

## THEY KNEW THE PROPHET

### **Mrs. Palmer**

My father owned a farm near that of the Smith family, in New York. My parents were friends of the Smith family, which was one of the best in that locality—honest, religious and industrious, but poor. The father of the family was above the average in intelligence. I have heard my parents say that he bore the appearance of having descended from royalty. Mrs. Smith was called “Mother Smith” by many. Children loved to go to her home.

My father loved young Joseph Smith and often hired him to work with his boys. I was about six years old when he first came to our home. I remember going into the field on an afternoon to play in the corn rows while my brothers worked. When evening came, I was too tired to walk home and cried because my brothers refused to carry me. Joseph lifted me to his shoulder, and with his arm thrown across my feet to steady me, and my arm about his neck, he carried me to our home.

I remember the excitement stirred up among some of the people over Joseph’s First Vision, and of hearing my father contend that it was only the sweet dream of a pure minded boy. One of our church leaders came to my father to remonstrate against his allowing such close friendship between his family and the “Smith Boy,” as he called him. My father defended his own position by saying that Joseph was the best help he had ever found. He told the churchman that he always fixed the time of hoeing his large field to that when he could secure the services of Joseph Smith, because of the influence that boy had over the wild boys of the neighborhood, and explained that when these boys, or young men, worked by themselves much time would be spent in arguing and quarreling, which often ended in a ring fight. But when Joseph Smith worked with them, the work went steadily forward, and he got the full worth of the wages he paid.

I remember the churchman saying, in a very solemn and impressive tone, that the very influence the boy carried was the danger they feared for the coming generation, that not only the young men, but all who came in contact with him, would follow him, and *he must be put down*.

Not until Joseph had had a second vision and begun to write a book which drew many of the best and brightest people of the churches away did my parents come to a realization of the fact that their friend, the churchman, had told them the truth. Then, my family cut off their friendship for all the Smiths, for *all* the family followed Joseph. Even the father, intelligent man that he was, could not discern the evil he was helping to promote.

My parents then lent all the aid they could in helping to crush Joseph Smith; but it was too late. He had run his course too long. He could not be put down.

There was never a truer, purer, nobler boy than Joseph Smith, before he was led away by superstition.

“Stories from the Notebook of Martha Cox, Grandmother of Fern Cox Anderson,” Church Historian’s Library, Salt Lake City, Utah; Lee C. LaFayette, “Recollections of Joseph Smith,” Church Historian’s Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.