

Correspondence.

The Temple Block and the Country around.

INDEPENDENCE, Mo.,
Evening, Nov. 15th, 1875.

Editor Deseret News:

In company with Brothers F. Little, and J. W. Fox, Jun., I arrived at Independence, Mo., from Omaha, on the morning of the 15th inst. After breakfast we started for the Temple Block, about one mile west of the town. What is considered here as the Temple Block consists of about twenty-seven acres. The south-west corner of the survey is designated by a stone, which is nearly in the track of the wagon road running from Independence to Westport, and a few yards south of the bridge which carries the wagon road over the R. R. running through here.

The east line is a board fence which was the western boundary of the old town of Independence. The road from Independence to Westport constitute the northern boundary.

The spot which we suppose is the site of the future Temple which the Saints are to build in Jackson Co. is the top of a rise of ground which slopes more or less in every direction, in the North east corner of the plat. From this elevation there is a very fine view of the surrounding country. While the ground immediately around the crown of this hill is improved and occupied with some very good houses, some three or four acres on top of the elevation are left entirely out to the common. It appears to be a play ground, on which some of the youths of the town occasionally indulge in a game of base ball.

We were informed that a number of persons, who consider themselves old orthodox Saints, have associated together for the purpose of erecting a church on or near the supposed site of the Temple. Considerable preparation of materials was once made, but so far it appears to be a failure.

Mr. Wm. Eaton, who lives on the ground, is the owner of five town lots near the site of the Temple, and we were informed that the county record still shows the title to three other lots invested in the Trustee in Trust of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

The elevated ground on which the town of Independence stands, is the fountain head of four small streams—Sugar Creek, on the west; a branch of Rock Creek on the South; Spring Branch Creek on the east; and Mill Creek on the north. There is a report in circulation that the "Mormons" found a coal bed on the latter creek, but have kept its location a secret. Specimens of coal are occasionally found here.

There has been a great depreciation in the value of real estate since the war. Good land can be bought in the country for from 12 to 15 dollars per acre, and improvements for much less than cost.

Gen. Lucas, who will be remembered by many of the Saints until the day of reckoning, is dead. He was county recorder and hisson has now filled that office for a number of years.

After the Saints were driven out of the country, it appears to be an admitted fact here, that every scheme was devised to obliterate their land titles. Some, however, they found it difficult to mar, and the original record still remains.

History sometimes repeats itself with singular fatality. We were informed here that in 1833 there were about 150 houses belonging to the Saints burnt between Independence and Westport. In the last war the same ground was burnt over again, not a house being left on the road between Rock Creek, about two miles West of Independence, and the town of Westport, a distance of about 10 miles.

Col. Thomas Pitcher, of mob notoriety, still lives, but is a bankrupt. On lands from which the Saints had been driven, he built the finest residence in the county and the best flouring mill at that time west of St. Louis. These, with other improvements and some 40,000 dollars worth of wheat, were destroyed during the last war.

There are several large establishments for manufacturing purposes around Independence, but they do not seem to flourish. Nature has done more to make this country a paradise for men than any other country that I have seen.

This section of country, for all practical purposes, is about the geographical center of North America, and the idea is becoming prevalent among intelligent men, that it is yet destined to become the great political and commercial center of the Continent.

We were informed that near Kansas City there is a tract of land reserved, on the speculative idea that the capital of the United States will yet be located in that region.

A plan is also under consideration for making Kansas City a centre of inland trade, and Galveston, Texas, the great shipping mart for that trade.

We are indebted to A. C. Halderman, Esq., and family, for many kindly courtesies extended to us during our visit. Their residence is on the north side of and faces the Temple site. They are workers in marble, and furnished us some finely cut and polished specimens of a beautiful shell rock, a stratum of which underlies the site of the Temple. He pronounces it superior to Italian marble for many kinds of fine work.

We wish a kind remembrance to many friends.

Your brother in the Gospel,

JAMES A. LITTLE.

"Rents have risen," was the jocose remark of the astute small boy, when a nail caught in the previously small tear in his coat tail, and ripped the garment up to his neck. Subsequently, after an interview with his parents, he moaned to himself in the woodshed, that "leather had fallen."

The Rev. Henry Morgan's sermon on "Seventeen Reasons Why Men Don't Go to Church" is likened by wise people to that famous song with 499 verses. The first reason why men don't go to church is because they don't want to, and the seventeenth reason is the same.

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