

An Examination of the 1829 “Articles of the Church of Christ” in Relation to Section 20 of the Doctrine and Covenants

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The 1829 “Articles of the Church of Christ” is a little-known antecedent to section 20 of the Doctrine and Covenants. This article explores Joseph Smith’s and Oliver Cowdery’s involvement in bringing forth these two documents that were important in laying the foundation for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Section 20 was originally labeled the “Articles and Covenants.” It was the first revelation canonized by the restored Church and the most lengthy revelation given before the first priesthood conference was held in June 1830. Scriptural commentators in recent years have described the inspired set of instructions in section 20 as “a constitution for the restored church.”¹ In many respects, the Articles and Covenants was the Church’s earliest *General Handbook of Instructions*. Although Latter-day Saints typically associate the Articles and Covenants with the organization of the Church on April 6, 1830, this regulatory document had roots in earlier events: in the earliest latter-day revelations, in statements on Church ordinances and organization from the Book of Mormon, and in the preliminary set of Articles written by Oliver Cowdery in the last half of 1829.

This article will review those early revelations to show how the organization of the Church was prophetically foreshadowed and instituted. It will then identify certain prescriptions in the Book of Mormon that influenced the steps taken and pronouncements issued as the Church was organized on April 6, 1830. In particular, the contents of the 1829 Articles of the Church of Christ (figs. 1, 2, 3) and the 1830 Articles and Covenants of the Church of Christ will be summarized and contrasted. From this, the process through which Doctrine and Covenants 20 came into being will be explored in order to explain more fully how it came to be accepted as scripture.

1) I commandment from the unto Aliva how he should build up
his church & the manner thereof —
Saying Aliva listen to the voice of Christ your Lord & your God & your
Redeemer & write the words which I shall command you concerning my Church
my People my Aposles & my Felicitations. Behold the world is rebelling against
me & I must needs be that the children of men are thrust a part & that will
be as Gentiles & like the House of Israel for behold I command all who come
about to repent. I speak unto you even as unto that mine apostle John & am
called even with that same calling with which he was called Now therefore who
ever repenteth & humbleth himself before me & desireth to be baptized in my
name shall ye baptize them & after this manner shall ye command me that
I should baptize them Behold ye shall go down & stand in the water & in my
name shall ye baptize them And now behold these are the words which ye
shall say calling them by name saying Having authority given me of Jesus Christ
I baptize you in the name of the Father of the Son & of the Holy Ghost & whoso
ever shall be baptized in my name shall come forth again out of the water
& after this manner shall ye baptize in my name For behold verily I say unto you
that the Father & the Son & the Holy Ghost are one & I am in the Father & the Father
in me & the Father & I are one
And ye are also called to ordain Priests & Teachers according to the gifts & calling of
God unto men & after this manner shall ye ordain them Ye shall pray unto the Father
in my name & then shall ye lay your hands upon them & say In the name of Jesus
Christ I ordain you to be a Priest or a Teacher I ordain you to be a Priest
to preach & baptize & administer of wine through Jesus Christ by the ordinance of his
name to the end of time & that shall be the duty of the Priest He shall teach them
the members of the Church & shall also which Church shall be called
the Church of Christ & he shall pray to the Father in my name for the Church
to be that it be built upon my Rock & I will bless it And after that ye have prayed
to the Father in my name ye shall preach the truth in soberness casting out none from
among you but rather invite them to come And the Church shall oft partake
of bread & wine & after this manner shall ye partake of it The Elders or Priests
shall minister it & after this manner shall he do he shall kneel under the Church
& pray to the Father in the name of Christ & then shall ye say O God our Eternal
Father

FIG. 1. 1829 "Articles of the Church of Christ," page 1. In anticipation of the organization of the Church, Oliver Cowdery prepared the Articles, describing how the Church should be governed. The entire two and a half page document is written in Oliver Cowdery's distinct handwriting. Priesthood authority and baptism by immersion are first discussed.

we ask still in the name of thy Son Jesus Christ to bless & sanctify this bread &
the souls of all those who partake of it that they may ^{be} in remembrance of the body of
thy Son & witness unto thee O God the Eternal Father that they are willing to take
upon them the name of thy Son & always remember him & keep his commandments & that
thou hast given them that they may always have his spirit to be with them Amen
I and thou shall yet take the cups say O God the Eternal Father we ask still in the
name of thy Son Jesus Christ to bless & sanctify this wine to be the souls of all those
who partake of it that they may be in remembrance of the blood of thy Son which was
shed for them that they may witness unto thee O God the Eternal Father that
they always remember him that they may have his spirit to be with them Amen
I and thou behold I give unto you a commandment that ye shall not suffer any one know-
ingly to partake of my flesh & blood unawares when ye shall minister for whom
ye shall minister my flesh & blood unawares eateth & drinketh damnation to his soul
Therefore if ye know that a man is unawares to eat & drink of my flesh & blood ye shall
forbid him unawares ye shall not cast him out from among you but ye shall mini-
ster unto him & shall pray for him unto the Father in my name & it will be that he
repenteth & is baptized in my name then shall ye receive him & shall minister unto
him of my flesh & blood but if he repenteth not he shall not be numbered among
my people that he may not destroy my people for he doth know my flesh & they
do remember me the less ye shall not cast him out of your Synagogues or your places
of worship for unto such shall ye continue to minister for ye know not what
they will return & repent & come unto me with full purpose of heart & I shall
heal them & ye shall be the means of bringing Salvation unto them Therefore keep
these sayings which I have commanded you that ye come not unto condemnation
for us unto him whom the Father condemneth
And the Church shall meet together oft for prayer & supplication crying out none for
your places of worship but rather to them to come And each man shall
speak & tell the Church of their progress in the way to Eternal life
And there shall be no pride no envy no strife no malice no idolatry no
witchcrafts no whoredoms no fornications no contentions nor lying words
nor in any manner of iniquity & if any one is guilty of any or the least of these
& doth not repent & show fruits unto you repentance they shall not be number-
ed among my people that they may not destroy my people

Courtesy Church Archives

FIG. 2. 1829 "Articles of the Church of Christ," page 2. In building up the Church, Oliver Cowdery was commanded to rely "upon the things which are written" (D&C 18:3). On this page, the words of the sacrament prayers parallel Moroni chapters 4 and 5.

And now I speak unto the Church Repent all ye ends of the Earth & come
 unto me & be baptized in my name which is Jesus Christ & endure to the end &
 ye shall be saved Behold Jesus Christ is the name which is given of the Father &
 there is none other name given whereby man can be saved Therefore all men must
 take upon them the name of God is Father of the Father for in that name shall they
 be called at the last day Therefore if they know not the name by which they are
 called they cannot have place in the Kingdom of my Father Behold ye must walk
 uprightly before me & sin not & if ye do walk uprightly before me & sin not my grace
 is sufficient for you that ye shall be lifted up at the last day Behold I am
 Jesus Christ the Son of the living God I am the same which came unto my own
 & my own received me not I am the light which shineth in darkness & the darkness com-
 prehended it not these words are not of men nor of man but of our Father
 he is the words of him who is the first & the last the light & the life of the world
 And I Jesus Christ gave love & grace unto you & your Redeemer by the power of my
 Spirit hath spoken it Amen And now of I have not authority to write
 these things judge ye behold ye shall know that I have an authority when ye shall
 see me stand before you as I stand before you all I have said unto you
 as ye see all I have said unto you our Lord Jesus Christ he & abide with you all I have
 said unto you eternally in his Kingdom through the infinite atonement which is
 in Jesus Christ Amen Behold I am Oliver I am an Apostle
 of Jesus Christ by the will of God the Father & the Lord Jesus Christ
 Behold I have written the things which he hath commanded me for behold
 his word was unto me as a burning fire that shined in my bones & I was in agony
 & I could no longer stand Amen

Written in Regia year 1829 & 1830 by Oliver Cowdery
 of the articles of the Church of Christ J.C.

FIG. 3. 1829 "Articles of the Church of Christ," page 3. This relatively short statement of doctrines and procedures depended heavily on excerpts from the Book of Mormon and early revelations given to the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Prophetic Anticipation of the Organization of the Church

Joseph Smith's first responsibility as the latter-day prophet was to translate the Book of Mormon plates, which were entrusted to him by the angel Moroni on September 22, 1827. Only later would restoring and organizing the Lord's Church become an obvious extension of his prophetic mission, for that aspect of the restoration had to wait until the Prophet had finished translating the Book of Mormon in 1829.² But as the work of translation unfolded, the way was simultaneously being prepared for the imminent restoration and organization of the Church.

The earliest revelation that specifically mentions the impending establishment of the Church was given in late summer 1828. It was received shortly after Martin Harris had carelessly lost the initial 116 pages (containing the book of Lehi) from the Book of Mormon translation. In the revelation that followed, the Lord told Joseph Smith that in reestablishing His Church, this modern generation should be openhearted and spiritually prepared. The Lord admonished: "And for this cause have I said, if this generation harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them. Now I do not say this to destroy my church, but I say this to build up my church: therefore, whosoever belongeth to my church need not fear, for such shall inherit the kingdom of heaven."³

A few months later, in March 1829, the Lord spoke again on this subject, telling Joseph Smith and Martin Harris that the restored Church would be patterned after the New Testament-era organization. Expanding the earlier precondition, the Savior declared, "And thus, if the people of this generation harden not their hearts,⁴ I will work a reformation among them, . . . and I will establish my church, like unto the church which was taught by my disciples in the days of old."⁵ The Lord explained to his latter-day disciples that this reformation marked "the beginning of the rising up, and the coming forth of my church out of the wilderness—clear as the moon and fair as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."⁶

After Martin Harris was dismissed as scribe over the loss of the 116-page manuscript of the book of Lehi, Joseph Smith prayed fervently for another assistant to help him complete the work. His prayers were answered when Oliver Cowdery, the district school teacher from Manchester, New York, came to Harmony, Pennsylvania, in early April 1829. As part of his teaching remuneration, Cowdery had boarded with Joseph's parents, who eventually confided in Oliver about Joseph Jr.'s possession of the Book of Mormon record. After receiving profound spiritual confirmation of Joseph's calling, Oliver traveled to Harmony with the intention to be Joseph Smith's scribe. With Cowdery's assistance, the Book of Mormon translation made substantial progress. Inside of an amazingly productive

three-month stretch, from early April to late June 1829, Joseph translated and Oliver, as the main scribe, wrote more than four hundred closely written foolscap pages—almost the entire unsealed portion of the Nephite plates. Also, during these months, Joseph Smith received at least a dozen revelations and accomplished several other important tasks.⁷

The Nature of Oliver’s Authority

Soon after they met, Oliver asked Joseph to inquire of the Lord to know his (Oliver’s) duty. In response the Lord told Oliver—not once, but twice—to “give heed unto my words.”⁸ Cowdery was also counseled, “Now as you have asked, behold, I say unto you, keep my commandments, and seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion.”⁹ The Lord reminded the young schoolmaster, “For thou hast inquired of me, and behold as often as thou hast inquired, thou hast received instruction of my Spirit.”¹⁰ Oliver was assured that he would “receive a knowledge of whatsoever things [he] shall ask in faith, with an honest heart.”¹¹

Fascinated by Joseph’s ability to translate the ancient record, Oliver sought for the same blessing. Weeks earlier, the Lord had promised Oliver the gift “to translate even as my servant Joseph.”¹² Few details are known about the scribe’s attempt to translate, but, after Cowdery “did not translate according to that which [he] desired” of the Lord, he went back to writing for the Prophet. The Lord told Oliver to continue as scribe until the translation was completed.¹³

By May 1829, the Prophet Joseph was hard at work translating the book of 3 Nephi. As the work progressed, Joseph and Oliver became inspired by the Savior’s teachings to his disciples in ancient Bountiful. Years later, Cowdery reflected on how the translation spiritually motivated them. He wrote:

No men in their sober senses, could translate and write the directions given to the Nephites, from the mouth of the Savior, of the precise manner in which men should build up his church, . . . without desiring a privilege of showing the willingness of the heart by being buried in the liquid grave, to answer a “good conscience by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”

As the pure, undiluted gospel of Christ in 3 Nephi unfolded before them, Joseph and Oliver wanted to know more about priesthood authority and baptism for the remission of sins mentioned particularly in 3 Nephi 11:18–27. Oliver explained that in reflecting on 3 Nephi they realized that “none had authority from God to administer the ordinances of the gospel.”¹⁴ The Prophet’s history confirms that a desire for baptism for the remission of sins influenced their subsequent inquiry.¹⁵

On May 15, 1829, Joseph and Oliver adjourned to the nearby woods where they prayed for guidance. There along the tree-lined bank of the Susquehanna River, the heavens opened and the Lord's faithful servant John the Baptist came to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery to lay his hands upon their heads and bestow upon them the Aaronic Priesthood.¹⁶ As Oliver later explained, John the Baptist delivered the keys of the gospel of repentance, which included authority to baptize. The Aaronic Priesthood did not include the power of the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost (as is made clear in 3 Nephi 18:37), but Joseph and Oliver were promised that they would receive higher priesthood authority in due time. The heavenly minister directed Joseph to baptize Oliver, and Oliver to do the same for Joseph. After these baptisms were performed in the Susquehanna River, the Holy Ghost was manifested. Joseph Smith recounted:

No sooner had I baptized Oliver Cowdery than the Holy Ghost fell upon him and he stood up and prophecied many things which should shortly come to pass. And again so soon as I had been baptized by him, I also had the Spirit of prophecy when standing up I prophecied concerning the rise of this Church and many other things connected with the Church and this generation of the children of men.¹⁷

After their baptisms, Joseph and Oliver laid hands on each other's head and conferred the Aaronic Priesthood. Thus Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, as companions, received a transcendent understanding of the preparatory events connected to the "rise of this Church" almost a year before the Church was organized on April 6, 1830.

Shortly after John the Baptist's appearance, the Savior's three presiding apostles during the meridian of time—Peter, James, and John—came to Joseph and Oliver and bestowed the Melchizedek Priesthood and the associated keys, including the apostleship.¹⁸ Although Joseph and Oliver were given the keys and powers necessary to reestablish Christ's Church upon the earth, they did not exercise these keys or bestow the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands until the Church was organized in early April 1830. Shortly after receiving the essential gospel ordinances and priesthood authority, Joseph and Oliver moved, in early June 1829, to Peter Whitmer Sr.'s farmhouse in Fayette, New York. There they could work on the remainder of the Book of Mormon translation without concern for provisions or persecution.

As the translation proceeded, Joseph, Oliver, and Peter Whitmer's son, David, prayed to the Lord in mid-June 1829 for further "instructions relative to building up the church of Christ, according to the fullness of the gospel."¹⁹ The first part of the revelation that came in answer to their prayer implies that Oliver, in particular, wanted to know how to organize the Church. The Lord told Oliver to "rely upon the things which are

written, for in them are all things written concerning [the foundation of]²⁰ my church, my gospel, and my rock. Wherefore if you shall build up my church, upon the foundation of²¹ my gospel and my rock, the gates of hell shall not prevail against you” (D&C 18:3–5).

Later in the summer of 1829, the Prophet and his closest associates gathered at Peter Whitmer Sr.’s farmhouse and eagerly petitioned the Lord for permission to exercise the Melchizedek Priesthood keys by laying on hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.²² Responding to their solemn and fervent request, the Lord gave a revelation describing the manner in which they should hold the organizational meeting of the Church. This revelation called for Joseph to ordain Oliver an elder in the Church and for Oliver to then ordain Joseph to the same office. Joseph would be called the First Elder, and Oliver the Second Elder. Together they would select and ordain other men to either the Aaronic or Melchizedek Priesthood as directed by the Spirit. The assemblage would then vote, by the rule of common consent, to sustain Joseph and Oliver as their presiding officers and spiritual teachers. The sacrament would be administered by priesthood authority, and then Joseph and Oliver would be permitted to lay on hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Joseph explained that these actions were to be deferred until “such times, as it should be practicable to have our brethren, who had been and who should be baptized, assembled together.”²³ Months before the organization of the Church, a separate revelation given “by the Spirit of Prophecy” revealed “the precise day upon which, according to his [the Lord’s] will and commandment, we should proceed to organize his Church once again, here upon the earth.”²⁴ The date revealed was April 6, 1830, half a year in the future.

During the second half of 1829, Oliver Cowdery set about to use the as-yet-unpublished manuscript of the Book of Mormon, along with several early manuscript revelations, to compose the statement on Church procedure and organization that he called the “Articles of the Church of Christ.” In doing so, he literally fulfilled the command given to him the previous June when the Lord told him to “build up my church” by “rely[ing] upon the things which are written.”²⁵ Oliver’s Articles are an example of how closely he worked with the Prophet in laying the foundation of the Church. Years later, perhaps reflecting on these early events, Oliver confided to Phineas Young, his brother-in-law, how the Church, “the foundation of which my own hands helped to lay, is constantly near my thoughts.”²⁶

The authoritative tone is what first strikes the reader of the Articles. It is written so that the Lord speaks in the first person, just as many of

the revelations to Joseph. It may seem odd that Oliver was the actual compiler of revelation when his role as scribe for the Prophet seems so commonplace. Nevertheless, in the context of the pre-Church organization, Cowdery's actions were legitimate. Not until a year later, in the summer of 1830, months after the Church was organized, did the Lord specify that Joseph Smith, and Joseph Smith alone, was the Lord's appointed mouthpiece (D&C 28:1–7). Oliver Cowdery, as a bipartite holder of the restored keys of the Melchizedek Priesthood, was entitled to certain gifts of the Spirit. Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, who served for many years as Church historian and, later, as Church President, described Oliver's unique position: "Oliver Cowdery's standing in the beginning was as the 'Second Elder' of the Church, holding the keys jointly with the Prophet Joseph Smith."²⁷ Heber C. Kimball, a contemporary of Oliver Cowdery and later a counselor to Brigham Young in the First Presidency, noted that "Oliver Cowdery received revelations and wrote them."²⁸ However, it should not be automatically assumed that God's word to Oliver is precisely the same in nature as Joseph's revelations. The following two sections will highlight many differences.

Still, in his calling as the Second Elder, Oliver apparently held sufficient authority to write the first articles in anticipation of the Church's organization. Oliver testified that the Spirit of the Lord guided him throughout: "Behold I have written the things which [the Lord] hath commanded me for behold his word was unto me as a burning fire shut up in my bones and I was weary with forbearing and I could forbear no longer."²⁹

The Contents of Cowdery's 1829 Articles

The surviving copy of Cowdery's "Articles of the Church of Christ" is transcribed and printed in full as an appendix at the end of this article. A brief synopsis of its contents shows that Oliver selected doctrinal or essential ordinance passages from the unpublished Book of Mormon manuscript, integrated those passages with material from several of the Prophet's 1829 revelations, and added a few lines of his own commentary.

The Articles begin simply with the words "A commandment from God unto Oliver how he [Oliver] should build up his [the Lord's] church and the manner thereof." The Spirit tells Oliver to "listen to the voice of Christ . . . and write the words which I [the Lord] shall command you concerning my Church my Gospel my Rock and my Salvation."

The Church is then warned, "Behold the world is ripening in iniquity and it must needs be that the children of men are stirred up unto repentance both the Gentiles and also the House of Israel." Thus, a call

to repentance is issued and the apostolic calling of Oliver is affirmed: “For behold I [the Lord] command all men every where to repent and I speak unto you [Oliver] even as unto Paul mine apostle for ye are called even with that same calling with which he was called.”

Next, the manner and form of baptism are defined (reflecting 3 Nephi 11 and Mosiah 18). The procedure to be used by Church elders in ordaining priests and teachers is then explained (following Moroni 3), duties of the priests are specified, and the manner and form of administering the sacrament are defined (complete with the words of the sacrament prayers from Moroni 4–5). A commandment is given to refuse to allow the unworthy (unrepentant) to partake of the sacrament (echoing 3 Nephi 18:28).

Church members are counseled to meet together often for prayer and fasting and to report their personal progress toward eternal life (as the people are commanded in 3 Nephi 18:22 and Moroni 6). A warning is given against a dozen evils and iniquities (along the lines of Alma 1:32), and instructions are given to dismiss those who will not repent. The Lord calls all to repentance and invites them to come unto him, be baptized, endure to the end, and be saved, using language reminiscent of the words spoken by Jesus Christ as recorded in 3 Nephi 11.

The next sentence reads, “Behold ye must walk uprightly before me and sin not and if ye do walk uprightly before me and sin not my grace is sufficient for you that ye shall be lifted up at the last day.” This is followed by a direct quotation from the earliest revelation given to Oliver Cowdery by the Prophet Joseph Smith in April 1829, found in D&C 6:21: “Behold I am Jesus Christ the Son of the liveing God I am the same which came unto my own and my own received me not I am the light which shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not.”

Finally, the Lord bears testimony that “these words are not of men nor of man but of me,” and the closing statement reads, “Now remember the words of him who is the first and the last the light and the life of the world And I, Jesus Christ, your Lord and your God and your Redeemer, by the power of my Spirit hath spoken it Amen[.]”

Oliver appends an assertion of the authority by which this statement is issued: “And now if I have not authority to write these things judge ye behold ye shall know that I have authority when you and I shall be brought to stand before the judgment seat of Christ[.]” Cowdery then bears his apostolic testimony: “Behold I am Oliver I am an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

As is further confirmed by the notes to the transcription that follows in the appendix below, Oliver incorporated procedures and ordinances

gleaned from the Book of Mormon, supplemented by modern revelation or commentary of his own origination, to write his Articles of the Church of Christ.³⁰

A Brief Comparison of Cowdery's 1829 Articles with the 1830 Articles and Covenants

In the last twenty years, several Mormon writers have described Cowdery's 1829 Articles as the source or as a draft of the later Articles and Covenants (D&C 20).³¹ By this they imply that Joseph Smith revised and expanded Cowdery's earlier Articles. For the following reasons, such an interpretation is both inaccurate and misleading.

Comparison of Oliver Cowdery's 1829 Articles with an original 1830 version manuscript of the Articles and Covenants (D&C 20) is impossible since no surviving copy of the latter predates early 1831. The earliest extant manuscript of D&C 20 is cited herein as Watters-Daily.³² This early copy was made by an unidentified scribe sometime between February 9 and June 19, 1831.³³ Careful textual comparison of Cowdery's 1829 Articles against this early copy of D&C 20 reveals that Oliver Cowdery's document is far more dependent on the Book of Mormon text than is the latter. Roughly one-fifth of section 20³⁴ relies on the Book of Mormon for its text, while more than half of Cowdery's Articles are either direct quotations or paraphrases with slight deviations from the Book of Mormon.³⁵

Since the Prophet Joseph Smith left only a brief, general description of the reception of D&C 20, we are left to wonder exactly how the Articles and Covenants information was received.³⁶ Apparently a large percentage of the Articles and Covenants came by direct revelation to the Prophet. While the wording of the baptismal and sacramental ordinances in both documents is similar (as one would expect, given that the restored Church's use of baptismal and sacramental prayers are derived from the Book of Mormon),³⁷ significant differences exist. Cowdery's manuscript quotes or paraphrases almost double the amount of words from the Book of Mormon as does the Watters-Daily copy of D&C 20.³⁸ The Articles and Covenants, given through the Prophet Joseph Smith, is a richer, more comprehensive doctrinal and procedural document that in fact bears little or no resemblance to the earlier Cowdery Articles. More than a decade ago, Richard Lloyd Anderson described Cowdery's Articles not as a draft, but as a "forerunner" of section 20.³⁹ Analysis and comparison of these two early regulatory documents bears this description out. Cowdery's 1829 document came before the 1830 Articles and Covenants,

but Cowdery's document was not revised, corrected, expanded or specifically used to create section 20.

As shown in the next section, the more comprehensive Articles and Covenants, which was received during the second quarter of 1830, quickly eclipsed Cowdery's less complex version of the Church articles. Oliver's 1829 document should be read and understood simply as a preliminary step taken by the Second Elder to assist in laying the administrative groundwork for the organization of the restored Church.

Writing the Articles and Covenants of the Church

The historical heading of section 20 in the current edition of the Doctrine and Covenants says that the Articles and Covenants was received in April 1830, but does not say where it was received. No explanation or source is given to support this dating. When the Articles and Covenants was published in the 1833 edition of the Book of Commandments, the date and location were given as June 1830 at Fayette, New York.⁴⁰ Regrettably, we do not have an original manuscript or even a pre-1831 copy of the Articles and Covenants. The two earliest copies are the Watters-Daily manuscript and a version printed in an Ohio newspaper. Both of these items preserve the text as it read in early 1831.⁴¹ In analyzing these copies, one needs to remember that the Articles and Covenants was a practical religious text that the Prophet revised and expanded as the Church organization developed.⁴²

Reliable sources provide enlightening details that allow us to approximate the time period for the reception of section 20. It appears that Joseph Smith dictated D&C 20 between late March and the first week of June 1830.⁴³ This dating is derived from the earliest time period in 1830 that Joseph Smith was in western New York for a sustained visit (not a brief visit such as those mentioned by Mother Lucy Mack Smith⁴⁴) and the June 9, 1830, church conference at Fayette where the Articles and Covenants was first read in public. A manuscript history written by Joseph Knight, a close friend and supporter of Joseph Smith, describes how he transported the Prophet in his wagon from Harmony to Manchester at the time E. B. Grandin was completing the printing of the Book of Mormon, just before the Church's organization. Mother Lucy Mack Smith, in her family memoir, recalled that Joseph returned from Pennsylvania "about the first of April of the same year in which the Book of Mormon was published."⁴⁵

Additional historical evidence suggests that Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were together when the Articles and Covenants was written.

Oliver was living in the Palmyra-Manchester area during spring 1830 as he, along with Joseph's brother Hyrum, personally supervised the publication of the Book of Mormon. In late March or early April 1830, Cowdery traveled along with Joseph Smith and others to Fayette, New York, where they participated in the organization of the restored Church of Christ on April 6, 1830.

Though Oliver Cowdery was probably involved in writing section 20, this time it was only in the mechanical sense—as the Prophet's scribe. Years later, Brigham Young described how Joseph had to struggle with Oliver as the Prophet dictated a revelation on priesthood—evidently the 1830 Articles and Covenants. President Young said, “You read that Oliver Cowdery was the Second Elder and you remember the Revelation on the Priesthood [section 20];⁴⁶ . . . Joseph was two hours laboring with O[liver] C[owdery] to get him to write the Revelation in humility.”⁴⁷ The fact that Oliver Cowdery had compiled an earlier set of Articles could at least partially explain his reluctance or difficulty. The Second Elder may have felt that his earlier composition of the Articles was being overlooked or was already sufficient.

It is uncertain whether Joseph Smith had either received or committed the Articles and Covenants to paper by the time the Church was organized at Fayette on April 6, 1830. Since there are no contemporary minutes for the meeting that day, it is not known if D&C 20 was presented or discussed. None of those present in Fayette on that memorable day mentioned the Articles and Covenants in connection with the formal organization.

On the other hand, during the first quarterly conference of elders held in Fayette on June 9, 1830, Joseph Smith read the Articles and Covenants and then called for a sustaining vote.⁴⁸ The conference minutes reported that the revelation was “recieved [*sic*] by the unanimous voice of the whole congregation, which consisted of most of the male members of the Church.”⁴⁹ At this inaugural conference, the priesthood holders were given licenses showing their priesthood office (fig. 4) and certifying that they had been “baptized and received into the Church according to the Articles and Covenants of the Church.” Alongside his official Church leadership title, the Prophet signed his name to these simple handwritten certificates as First Elder, and Oliver Cowdery signed as Second Elder.⁵⁰

A Brief Overview of the Contents of the 1830 Articles and Covenants

An examination of the contents and structure of the Articles and Covenants (fig. 5) discovers that the revelation has two sections. The first part,

A License Liberty Power & Authority
Given to Joseph Smith Sr. signifying & knowing that
he is a Priest of this Church of Christ established & regularly
organized in these last days of the world in the 6th day of
April 1830 of which has been done by the will of God and in ac-
cording to his holy calling & the gift & power of the Holy Ghost accord-
ing to the revelations of Jesus Christ given to Joseph Smith Sr.
the first Elder of the Church signifying that he has been baptized
& received into the Church according to the Articles & Covenants of
the Church & ordained under the hand of Oliver Cowdery who is an
Apostle of our Lord an Elder of the Church
Signed by Joseph Smith Sr. First Elder
Oliver Cowdery Second Elder
Given to the Bearer in conference held in
Fayette Seneca County N.Y. June 9th 1830

FIG. 4. During the inaugural conference of elders held in Fayette on June 9, 1830, Joseph Smith read the Articles and Covenants and then called for a sustaining vote. Ten handwritten priesthood licenses were then given to the priesthood holders present. This license given to Joseph Smith Sr. is signed by the Prophet as First Elder and Oliver Cowdery as Second Elder. All of the licenses issued that day were written out by Oliver Cowdery. The long ink splotch under Cowdery's signature was a crude seal added to prevent anyone else from signing their names to the licenses.

The name of the Church of Christ in these last days
 being one thousand eight hundred and thirty years since
 the coming of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ
 in the flesh it being regularly organized and esta-
 blished agreeable to the laws of our country by
 the will and commandments of God in the first 10
 Month and on the sixteenth day of the Month which
 is called April which year our founders were
 were given to Joseph the son who was called
 of God an apostle of Jesus Christ and Elder
 of the Church and also to Oliver who was also
 called of God an apostle of Jesus Christ and Elder
 of the Church and ordained under his hand
 and this according to the grace of our Lord
 and saviour Jesus Christ to whom be all
 glory both now and forever Amen
 36 After that a ~~vision~~ was manifested unto
 the first Elder that he had received a revelation
 of his sins he was interjected again in the name
 of the world but after truly repenting
 God ministered unto him by an holy Angel
 whose countenance was as lightning and whose
 garments were pure and white above all other
 men and gave unto him commandments which
 he obeyed him from on high and gave unto
 him power by the means of which was before
 prepared that he should translate a book which
 book contained a record of a fallen people
 and also the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ
 to the Gentiles and also to the Jews
 proving unto them that the holy scriptures
 are true and also that God doth his purpose
 and will call them to his holy work in these
 last days as well as in days of old that he
 might be the same God forever Amen
 This Book was given by inspiration it is called
 by the ministering of Angels and ordained
 unto the world by three witnesses because
 so great witness by them shall the world
 be Judge even as many as shall hereafter
 receive this work with a faith

Courtesy Church Archives

FIG. 5. Manuscript copy of the first page of the Articles and Covenants, ca. early 1831. It is referred to as the Watters-Daily copy in this essay, and is written in the hand of an unknown scribe. This is the earliest known manuscript of what would become D&C section 20.

verses 1–36 in the current edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, has five subsections or paragraphs that all end with “Amen” and that are beautifully succinct historical and doctrinal statements. The second part, comprising verses 37–84, details the procedural requirements and ordinances of the restored Church of Christ. A brief outline of the contents, referenced by the modern versification, follows.

The five “Amen” sections are:

Verses 1–4: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was founded according to civil law and “by the will and commandments of God” on April 6, 1830. The Lord gave these commandments to “Joseph the Seer,”⁵¹ whom he called and ordained an Apostle of the Savior “to be the first elder”⁵² of the Church and to Oliver Cowdery, whom the Savior called and ordained an Apostle and “the second elder.”

Verses 5–12: After Joseph Smith received forgiveness for his youthful sins (during the First Vision), he became “entangled again in the vanities of the world.” But Joseph repented, and God sent a “holy angel [Moroni], whose countenance was as lightning and whose garments were pure,” to the Prophet multiple times from 1823 to 1827. In due time, the Lord “inspired him and gave him power from on high” to translate the Book of Mormon plates, “proving to the world that the holy scriptures are true” and that the Book of Mormon is a second witness of Jesus Christ and his eternal gospel.

Verses 13–16: The world will be judged by the testimony of the Three Witnesses. Those who accept the Book of Mormon will “receive a crown of eternal life; but those who harden their hearts and reject it” will be damned.

Verses 17–28: The doctrine of the unchangeable God and the creation, fall, and atonement are explained.

Verses 29–36: The Lord explains the doctrines of repentance, faith, justification, and sanctification. Verse 36 concludes the historical and doctrinal section of the Articles and Covenants.

The remainder of D&C section 20 contains the core administrative procedures and ordinances by which the priesthood and general Church membership are to abide. The Prophet organized the final section of the Church’s constitution in the following order:

Verse 37: The prerequisites for baptism are explained.

Verses 38–67: Duties of the elders, priests, teachers, deacons, and members of the Church of Christ are detailed.

Verses 68–71: Duties of baptized members are explained.

Verses 72–74: The mode of baptism is specified (that is, immersion) and the baptismal prayer is given (compare 3 Nephi 11:25).

Verses 75–79: The Church is commanded to “meet together often” to partake of the sacrament in the “remembrance of Jesus Christ.” The sacramental prayers on the bread and wine of the Lord’s Supper are specified (compare Moroni 4–6).⁵³

Verse 80: The procedure for dealing with members in transgression is explained.

Verses 81–84: Finally, Church regulations governing membership lists and recommends are given.

Acceptance of the Articles and Covenants

An interesting episode directly connected with the acceptance of the Articles and Covenants occurred a short time after the Church was organized. The Prophet’s manuscript history preserves some of the details of the incident.⁵⁴ Sometime in either July or August 1830, while Oliver Cowdery was living with the Whitmers at Fayette, he discovered what he thought was an error in the Articles and Covenants. Oliver became alarmed when he read “and truly manifest by their works that they have received of the Spirit of Christ unto the remission of their sins.”⁵⁵ Cowdery wrote an angry letter to Joseph, who was working his farm in Harmony, pointing out the alleged doctrinal mistake. It is possible that Oliver associated the requirement of “manifest by their works” as being too closely akin to the requirement that a believer must prove before the congregation that he or she has received God’s grace before being admitted into full fellowship,⁵⁶ but the basis of his objection remains unstated and obscure. Oliver simply demanded “in the name of God” that Joseph make the deletion so that, as he warned, “no priestcraft be amongst us.”⁵⁷

In a prompt reply to his assistant, Joseph Smith asked Oliver “by what authority he took upon him to command [the Prophet] to alter or erase, to add or diminish to or from a revelation or commandment from the Almighty God.”⁵⁸ A short time later, Joseph visited Oliver and the Whitmer family, and, as the Prophet describes, “with great difficulty, and much labour” he reasoned with and convinced them that Oliver Cowdery’s “rash judgment” did not accord with the Spirit of God and that the challenged religious doctrine in the Articles and Covenants was “in accordance with the rest of the commandment.”⁵⁹ The evidence indicates that after all they had been through—their shared revelatory experiences in the restoration of the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthood and the inspired translation of the Book of Mormon—Cowdery evidently viewed himself as Joseph Smith’s coequal—a position that was not his to claim.

When the Church met for the second quarterly conference on September 26, 1830, at Fayette, conference attendees appointed the Prophet to preside. The minutes show that the first item of business voted upon was the appointment of Joseph Smith as the one “to receive and write Revelations & Commandments for this Church,” and the “voice of the Conference” sanctioned the resolution.⁶⁰ Oliver Cowdery was not the only prominent individual who had challenged the Prophet’s authority; Hiram Page had

attempted to receive revelation “concerning the upbuilding of Zion [and] the order of the Church.”⁶¹ Acknowledging Joseph Smith as the only revelator for the Church clarified, for leaders and members alike, that he alone was charged with the prophetic governance of the Church.⁶²

During the conference, Oliver Cowdery read the Articles and Covenants to the congregation, and the Prophet commented upon them.⁶³ Evidently, by autumn 1830, Oliver had become reconciled to and sustained the Articles and Covenants as the procedural authority of the Church, as did all other members at that time.

Conclusion

The Articles and Covenants of the Church of Christ began to take shape shortly after Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery first met in April 1829. The Lord commanded Oliver to “rely upon the things which are written” in shaping the forthcoming Church’s earliest policies and procedures (D&C 18:3). Cowdery’s Articles of the Church of Christ, prepared sometime in the second half of 1829, was a relatively short procedural statement that depended heavily on excerpts from the Book of Mormon and early revelations to the Prophet. Thus it can be concluded that even though Oliver’s Articles were written in the first person of Christ’s voice, it does not rise to the same stature of original and authoritative revelation. At some point between late March and early June 1830, the Prophet Joseph Smith, assisted by Oliver Cowdery as scribe, wrote the revelation known as the Article and Covenants, which superceded Cowdery’s earlier Articles. In the more comprehensive and longer Articles and Covenants, the Lord gave to Joseph, Oliver, and the Church a constitutional and procedural guide to regulate Church affairs. Oliver’s 1829 document was simply a preliminary attempt to compile a governing document, but it lacked the organizational details needed to administer to the needs of the Church. The material in D&C section 20 was read in the first two conferences of the Church and was cited authoritatively in official Church documents, such as priesthood licenses and member recommends, from the earliest years of the Church.

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Appendix: Oliver Cowdery's 1829 "Articles of the Church of Christ"

In the early 1970s, while conducting research on the historical and textual development of the revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants, Robert J. Woodford analyzed all extant manuscript copies of Joseph Smith's revelations, most of which are in the LDS Church Archives.⁶⁴ Woodford's analysis of D&C section 20 includes the earliest verbatim transcription of Oliver Cowdery's Articles of the Church of Christ.⁶⁵ Woodford's was the first public presentation of Cowdery's 1829 document.

The only surviving copy of Cowdery's Articles was written on a large sheet of paper folded in half, creating a four-page manuscript. Oliver wrote on the first three pages and left the fourth page blank.⁶⁶ The document's concluding notation, written by Oliver, indicates that this manuscript is a "true copy" of the Articles of the Church as they existed in 1829. This suggests that an earlier, original Articles manuscript must have once existed. From mid-1831 until the late 1950s, this three-page "true copy" was hidden away and unknown to anyone.

What is unique about Cowdery's manuscript is that it was once part of the official Church records but was lost (probably stolen) from the Church in summer 1831. Almost 130 years later, in 1960, the Church unexpectedly received Cowdery's Articles document as part of a larger donation of early church manuscripts. The unsolicited donation came from a non-Mormon descendant of an individual briefly noticed in the Ohio period of Latter-day Saint history. Many readers of early Mormon history will recall the name Symonds Ryder. He had joined the Church by June 1831, but his conversion was short-lived and he apostatized after only a few months. In addition, the official Church history identifies Symonds Ryder as the notorious ringleader of the Hiram, Ohio, mob that tarred and feathered Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon in March 1832.⁶⁷ Earlier, prior to his apostasy, Ryder was mentioned in a revelation (D&C 52:37) when the Lord called him to replace an unfaithful missionary. Unfortunately, in writing the revelation and letter of appointment, the Prophet's scribe misspelled Symonds Ryder's name by writing an *i* rather than a *y*. This innocent mistake allegedly gave Ryder reason to doubt Joseph Smith's source of inspiration. Even though Ryder himself was not very consistent, his preferred spelling of the name is Symonds Ryder. Strangely, and with perhaps a touch of humorous irony, the current edition of the Doctrine and Covenants still misspells Ryder's first name.

There is a potential link, recently discovered, between Symonds Ryder's apostasy and the disappearance of the manuscript of Oliver Cowdery's

Articles of the Church in 1831. Ryder was in Kirtland on June 6, 1831, when he was ordained an elder by Joseph Smith.⁶⁸ Two weeks after Symonds's ordination, the Prophet, accompanied by many of the leading brethren in Ohio, departed from Kirtland on their first visit to Independence, Jackson County, Missouri—the site of the prophesied city of the New Jerusalem and the land designated as Zion. Allegedly, with the Church leaders away, Symonds Ryder traveled north from his farm in Hiram, Ohio, up to the Church headquarters in Kirtland. Somehow, without being discovered, he accessed the Church records. Symonds apparently knew what he was looking for. He secured a certain group of manuscript revelations. The documents he took detailed, in one way or another, the organization, procedures, or laws of the Church. Included in these materials was Oliver Cowdery's 1829 Articles.⁶⁹ Ironically, also among the manuscripts was a copy of the revelation in which Ryder's name was misspelled. More than 125 years later, in 1958, Symonds Ryder's descendants discovered these manuscript revelations tightly rolled up in a linen handkerchief inside the drawer of a dresser that had been in the Ryder family for many years. The family believes that Ryder himself hid these documents for unknown reasons and they remained untouched until being discovered in 1958. It was his great-great-granddaughter who unrolled the precious old documents and flattened them in books. Two years later, the Ryder family, assisted by a Latter-day Saint family living in the community of Ravenna, Ohio, forwarded these priceless historical revelation documents to the Church historian in Salt Lake City.⁷⁰

The following is a verbatim transcription of the original manuscript now in the LDS Church Archives. Spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing are reproduced as in the handwritten document. Angle brackets (as in <eat>) are used to show letters or words inserted in the text by Oliver Cowdery. Editorial additions are indicated with square brackets (as in [it]). Bracketed page numbers (as in [p. 1]) denote the end of a page in the original. Cowdery's frequent use of the ampersand has been silently replaced with "and." The entire document is in Oliver's handwriting.

Transcription of the 1829 Articles of the Church of Christ

A commandment from God unto Oliver how he should build up his church⁷¹ and the manner thereof—

Saying Oliver listen to the voice of Christ your Lord and your God and your Redeemer and write the words which I shall command you concerning my Church my Gospel my Rock⁷² and my Salvation. Behold the world

is ripening in iniquity and it must needs be that the children of men are stirred up unto repentance both the Gentiles and also the House of Israel⁷³ for behold I command all men every where to repent and I speak unto you even as unto Paul mine apostle for ye are called even with that same calling with which he was called⁷⁴ Now therefore whosoever repenteth and humbleth himself before me and desireth to be baptized in my name shall ye baptize them⁷⁵ And after this manner did he command me that I should baptize them Behold ye shall go down and stand in the water and in my name shall ye baptize them And now behold these are the words which ye shall say calling them by name saying Having authority given me of Jesus Christ⁷⁶ I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost Amen And then shall ye immerse them in the water and come forth again out of the water and after this manner shall ye baptize in my name For behold verily I say unto you that the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost are one and I am in the Father and the Father in me and the Father and I are one.

And ye are also called to ordain Priests and Teachers according to the gifts and callings of God unto men⁷⁷ and after this manner shall ye ordain them Ye shall pray unto the Father in my name and then shall ye lay your hands upon them and say In the name of Jesus Christ I ordain you to be a Priest or if he be a Teacher⁷⁸ I ordain you to be a Teacher to preach repentance and remission of sins through Jesus Christ by the endurance of faith on his name to the end Amen⁷⁹ And this shall be the duty of the Priest He shall kneel down and the members of the Church shall kneel also which Church shall be called The Church of Christ and he shall pray to the Father in my name for the church and if it so be that it be built upon my Rock I will bless it And after that ye have prayed to the Father in my name ye shall preach the truth in soberness casting out none from among you⁸⁰ but rather invite them to come And the Church shall oft partake of bread and wine⁸¹ and after this manner shall ye partake of it The Elder or Priest shall minister it and after this manner shall he do he shall kneel with the Church and pray to the Father in the name of Christ and then shall ye say O God the Eternal Father [p. 1] we ask thee in the name of thy Son Jesus Christ to bless and sanctify this bread to the souls of all those who partake of it that they may et <eat> in remembrance of the body of thy Son and witness unto thee O God the Eternal Father that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son and always remember him and keep his commandments which he hath⁸² given them that they may always have his spirit to be with them Amen⁸³ And then shall ye take the cup and say O God the Eternal Father we ask thee in the name of thy Son Jesus Christ to bless and sanctify this wine to the souls of all those who drink of it that they may do

[it] in remembrance of the blood of thy Son which was shed for them that they may witness unto thee O God the Eternal Father that they do always remember him that they may have his spirit to be with them Amen⁸⁴ And now behold I give unto you a commandment⁸⁵ that ye shall not suffer any one knowingly to partake of my flesh and blood unworthily when ye shall minister it for whoso eateth and drinketh my flesh and blood unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to his soul Therefore if ye know that a man is unworthy to eat and drink of my flesh and blood ye shall forbid him nevertheless ye shall not cast him out from among you but ye shall minister unto him and shall pray for him unto the Father in my name and if it so be that he repenteth and is baptized in my name then shall ye receive him and shall minister unto him of my flesh and blood but if he repenteth not he shall not be numbered among my people that he may not destroy my people For behold I know my sheep and they are numbered nevertheless ye shall not cast him out of your Synagogues or your places of worship for unto such shall ye continue to minister for ye know not but what they will return and repent and come unto me with full purpose of heart and I shall ~~heat~~ <heal> them and ye shall be the means of bringing Salvation unto them Therefore keep these sayings which I have commanded you that ye come not under condemnation for wo unto him whom the Father condemneth—⁸⁶

And the church shall meet together oft for prayer and sup[p]lication casting out none from your places of worship but rather invite them to come And each member shall speak and tell the church of their progress in the way to Eternal life

And there shall be no pride nor envying nor strifes nor malice nor idolatry nor witchcrafts nor whoredoms nor fornications nor covetousness nor lying nor deceits nor no manner of iniquity⁸⁷ and if any one is guilty of any or the least of these and doth not repent and show fruits mee<a>ts [meets] for repentance they shall not be numbered among my people that they may not destroy my people [p. 2]

And now I speak unto the Church Repent all ye ends of the Earth and come unto me and be baptized in my name⁸⁸ which is Jesus Christ and endure to the end and ye shall be saved Behold Jesus Christ is the name which is given of the Father and there is none other name given whereby men can be saved Wherefore all men must take upon them the name which is given of the Father for in that name shall they be called at the last at <day> Wherefore if they know not the name by which they are called they cannot have place in the Kingdom of my Father⁸⁹ Behold ye must walk uprightly before me and sin not and if ye do walk uprightly before me and sin not⁹⁰ my grace is sufficient for you that ye shall be lifted up at

the last day⁹¹ Behold I am Jesus Christ the Son of the liveing God I am the same which came unto my own and my own received me not I am the light which shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not⁹² these words are not of men nor of man but of me⁹³ Now remember the words of him who is the first and the last the light and the life of the world⁹⁴ And I Jesus Christ your Lord and your God and your Redeemer by the power of my Spirit hath spoken it Amen⁹⁵

And now if I have not authority to write these things judge ye behold ye shall know that I have authority when you and I shall be brought to stand before the judgment seat of Christ⁹⁶ Now may the [*manuscript torn*] [grace] of God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ be and abide with you all⁹⁷ and [*manuscript torn*] [finally] save you Eternally in his Kingdom through the Infinite atonement which is in Jesus Christ Amen—

Behold I am Oliver I am an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ Behold I have written the things which he hath commanded me for behold his word was unto me as a burning fire shut up in my bones and I was weary with forbearing and I could forbear no longer⁹⁸ Amen—

Written in the year of our Lord and Saviour 1829—

A true Copy of the articles of the Church of Christ &c.⁹⁹

1. Lyndon W. Cook, *The Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Provo, Utah: Seventy's Mission Bookstore, 1981), 31. See also Robert John Woodford, "The Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants," 3 vols. (PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 1974; CD version, Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History and BYU Studies, 2001) 1:286–93.

2. Oliver Cowdery, in the final installment of his history of the "rise of the church," stated that Moroni told Joseph Smith in 1823 that "when they [the Book of Mormon plates] are interpreted the Lord will give the holy priesthood to some, and they shall begin to proclaim this gospel and baptize by water, and after that they shall have power to give the Holy Ghost by the laying on of their hands." Oliver Cowdery to W. W. Phelps, Letter 8, undated, ca. September–October 1835, printed in *Messenger and Advocate* 2 (October 1835): 199. All primary sources, both published and unpublished, will be cited as in the original documents, with no attempt to correct spelling, capitalization, and so forth.

3. *A Book of Commandments, For the Government of the Church of Christ Organized According to Law, on the 6th of April, 1830* (Zion [Independence, Mo.]: W. W. Phelps, 1833), 9:14 (hereafter cited as Book of Commandments); current D&C 10:53–55.

4. Joseph Smith read a similar statement sometime in May or June 1829, while translating the Savior's teachings to the Nephites. Speaking about the latter-day Gentiles, the Lord said, "But if they will repent, and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them." *The Book*

of *Mormon* (Palmyra, N.Y.: E. B. Grandin, 1830), [3rd] Nephi, chapter 10 (p. 501) (hereafter cited as 1830 Book of Mormon); current 3 Nephi 21:22.

5. Book of Commandments 4:5. When the revelation was prepared for publication in the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants, verses 5 and 6 of the Book of Commandments were replaced by the material in the latter half of verse 3 in the 1835 edition. Current D&C 5:18–20 reads the same as the 1835 D&C. The only extant manuscript copy of Doctrine and Covenants 5 is worded slightly differently: “And I will establish my Church yea even the church which was taught by my Disciples.” D&C 5 manuscript, undated, 1, Newel K. Whitney Collection, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (hereafter cited as Perry Special Collections).

6. 1835 D&C 32:3; current D&C 5:14. This phrase was first included in the revelation when it was published in the 1835 D&C.

7. These revelations are found in current D&C 6–9, 11–18. Current D&C 10, received in summer 1828, is chronologically out of order due to the 1833 Book of Commandments editors incorrectly assigning a later date of May 1829 (see Book of Commandments, chapter 9, heading). While compiling the Prophet’s official history in 1839, James Mulholland, one of Joseph Smith’s clerks, inserted a copy of this revelation into the Prophet’s manuscript history immediately following section 3 (dated July 1828). Mulholland used the 1835 D&C as his source text for this revelation. See Manuscript History of the Church, Book A-1, 10–11, Church Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter cited as LDS Church Archives), published in Dean C. Jessee, ed., *The Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989–92), 1:287–88. For an in-depth discussion of the dating of D&C 10, see Max H. Parkin, “A Preliminary Analysis of the Dating of Section 10,” *Sidney B. Sperry Symposium, January 27, 1979, The Doctrine and Covenants* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1979), 68–84. For a convenient listing of the activities of that eventful spring, see John W. Welch, “How Long Did It Take to Translate the Book of Mormon?” in John W. Welch, ed., *Reexploring the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1992), 1–8.

8. Book of Commandments 5:1; current D&C 6:2.

9. Book of Commandments 5:3; current D&C 6:6.

10. Book of Commandments 5:6; current D&C 6:14.

11. Book of Commandments 7:1; current D&C 8:1. See also Book of Commandments 5:2, 5, 6–7 (current D&C 6:5, 10–11, 14–15); Book of Commandments 7:1–2, 3–4 (current D&C 8:1–4, 9–11).

12. Book of Commandments 5:11; current D&C 6:25.

13. Book of Commandments 8:1; current D&C 9:1. The Lord told Oliver that after completing this sacred assignment he would be given power to help translate other records. In verse two of the current D&C 9, the superscript letter *a* on the word *other* is keyed to the phrase *other records*. The corresponding footnote describes Oliver Cowdery’s later participation in the “New Translation” of the Bible (the Joseph Smith Translation, or JST) and a similar revelatory translation called the Book of Abraham, which was derived from Egyptian papyrus purchased by Church members at Kirtland in July 1835. Oliver Cowdery was the first of several scribes who helped the Prophet Joseph Smith with the translation of the Bible. Working from June through mid-October 1830, Oliver Cowdery wrote the first

installment of the Old Testament, Manuscript One (Joseph Smith Translation, Old Testament 1), starting on page one and ending on page ten, line five (Moses 1:1–5:43). For a typographical facsimile of Oliver Cowdery’s contribution to the Bible translation, see *Joseph Smith’s New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts*, ed. Scott H. Faulring, Kent P. Jackson, and Robert J. Matthews (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2004), 83–95. In 1866, Emma Smith, the Prophet’s widow, gave the original JST manuscripts to her son, Joseph Smith III, the leader of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (RLDS Church). These manuscripts are in the library-archives of the Community of Christ (formerly RLDS Church), headquartered in Independence, Missouri. Since October 1880, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has canonized the vision of Moses (Moses 1) and the first eight chapters of the JST in the Pearl of Great Price. Oliver Cowdery’s involvement with the translation of the Book of Abraham (also in the Pearl of Great Price) occurred in the latter half of 1835. The surviving Kirtland Egyptian manuscripts, very little of which are in Oliver’s handwriting, are in LDS Church Archives. Before Cowdery was involved in either of these scriptural undertakings, he lent a hand in laying the foundation of the latter-day Church of Christ.

14. Oliver Cowdery to William W. Phelps, Letter 1, September 7, 1834, published in *Messenger and Advocate* 1 (October 1834): 15.

15. Manuscript History of the Church, Book A-1, 17–18, published in Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 1:290; Joseph Smith Jr., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d ed., rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 1:39 (hereafter cited as *History of the Church*); Joseph Smith—History 1:68–70.

16. The official account of the Aaronic Priesthood restoration is in Manuscript History of the Church, Book A-1, 17–18; Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith* 1:290–91; *History of the Church*, 1:39–41; and Joseph Smith—History 1:68–72.

17. 1839 Draft History, first unnumbered page, Archive of the First Presidency, published in Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 1:231. This draft was the source of the material copied into Manuscript History of the Church, Book A-1, 18; and published in Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 1:291; *History of the Church*, 1:42; and Joseph Smith—History 1:73.

18. For a complete set and analysis of all known accounts of the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood, see Brian Q. Cannon and BYU Studies Staff, “Priesthood Restoration Documents,” *BYU Studies* 35, no. 4 (1995–96): 163–207. Although many details were given, neither Joseph Smith nor Oliver Cowdery revealed the precise date on which Peter, James, and John restored the Melchizedek Priesthood. In the last twenty-five years, Mormon historians have written many articles attempting to identify the time frame for the bestowal of the Melchizedek Priesthood and the accompanying apostleship. After carefully studying the known facts and different views of this issue, I accept Larry Porter’s findings (see his 1996 *Ensign* article listed below) that this event most likely occurred in late May 1829. For further, sometimes divergent, interpretations, see Larry C. Porter, “Dating the Restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood,” *Ensign* 9 (June 1979): 5–10; Larry C. Porter, “The Priesthood Restored,” in *Studies in Scripture, Volume Two: The Pearl of Great Price*, ed. Robert L. Millet and Kent P. Jackson (Salt Lake City: Randall Book, 1985), 2:389–409; William G. Hartley, “‘Upon You My Fellow Servants’:

Restoration of the Priesthood,” in *The Prophet Joseph: Essays on the Life and Mission of Joseph Smith*, ed. Larry C. Porter and Susan Easton Black (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988), 49–72; Gregory A. Prince, *Having Authority: The Origins and Development of Priesthood During the Ministry of Joseph Smith* (Independence, Mo.: John Whitmer Historical Association Monograph Series, 1993), 16–32, updated and expanded in Gregory A. Prince, *Power from on High: The Development of Mormon Priesthood* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1995), 3–15, 47–57; Larry C. Porter, “The Restoration of the Priesthood,” *Religious Studies Center Newsletter* 9 (May 1995): 1–12; D. Michael Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994), 1–38; and Larry C. Porter, “The Restoration of the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods,” *Ensign* 26 (December 1996): 30–47.

19. Book of Commandments, chapter 15, heading.

20. Book of Commandments 15:3–4. The material in square brackets was added to this revelation when it was published in the 1835 D&C (43:1). See current D&C 18:3–5.

21. 1835 D&C replaced *and* with *upon the foundation of*. See current D&C 18:3–5.

22. The historical evidence is ambiguous as to whether just Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, or whether they and others (such as Martin Harris, Hyrum Smith, or any of the five Whitmer brothers), joined in asking the Lord for further revelation on the issue of receiving permission to bestow the gift of the Holy Ghost. See 1839 Draft History, 7–8; Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 1:238–39. This draft was the source for the material copied into Manuscript History of the Church, Book A-1, 26–27; and published in Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 1:299–300; and *History of the Church*, 1:60–62.

23. 1839 Draft History, 7–8. See also Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 1:238–39, 299. Those helping compile the Prophet’s history copied this part of the draft, with some editing, into the Manuscript History of the Church, Book A-1, 26–27. See Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 1:298–300. In both the 1839 Draft History and Manuscript History of the Church, Book A-1, the revelation given in June 1829 to Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, and David Whitmer (current D&C 18) *comes after* the narrative about the revelation received at Father Whitmer’s log home. However, the correct historical sequence is the reverse. The other revelations, telling in detail the order of the Church organizational meeting and specifying the date when they should restore the Church, were given after mid-June 1829 (the latest possible date on which Joseph Smith could have received the revelation in D&C 18) and following completion of the Book of Mormon translation at the end of June. Joseph Smith received these revelations before his departure from western New York for his farm in Harmony in late August 1829, soon after contracting with E. B. Grandin to print the Book of Mormon.

24. Manuscript History of the Church, Book A-1, 29; Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 1:300. This material was original to the Manuscript History of the Church. The 1839 Draft History reads, “We continued to receive instruction concerning our duties from time to time, and among many things the fol[l]owing directions, fixing the time of our anticipated meeting together for the purpose of being organized were given by the Spirit of prophecy and revelation.” 1839 Draft History, 8; and Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 1:239.

25. Book of Commandments 15:3–4. See current D&C 18:3–4.

26. Oliver Cowdery to Phineas H. Young, November 12, 1846, Brigham Young Collection, LDS Church Archives.

27. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3 vols., comp. Bruce R. McConkie (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954), 1:212. President Smith was an Apostle and the Church historian at the time he expressed this view.

28. Heber C. Kimball, in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1855–86), 5:28, July 12, 1857. These remarks were delivered in a public discourse in Salt Lake City.

29. Oliver Cowdery, “Articles of the Church of Christ,” 3, LDS Church Archives. Oliver Cowdery’s spiritual reaction, which he described “as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing and I could forbear no longer,” is a close paraphrase of Jeremiah 20:9.

30. A detailed discussion of the use of the Book of Mormon in Cowdery’s 1829 Articles is presented in Scott H. Faulring, “The Book of Mormon: A Blueprint for Organizing the Church,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 7, no. 1 (1998): 60–69, 71.

31. See, for example, Woodford, “Historical Development,” 1:287; Richard L. Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1984), 157; David J. Whittaker, “The ‘Articles of Faith’ in Early Mormon Literature and Thought,” in *New Views of Mormon History*, ed. Davis Bitton and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), 64–65; Stephen E. Robinson and H. Dean Garrett, *A Commentary on the Doctrine and Covenants*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000), 1:126; and Joseph Fielding McConkie and Craig J. Ostler, *Revelations of the Restoration: A Commentary on the Doctrine and Covenants and Other Modern Revelations* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000), 155.

32. Named after the donor-facilitator who returned this manuscript to the Church in 1960. See additional details on this transaction later in this paper.

33. This copy was made about the same time as the reception of D&C 42 (which occurred early February 1831), a copy of which is in the same “manuscript gathering” containing this copy of D&C 20. At the latest, this copy was in existence in mid-June 1831, when Joseph Smith left Kirtland for Missouri and Symonds Ryder searched among the records the Church leaders had left behind. See note 67.

34. Because it is the earliest manuscript, the Watters-Daily copy of D&C 20 at the LDS Church Archives is used in this study for textual comparison. Of its 2,119 words, only 443 are derived from the Book of Mormon text.

35. Approximately 746 words (52 percent) of the total 1,444 words included in Cowdery’s Articles are directly dependent on the Book of Mormon text.

36. The Prophet’s manuscript history suggests that the Articles and Covenants was written in mid- to late-1829, which is actually a more accurate historical context for the writing of Cowdery’s 1829 Articles. See 1839 Draft History, 8; and Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 1:239, 241. This draft material, with some editing, was copied into the Manuscript History of the Church, Book A-1, 29–30.

37. The Savior instituted the sacrament among the Nephites during his personal ministrations in AD 34 (see 3 Nephi 18), but specific wording for administering the sacrament is not recorded there. The manner of administering the

sacrament along with the specific sacramental prayers are found in Moroni, chapters 4–5.

38. The Watters-Daily copy of D&C 20 has 392 words dealing with baptism or sacrament, while Oliver Cowdery’s Articles has 650 words on these same subjects.

39. Richard Lloyd Anderson, “The Organization Revelations (D&C 20, 21, and 22),” in *Studies in Scripture, Volume One: Doctrine and Covenants*, ed. Robert L. Millet and Kent P. Jackson (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1984), 1:114.

40. See Book of Commandments, chapter 24, heading. The Book of Commandments was the Church’s first, though unsuccessful, attempt to publish Joseph Smith’s revelations in book form. The earliest publication of the Articles and Covenants by the Latter-day Saints was on the front page of the Church’s first periodical, *The Evening and the Morning Star* (June 1832). No date or location for the reception of the Articles and Covenants was given in *The Evening and the Morning Star*.

41. See manuscript copy of D&C 20 from the Watters-Daily acquisition (described in note 97), Revelations Collection, LDS Church Archives; and “The Mormon Creed,” *Painesville Telegraph*, April 19, 1831, 4. In this last reference, E. D. Howe, the antagonistic editor of the *Telegraph*, claimed that the copy he printed in his *Telegraph* newspaper was “obtained from the hand of Martin Harris” and was titled “The articles and covenants of the Church of Christ agreeable to the will and commandments of God.”

42. A detailed analysis of the textual differences in the Articles and Covenants is in Woodford, “Historical Development,” 1:303–51.

43. It is assumed from the earliest sources that the Articles and Covenants was written in western New York, either at Manchester or Fayette.

44. Mother Smith’s narrative mentions at least two brief return trips made by Joseph during the winter of early 1830. The first was for Joseph to enforce his copyright on the Book of Mormon against Abner Cole for his (Cole’s) unauthorized publication of Book of Mormon excerpts in the Palmyra *Reflector* in January 1830. The second return trip was when E. B. Grandin, fearful that he would not be paid for printing the Book of Mormon, stopped printing after being notified of a local boycott against the sale of the Book of Mormon. See Lucy Mack Smith, *Biographical Sketches*, 149–51.

45. See Dean C. Jessee, ed., “Joseph Knight’s Recollection of Early Mormon History,” *BYU Studies* 17 no. 1 (1976): 36–37; and Lucy Mack Smith, *Biographical Sketches*, 151. The first edition Book of Mormon was available for purchase by the last week of March 1830. The book was first advertised for sale in the *Wayne Sentinel*, March 26, 1830, 3.

46. The priesthood revelation mentioned here by Brigham Young, during which Oliver was present, can only be the “Articles and Covenants” (D&C 20). In the Latter-day Saint scriptures, there are only two other revelations given to the Prophet Joseph Smith that overwhelmingly focus on priesthood: D&C sections 84 and 107. When D&C 84 was received in September 1832, Cowdery was serving as the presiding priesthood leader in Zion (Jackson County, Missouri) and was not present in Kirtland, Ohio, for the reception of this revelation. Also, there is no evidence to suggest that Cowdery was in conflict with Joseph Smith over the contents of, or involved in the writing (scribal or otherwise) of D&C 107, parts of which were given in 1831 and 1835.

47. Brigham Young, Provo School of the Prophets Minutes, April 15, 1868, 1, published in Elden J. Watson, ed., *Brigham Young Addresses, 1865–1869*, vol. 5 (Salt Lake City: Elden J. Watson, 1982). It should be pointed out that in 1830 Brigham Young was not yet affiliated with the restored Church of Christ (he joined in 1832), so he was probably relating information he heard from Joseph Smith or someone else present in 1830.

48. The official minutes note that this first conference was convened “according to the Church Articles and Covenants.” *Far West Record*, 1, published in Donald Q. Cannon 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), 1.

49. Oliver Cowdery took the minutes of the June 1830 conference because he was serving as Church recorder at the time. A retained copy is in the *Far West Record*, 1. See Cannon and Cook, *Far West Record*, 2.

50. At least three of the ten licenses issued on June 9, 1830, still exist, and they all refer to the authority of the Articles and Covenants. See Joseph Smith Sr. priest license, June 9, 1830, Joseph Smith Papers, LDS Church Archives (fig. 4 herein); John Whitmer elder license, June 9, 1830, Western Americana Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University; and Christian Whitmer teacher license, June 9, 1830, Western Americana Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

51. Both of the earliest manuscript copies of D&C 20 (the Watters-Daily document and a copy made by John Whitmer for Zebedee Coltrin) refer to the Prophet Joseph Smith as “Joseph the Seer.”

52. Earlier versions (both manuscript and published) read simply “an elder.” Joseph Smith’s unique position and calling as “first elder” was clarified in the 1835 D&C. It should be noted that the priesthood licenses issued at the first conference of elders, held June 9, 1830, specifically designated that Joseph was the First Elder and Oliver Cowdery was the Second. See Joseph Smith Sr. (fig. 4), John Whitmer, and Christian Whitmer priesthood licenses, as cited in note 49 above.

53. The dependence of Doctrine and Covenants 20:75–79 on Moroni 4–6 is apparent. In the first printing of Doctrine and Covenants 20 in the 1831 *Painesville Telegraph*, the text explicitly states: “And the manner of baptism and the manner of administering the Sacrament are to be done *as is written in the Book of Mormon*” (emphasis added). See Anderson, “The Organization Revelations,” 121n26. As in the 1830 edition, other early sources for Doctrine and Covenants 20 simply refer the reader to “Book of Mormon, 575,” in lieu of quoting the wording of the Book of Mormon prayers, or they place the material from Moroni 4–5 and 3 Nephi 11 in quotation marks. See Woodford, “The Historical Development of the Doctrine & Covenants,” 343. These factors confirm that Doctrine and Covenants 20:75–79 was composed intentionally as a reiteration of Moroni 4–5. See further, John W. Welch, “From Presence to Practice: Jesus, the Sacrament Prayers, the Priesthood, and Church Discipline in 3 Nephi 18 and Moroni 2–6,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 5, no. 1 (1996): 119–39.

54. See 1839 Draft History, 23; and Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 1:259–60. This draft material, with some editing, was copied into the Manuscript History of the Church, Book A-1, 50–51. See Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 1:319–20. It also appears in a slightly edited version in *History of the Church*, 1:104–5.

55. See Daniel G. Reid, ed., *Dictionary of Christianity in America* (Downer's Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1990), s.v. "Conversion Narratives." See also Edmund S. Morgan, *Visible Saints: The History of a Puritan Idea* (Ithaca and London: Cornell Paperbacks, Cornell University Press, 1965), 88–92; and Patricia Caldwell, *The Puritan Conversion Narrative: The Beginnings of American Expression* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

56. 1833 Book of Commandments 24:30; current D&C 20:37. The Watters-Daily manuscript reads, "and truly manifest by their works that they have received the Spirit unto the remission of their sins."

57. Manuscript History of the Church, Book A-1, 50–51; published in *History of the Church*, 1:105. Oliver was obviously concerned that the offending phrase legitimized a form of priestcraft in the restored Church and that it was not in harmony with the restored gospel. Cowdery's passionate misinterpretation was unwarranted given that the Book of Mormon presents a similar doctrinal statement concerning baptism. See the prophet Moroni's teachings on baptism in the 1830 Book of Mormon, Moroni 6 (p. 576); current Moroni 6:1–4.

58. The Prophet's letter to Oliver Cowdery is presently unlocated, but was summarized in his 1839 Draft History, 23; and Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 1:260. This draft material, with some editing, was used in the Manuscript History of the Church, Book A-1, 51. See Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 1:320. It also appears in a slightly edited version in *History of the Church*, 1:105.

59. 1839 Draft History, 23, and Manuscript History of the Church, Book A-1, 51. Published in Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 1:260, 320.

60. As with the June conference, Oliver Cowdery, serving as Church recorder, took the minutes for the second conference. A retained copy of the minutes is in Far West Record, 2. See Cannon and Cook, *Far West Record*, 3.

61. 1839 Draft History, 25; and Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 1:263. This draft material, with some editing, was copied into the Manuscript History of the Church, Book A-1, 53–58. See Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 1:322–23. It also appears in a slightly edited version in *History of the Church*, 1:109–15.

62. More than four years later, in December 1834, after being set apart as Assistant President of the Church, Oliver Cowdery elaborated on the "power and authority" of the office of Church President. Oliver explained, "The office of the President [of the Church] is to preside over the whole Church; to be considered as at the head; to receive revelations for the Church; to be a Seer, Revelator and Prophet, having all the gifts of God:—taking Moses for an ensample." See Oliver Cowdery, "Unfinished Manuscript History," December 5–6, 1834, in Manuscript History of the Church, Book A-1, 17 (first numbering); and Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 1:21.

63. Far West Record, 2; Cannon and Cook, *Far West Record*, 3.

64. In April 1974, Woodford, a Church Educational System instructor, completed his massive 1,900-page dissertation at Brigham Young University entitled "The Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants." Woodford later privately published a limited edition of this three-volume work. At the core of his meticulous study was a section-by-section examination of the textual variants in each revelation in the Doctrine and Covenants. Woodford compared all known manuscripts, early Church publications, and English language editions of the Book of Commandments and Doctrine and Covenants.

65. Portions of Cowdery's Articles were either direct revelation to Oliver, quoted or paraphrased material from the Book of Mormon manuscript, or ideas influenced by modern revelation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith. Citations to the 1829–1830 printer's manuscript (Community of Christ Archives) are used here for comparison, since the relevant parts of the original (LDS Church Archives) are no longer extant. The transcription presented herein corrects Woodford's transcription errors and adds extensive textual annotations. Additional articles dealing with the relationship of this manuscript to the organization of the Church and D&C section 20 are: Woodford, "Historical Development," 1:287–93; Bushman, *Beginnings of Mormonism*, 156–57, 166–67; Whittaker, "Articles of Faith," 64–66; Anderson, "The Organizational Revelations," 109–23; and Robert J. Woodford, "The Articles and Covenants of the Church of Christ and the Book of Mormon," in *Sperry Symposium Classics: The Doctrine and Covenants* (Provo, Utah, and Salt Lake City: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, and Deseret Book, 2004), 103–16. Appreciation is given to Robert J. Woodford, Ronald O. Barney, and Steven R. Sorensen for their assistance in understanding this important document and its historical background.

66. There are 1,444 words in Cowdery's Articles; page one has 522 words, page two has 521 words, and page three has 401 words.

67. Manuscript History of the Church, Book A-1, 205–8; Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 1:374–78; *History of the Church*, 1:260–64.

68. Ryder's ordination was recorded in the Far West Record, 6. See Cannon and Cook, *Far West Record*, 9.

69. Later in life, Symonds Ryder explained that when Joseph Smith and the other Church authorities went up to Zion (Jackson County, Missouri) in 1831, they "left their papers behind." Without directly identifying himself as one of the "new converts," Symonds described how the "new converts [took] an opportunity to become acquainted with the internal arrangement of their church." Symonds Ryder to A. S. Hayden, February 1, 1868, published in A. S. Hayden, *Early History of the Disciples in the Western Reserve, Ohio* (Cincinnati: Chase & Hall Publishers, 1876), 221. In addition to Oliver Cowdery's 1829 articles, Symonds Ryder had in his possession copies of the following manuscript revelations: D&C 20, 35, 36, 42, 52, and 56. This listing was noted by Church archivist Earl Olson in his May 27, 1964, typewritten notation on William D. Daily's September 27, 1960, statement.

70. These documents are now at the LDS Church Archives. Further information on the finding and subsequent donation of these documents is in William D. Daily, Statement, September 27, 1960, in author's possession (see note 97); Woodford, "Articles and Covenants," 262–63; and Scott H. Faulring, "Symonds Ryder," *Mormon History Association Newsletter*, no. 103 (fall 1996): 3–5. The specific details about the documents being found by the Ryder family tightly rolled up in a linen handkerchief in a dresser drawer is from a personal telephone conversation between the author and Mr. Wayne E. Watters and his wife, Virginia (she is the descendant of Symonds Ryder), on October 2, 1996. Notes of conversation in author's possession.

Oliver composed these articles either at the Joseph Smith Sr. residence in Manchester, New York, or at the Peter Whitmer Sr. home in Fayette, New York. The Church acquired the document in 1960. On September 27, 1960, William D.

Daily, a Latter-day Saint serviceman stationed at the Ravenna Arsenal, made the following statement:

The enclosed writings were given to William D. Daily and his family on the night of 26 September 1960 by Mr. Wayne E. Watters, the principal of the Ravenna City High School, Ravenna, Ohio. Mr. Watters lives at 7101 State Rt. 44, Ravenna Ohio.

Mrs. Watters' great-great grandfather was Symonds Ryder. It was in his belongings that these writings were found. They were found about 2 years ago rolled in a linen cloth. The Watters pressed them in books and have held them in a pressed condition until they were delivered to me on the above date. . . .

[signature over typed name]

William D. Daily

(Elder)

Quarters "Q" RD2

Ravenna, Ohio

Later in the 1960s, after Cowdery's three-page Articles manuscript was returned to the Church by Symonds Ryder's descendants, the archivists filed it in the LDS Church Archives' Revelations Collection. Earl Olson, an LDS Church archivist, mistakenly cataloged the Articles as two separate documents. In a typewritten note appended to William D. Daily's September 1960 statement, Olson described the first two pages of the Articles as "A supposed revelation to Oliver Cowdery, beginning: 'A commandment from God unto Oliver how he should build up his Church.'" This manuscript leaf, written on both sides, had become separated from the other half of the sheet and did not identify Cowdery as the author. The first two pages of the Articles were filed in the "Unpublished Revelations" section of the Revelations Collection and assigned a "ca. 1830" date. The other half, the third page with a blank reverse side, had the year 1829 written on it, but it was not included in the Revelations Collection. Olson described this page as simply "A supposed revelation to Oliver Cowdery, 1829, beginning: 'And now I speak unto the Church.'" Cowdery's Articles document, recently deacidified and reattached, has since been moved to a collection of Oliver Cowdery's personal papers. A photocopy of William D. Daily's statement is in the author's possession.

71. Compare with Book of Commandments 15:4. See also 1835 D&C 43:1 and current D&C 18:5.

72. The phrase "my church, my gospel, and my rock" is in Book of Commandments 15:3. See also 1835 D&C 43:1 and current D&C 18:4–5.

73. First published in Book of Commandments 15:5. A descriptive summary of the revelation's contents is included in the chapter heading to Book of Commandments 15 and reads in part "and also, instructions relative to building up the church of Christ, according to the fulness of the gospel." This revelation was received by June 14, 1829, as evidenced by Oliver Cowdery using excerpts of the revelation in a letter written that day to Hyrum Smith from Fayette, New York. A retained copy of the letter is found in Joseph Smith Letterbook 1:5–6, Joseph

Smith Collection, LDS Church Archives. See also 1835 D&C 43:2 and current D&C 18:6.

74. Compare with Book of Commandments 15:11. See also 1835 D&C 43:3 and current D&C 18:9.

75. Compare with Book of Mormon Printer's Manuscript, 381; published in *The Printer's Manuscript of the Book of Mormon*, ed. Royal Skousen, 2 vols. (Provo, Utah: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, Brigham Young University, 2001), 2:813 (hereafter cited as Skousen, *Printer's Manuscript*); and 1830 Book of Mormon, [3rd] Nephi, chapter 5 (p. 478). See current 3 Nephi 11:23 and D&C 20:37.

76. Compare with Printer's Manuscript, 381; published in Skousen, *Printer's Manuscript*, 2:813; 1830 Book of Mormon, [3rd] Nephi, chapter 5 (p. 478); current 3 Nephi 11:23–27. The Printer's Manuscript that corresponds to 3 Nephi 11:25 reads: “~~having authority~~ <Having authority> given me of Jesus Christ.” This change, which only adds capitalization, is in Oliver Cowdery's handwriting; it appears from the similar ink color to be contemporary (ca. second half of 1829). It is not known whether the capitalization of *having* first occurred with Cowdery's Articles or the Printer's Manuscript or the no longer extant original Book of Mormon dictation manuscript. Compare Alma's prior usage of “having authority” (second century BC) in his earlier form of the baptismal prayer: Printer's Manuscript, 145; published in Skousen, *Printer's Manuscript*, 1:341; 1830 Book of Mormon, Mosiah, chapter 4 (p. 192); and current Mosiah 18:13. All of the earliest manuscript copies of the Articles and Covenants use the Book of Mormon phraseology “Having authority given me of Jesus Christ” from the baptismal prayer form given by the Savior when he appeared to the Nephites in Bountiful. Printer's Manuscript, 381; published in Skousen, *Printer's Manuscript*, 2:813; 1830 Book of Mormon, [3rd] Nephi, chapter 5 (p. 478); current 3 Nephi 11:25. The wording was modified by the Prophet Joseph Smith when the Articles and Covenants was published in the 1835 D&C (2:22) and reads “Having been commissioned of Jesus Christ.” The wording in the current D&C 20:73 is the same as in the 1835 D&C.

77. Compare with Printer's Manuscript, 454; published in Skousen, *Printer's Manuscript*, 2:959; 1830 Book of Mormon, Moroni, chapter 3 (p. 575); and current Moroni 3:4. Similar wording is used in the current D&C 20:60.

78. Parentheses enclose “or if he be a teacher” in 1830 Book of Mormon, Moroni, chapter 3 (p. 575); the same words are also enclosed in the current Moroni 3:3. The Printer's Manuscript, 454, does not use parentheses for this phrase. Published in Skousen, *Printer's Manuscript*, 2:959.

79. This part of the paragraph is also based upon material found in Printer's Manuscript, 454; published in Skousen, *Printer's Manuscript*, 2:959; 1830 Book of Mormon, Moroni, chapter 3 (p. 575); and current Moroni 3:3. Joseph Smith, in composing the Articles and Covenants for the Church in mid-1830, did not give defined wording for priesthood ordinations. This direction of the Prophet harmonized with the last sentence of the 1830 Book of Mormon, Moroni, chapter 3 (p. 575), indicating that priesthood ordinations were to be given “by the power of the Holy Ghost, which was in them.” See current D&C 20:60 and Moroni 3:4.

80. Printer's Manuscript, 392–93; published in Skousen, *Printer's Manuscript*, 2:835–36; 1830 Book of Mormon, [3rd] Nephi, chapter 8 (p. 492); and current 3 Nephi 18:22, 30, 32 describe the Savior teaching the Nephites that Church

members should not cast out the weak in faith unless those lacking in testimony refuse to repent.

81. The phrase “And the Church shall oft partake of bread and wine” is paraphrased from Printer’s Manuscript, 455; published in Skousen, *Printer’s Manuscript*, 2:960; 1830 Book of Mormon, Moroni, chapter 6 (p. 576); and current Moroni 6:6. See also current D&C 20:75.

82. The wording varies slightly between the current editions of the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants. The current Moroni 4:3 reads “hath,” while D&C 20:77 reads “has.”

83. Compare with Printer’s Manuscript, 454; published in Skousen, *Printer’s Manuscript*, 2:959; 1830 Book of Mormon, Moroni, chapter 4 (p. 575); and current Moroni 4:3. See also current D&C 20:77.

84. Compare with Printer’s Manuscript, 454; published in Skousen, *Printer’s Manuscript*, 2:959; 1830 Book of Mormon, Moroni, chapter 4 (pp. 575–76); and current Moroni 5:1–2. See also current D&C 20:78–79.

85. The phrase “I give unto you a commandment” appears to be a paraphrase by Oliver. Printer’s Manuscript, 392 (published in Skousen, *Printer’s Manuscript*, 2:835) reads: “& now behold this is the commandment which I give unto you.” All published sources follow the printer’s manuscript wording.

86. Compare with Printer’s Manuscript, 392–93; published in Skousen, *Printer’s Manuscript*, 2:835–36; 1830 Book of Mormon, [3rd] Nephi, chapter 8 (p. 492); and current 3 Nephi 18:28–33.

87. A similar warning, given to the latter-day Gentiles by the Lord through the prophet Mormon, is in Printer’s Manuscript, 410; published in Skousen, *Printer’s Manuscript*, 2:870; 1830 Book of Mormon, [3rd] Nephi, chapter 14 (p. 513); and current 3 Nephi 30:2.

88. Identical wording of the phrase “Repent all ye ends of the Earth and come unto me and be baptized in my name” is found in Printer’s Manuscript, 406; published in Skousen, *Printer’s Manuscript*, 2:862; 1830 Book of Mormon, [3rd] Nephi, chapter 12 (p. 508); and current 3 Nephi 27:20. See also current Ether 4:18 and Moroni 7:34.

89. The block beginning “which is Jesus Christ” is from Book of Commandments 15:23–26. See 1835 D&C 43:4 and current D&C 18:22–25.

90. This material is paraphrased from Book of Commandments 15:34. See 1835 D&C 43:5 and current D&C 18:31.

91. The wording here is from another modern revelation also received in June 1829 and first published in the 1835 D&C 42:3; see current D&C 17:8. The phrase “my grace is sufficient for you” is actually found in both June 1829 revelations; see current D&C 17:8 and 18:31.

92. This material is nearly verbatim from the earliest revelation given on Oliver’s behalf through the Prophet Joseph Smith in April 1829. See Book of Commandments 5:10; 1835 D&C 8:10; and current D&C 6:21. The phrase “Behold I am Jesus Christ the Son of the liveing God I am the same which came unto my own and my own received me not” is also a direct quote of Printer’s Manuscript, 378; published in Skousen, *Printer’s Manuscript*, 2:807; 1830 Book of Mormon, [3rd] Nephi, chapter 4 (p. 473); and current 3 Nephi 9:15, 16.

93. This phrase is from material later published in Book of Commandments 15:37; 1835 D&C 43:5; and current D&C 18:34.

94. This phrase is an expanded form of Book of Commandments 9:19; 1835 D&C 36:18; and current Doctrine and Covenants 10:70. The Savior’s voice, just prior to his postmortal ministry to the people of Nephi in the land Bountiful, testified that he was “the light and the life of the world” similar to the phrase quoted here. See Printer’s Manuscript, 378; published in Skousen, *Printer’s Manuscript*, 2:807; 1830 Book of Mormon, [3rd] Nephi, chapter 4 (p. 473); and current 3 Nephi 9:18. This description of the Savior is also found in other places in the Book of Mormon (Mosiah 16:9, Alma 38:9, 3 Nephi 11:11, and Ether 4:12).

95. This material is paraphrased from Book of Commandments 15:50; 1835 D&C 43:7; and current D&C 18:47.

96. Paraphrased from Printer’s Manuscript, 436; published in Skousen, *Printer’s Manuscript*, 2:922; 1830 Book of Mormon, Ether, chapter 2 (p. 548); and current Ether 5:6.

97. The same phrase “Now may the grace of God the Father and of our Lord Jesus Christ be and abide with you all” is used by Oliver Cowdery in his June 14, 1829, letter to Hyrum Smith. See retained copy in Joseph Smith Letterbook 1:6 (5–6), Joseph Smith Collection, LDS Church Archives.

98. The wording here about “a burning fire shut up in my bones” and so forth is paraphrased from Jeremiah 20:9. Ezra Booth, who apostatized from the Church in fall 1831, was shown this document (presumably by fellow dissident Symonds Ryder who allegedly took it from Church headquarters during summer 1831), and he (Booth) quoted this paraphrase of Jeremiah in one of his letters critical of Mormonism that was published in an Ohio newspaper. See Ezra Booth to Rev. I. Eddy, Letter 8, November 29, 1831, “Mormonism,” *The Ohio Star*, December 8, 1831, 1.

99. The “&c.” (for “etc.”) has been misread as being “O.C.,” Oliver Cowdery’s initials, but careful examination of the original manuscript confirms the reading of “&c.”