded, and perpetuated according to the Vermont law.

A piece of the last Ebenezer Dewey, whose farm adjoined the Smith farm, lives in Sharon village, and gave me



PANORAMA VIEW OF THE JOSEPH SMITH FARM.

A—Site of Joseph Smith's Birthplace. B—Foundation of Solomon Mack's Farmhouse. C—Barnyard and Stable.