

SEARCHING FOR GLORY

A historical novel based on the
life of Joseph Smith

MARK FOUYER

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ISBN: 978-1-960597-11-3 (Paperback) 978-1-960597-02-1 (eBook)

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Front cover image © WHPics

Book design by Robin Konie

First printing edition 2023

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PREFACE

This book is classified as historical fiction, which attempts to capture historical events, but fills in the gaps missing from the recorded document. Like a Hollywood movie based on a historical story that tells that story from the director's perspective. Sometimes this happens at the expense of the truth, but often, it is only telling the story from a different point of view. It does not necessarily make one true or false; it just takes what we know and offers alternative possibilities for why and how it may have happened.

Since this is a story from almost two hundred years ago, no one knows all the facts or what was in the mind of Joseph Smith. We can't go back in time and interview him; even if we could, we would still only get part of the truth from his biased viewpoint. In fact, even if a group of us could go back in time and view the actual events in real-time, we would all come up with differing storylines.

Any author who undertakes a project like this brings their own biases to the story. If I had undertaken this idea twenty years ago, it would have been quite different from what it is today. Twenty years ago, I was a full-believing, 10% tithe-paying, faithful member of the church Joseph Smith founded. I suspect that would have colored my conclusions of Joseph even if I had known the complete truth of his history.

The Work and The Glory novel series by Gerald Lund is a perfect example. He chose historical settings and events that fit his narrative and always turned them into faith-promoting events in favor of the church. He ignored certain aspects of the known history that would have been harder to explain and focused on events that were easier to explain faithfully. That was his goal, and he accomplished it. As a faithful member, I read the entire series and felt like it was a great way to learn church history without wading through the tedious, stale history books. At the time, I had no idea how colored his perspective was, I just enjoyed reading it, and it affirmed my beliefs that the church was true and established by God.

My journey out of the church was long and complicated, and I won't discuss the details here. Suffice it to say, as I took the time to read actual historical events concerning the church, I learned that I had been taught a watered-down, even whitewashed version my entire life. Key facts had been omitted or changed to make it align with a more faith-promoting version: the final version combined facts, fiction, and faithful conclusions. I understand the reasoning and motivation; I just don't believe it to be honest.

I stand on the shoulders of many notable historians. I name as many as possible in the chapter footnotes and acknowledgment section. If I missed anyone, please forgive the oversight. They are the real heroes.

I highly recommend reading the chapter notes at the end of the book. I know many people don't bother with footnotes, but these aren't just references like a typical footnote; they are also my thoughts and explanations of how I arrived at my conclusions. There are links to many of the references I used.

CHAPTER ONE: MOBS & MURDER

~ June 27, 1844 - Carthage, Illinois ~

A musket ball exploded through the door spraying splinters of wood into the small second-story bedroom. It narrowly missed the four occupants trapped inside the makeshift jail cell. Instant panic emanated from the prisoners as they realized their sudden mortal danger. Angry men were attempting to enter their cell, and the captives knew their lives hung in the balance. Two of the prisoners scattered towards the door trying to block the entrance. Joseph moved to the side to be clear of the door, while Hyrum, in full panic mode, froze in the center of the room.

It was Thursday, just after five o'clock in the evening. Joseph and Hyrum Smith, Willard Richards, and John Taylor had been quietly talking amongst themselves and listening to John sing one of Joseph's favorite hymns, when all hell broke loose. They knew they were in danger but were unprepared for what was to follow.

John felt the door push open just a crack. He leaned against it, but whoever was on the other side pushed harder. A musket slipped in through that crack and fired, hitting Hyrum directly in the face just as another ball flew through the window from outside, catching him in his back. Hyrum fell to the floor, exclaiming, "I am a dead man." The three men looked at him in horror.

Joseph lunged towards Hyrum, hunched over with sorrow and disbelief as he sobbed, "Oh dear brother Hyrum." It was instantly clear he was gone.

From outside the room, William Vorhease, hearing the commotion, called out, "I think we got one of 'em!"

In a burst of rage, Joseph sprang to action. Through the crack in the door, he fired a shot from the six-shooter revolver that was smuggled into him from one of his followers the day before. He had no idea who or what he was shooting at, but anger had overtaken him, and in that instant, he wanted revenge for Hyrum's death.

Outside the door, someone from the mob yelled, "He's got a gun!" Vorhease took the bullet square in his shoulder and fell to the floor in agony. Writhing in pain and afraid that the next shot might end him, he crawled on his backside, away from the door, fearing for his life. Another man, positioned with his foot against the door to keep it open at least a crack, leaned away to avoid taking a ball through the door but held his position. He wasn't about to try and push the door fully open since the prisoners were armed, but he wanted to hold his position and keep the door open a crack for additional men to fire through. Two more men rushed to Voorhees's aid, grabbed him, and helped him down the stairs fleeing to safety.

“Damn, how the devil do they have guns?” asked one of the men at the top of the stairs as he hurried away from the door. Confusion arose from the mob as that information was passed down the stairs from man to man, growing in detail with each passing murmur. When it reached the crowd outside the jail, the news was that the prisoners were armed to the hilt and ready to make a stand.

With this new realization, the mob hesitated, and a few men retreated down the stairs. Others refused to surrender and continued to poke their muskets through the crack in the door and fired a shot blindly into the room, hoping against hope they would hit one of the occupants.

Reloading was a tedious process, and with the limited space available in the hall, it effectively gave each man one shot. The stairway and hall were filled with men shoulder to shoulder. Instead of trying to navigate back down the stairs to reload, they would pass their fired rifle down the stairs for reloading, and then a loaded rifle was passed up the stairs to the men in front of the door. It was an efficient way to keep firing at the prisoners. Not knowing who was shooting from inside or how many of the prisoners might have weapons kept the mob from storming through the door; still, enough men were determined to kill Joseph and his brother by whatever means they could muster. It made for a steady stream of muskets ready to fire.

Inside, it was John Taylor who kept his foot against the door and struck at the muskets with his cane, knocking their aim down and into the floor. Once a shot was fired, the bayonet end of the rifle would be thrust through the door and violently twisted to try and catch someone’s leg and inflict pain. Willard tried to find a position where he could help, but there just wasn’t room for both of them. Joseph fired again, but this time the gun misfired with only the sound of the click of the hammer. He swore and cocked the gun for a third attempt.

Another musket found its way through the crack, and John immediately struck it, sending another ball into the floor. Joseph steadied his hand, stuck the gun through the gap, and fired a third attempt, this time with success; a small explosion echoed throughout the room. Outside the door, there was an anguished cry and more shouting. “I think you hit one, Brother Joseph,” exclaimed Willard.

“My God, they shot Gallaher in the face.”

William Gallaher screamed in agony as blood dripped down his face.

“Get him out of here and see to that wound.”

One man tore his shirt off and covered the bloody wound while he helped him down the stairs. The men on the stairs pressed against the wall to make room for them as they passed. Many gasped at the spectacle of the bloodied face, becoming very much aware that this might not be the easy task they had imagined.

Joseph fired off his fourth round. The sound mixed with the smell of powder meant success.

John Wills screamed obscenities as he grabbed his arm trying to stop the bleeding. Wincing, he retreated down the steps, cursing the Mormons through gritted teeth and vowing revenge.

Momentarily, Joseph's confidence grew as he thought they maybe had a chance, but when he fired the next shot, it misfired again. The crowd outside was growing in determination, and more muskets flew through the crack as John did his best to deflect all of them.

Joseph took his sixth and final shot, hoping it would find its mark. He cursed when it misfired again. The revolver was of no use now. Joseph looked at John with fear and disappointment; their fate appeared to be sealed. Surely now, the mob would rush the door and end it. Fortunately for the prisoners inside, the mob outside had no idea that that was their last shot.

Joseph's eye settled on his dead brother's body. Hyrum was supposed to succeed him as the next leader, and now Joseph realized he would most likely soon be joining him in death. Who would take command of his church now? Would it survive? Who would watch over his family? Why hadn't he fled when he had the chance? Regret filled his mind as he agonized over the details he could have changed or done differently. He thought about the last several days, filled with memories of the path that had led him to this moment. The sinking realization that this was his fault hit him, and guilt filled his soul. For a brief moment, the chaos and confusion went silent as his life played out again in front of him in incredible, horrible detail.

"I ain't heard another shot from inside; maybe they're outta bullets," yelled one man at the top of the stairs.

"You go first and see," yelled another back in a mocking tone. The first man glared back; he wasn't going to be the first one to burst through the door and find out if they were out of ammo.

John took one last swipe at a musket and sprang from the door towards the window. Willard did his best to keep the door from flinging open, but to his surprise, he felt no real push against the door, just the never-ending muskets filling the crack and firing shots. "Why aren't they rushing through the door?" he asked himself. It didn't matter; he couldn't keep up with them anymore, and shots were starting to hit the walls, not the floor.

John climbed onto the window sill and looked down. It was at least twelve feet to the ground. He hesitated for just a moment to catch his balance before he leaped, when a ball from the door exploded into his leg; at the same time, a ball from outside tore through his vest, hitting his pocket watch. Later inspection of the watch would show the time as five o'clock, sixteen minutes, and twenty-six seconds.

The force from the outside shot threw him back into the room and to the floor. In pain and agony, he rolled under the bed near the window and lay motionless. More muskets filled the crack and fired off additional rounds. Willard did his best to knock them down but could only do so much. Another bullet struck John in the hip tearing his pants and flesh down to the bone. Willard let out a sob; he was sure John must be dead.

Joseph, who had remained motionless for a moment, shook off his stupor and raced to the window where John had just attempted to jump. By now, the mob was gaining the advantage, and two shots hit Joseph from the doorway. Another one from the outside simultaneously struck him as he was perched on the window sill. He fell outward in what seemed like slow motion to the ground, exclaiming, "Oh Lord, My God!"

Willard ran from the door and peered out the window. Below, his beloved Joseph was in a heap on the ground. The mob was rushing to surround him, and more shots were fired into his body. Willard collapsed to the floor and sobbed.

Still lying motionless under the bed, John Taylor was conscious enough to think, "Had no one heard the Mason's distress call?" He shook his head in disbelief. There was no honor for anyone on that day.

Shouts that Joseph had leaped from the window came from outside. The news spread like wildfire to all those inside the jail. Mass hysteria ensued as men rushed from the hall and stairs to see the end of the despised Mormon leader. Willard looked out the window one last time to see his beloved leader and gasped at the horrific scene. He glanced over at Hyrum lying dead on the floor. The two most senior leaders of the church, along with his good friend John, were all killed within a few minutes. He shook his head in disbelief.

He pulled himself off the floor and headed towards the door that, a few moments ago, was filled with muskets. He peeked out from the doorway; the hall and stairs were empty. Seeing it clear, he was going to head to the inner jail room to try and hide. As he began crossing the threshold, he heard a muffled voice call out, "Take me." He turned in shock to see John raising a hand toward him.

Willard rushed back to the man he had presumed dead and helped him up under his arm. The two made their way through the hall and into the inner room. John moaned in agony as they struggled from the room. Once in the inner room, Willard carefully laid him on the floor and covered him with a bed to hide him should the mob return. "I know you are uncomfortable, but if your wounds are not fatal, I want you to live to tell the story," Willard said as he covered him and stroked his head. Not convinced this was over, Willard thought his chance of survival was slim.

Willard moved back to the door of the inner prison to watch, waiting for the mob to return. He would make a final stand if they did. He was likely a dead man, but if he could keep John hidden, there would be at least one person left to tell the awful tale to the members back in Nauvoo.

After what seemed like an eternity, Willard realized the noise and chaos had disappeared. He cautiously left the room to assess the situation. Investigation of the surrounding area revealed the mob was gone. With their goal achieved, they had left as quickly as they had come. Willard collapsed in the hallway and sobbed in a flood of emotion as he realized it was finally over. He had survived, and quite possibly John too, but the mob had murdered the two beloved leaders of his church in cold blood. It was a day he would never be able to forget, no matter how hard he tried.

CHAPTER TWO: SMITHS AND STONES

~1819 Palmyra, New York ~

Young Joseph opened his eyes and rubbed the sleep out of them. The first light of day was peeking through the window, and it had been a restless night. He looked around the room. He shared the bedroom with four of his brothers, and it was cramped, to say the least. His youngest brother was still a baby and slept in a makeshift crib with his parents. The boys' main bedroom was on the second floor of their tiny home. Five boys in three beds meant two boys per bed, except for one lucky single, at least for now until Don Carlos got a little older. Hyrum lay next to Joseph and was sleeping soundly. Joseph sighed. He dreamt of a better home and more comforts for himself and his family.

The Smith family was dirt poor. Joseph wasn't sure why, but he knew he didn't like it. His father certainly wasn't the hardest worker, but Joseph didn't blame him for their current situation—at least not entirely. It always seemed they were on the cusp of something great, but it never panned out.

Joseph had read and heard countless stories of buried treasures near where his family currently lived. According to local lore, the infamous pirate, Captain Kidd, had buried treasures throughout the area. He knew deep down inside that finding one of those treasures was his God-given destiny. Joseph and his family were meant for more than this. He was tired of being poor. His family struggled for even the barest of necessities. That wasn't going to be his future. He was going to make something of himself, and the first step was to find at least one of the buried treasures.

The desire to learn the secrets of folk magic consumed his waking thoughts. He had devoured every morsel of information he could, from anyone who would talk to him about scrying. Scrying was the magic of looking at a peep stone and using it to find lost items. The magic fascinated him, and he was hell-bent on becoming the best scryer the world would ever know. Lofty goals for someone so young, but Joseph wasn't afraid of dreaming big. Finding even one of Captain Kidd's treasures would set him and his family up for the rest of their lives. Failure just wasn't an option.

He rearranged his pillow to a more upright position and looked around the room. His brothers were all sleeping soundly, including Hyrum, who seemed unaware that Joseph was restless. There was no noise coming from the other parts of the house yet. He knew he would not find sleep again, so Joseph started to go over everything he had learned so far in his mind. Smiling, he convinced himself that better times were ahead.

Mornings were busy around the Smith household. There were chores to do, food to cook, and beds to make. Everyone had their responsibility, and you didn't neglect your duties if you wanted to stay in the good graces of Mother Smith.

At first glance, the Smith family was your typical nineteenth-century family, but they were as different as night and day upon closer inspection. They were currently living in a tiny log cabin they had constructed near some land they hoped to procure. Joseph's dad was trying to negotiate the purchase so they would have room to farm. It was a 100-acre parcel, and his father was sure it was the answer to their situation, but that didn't convince Joseph.

Joseph finished up his chores as quickly as he could after lunch. Were they done to the level his mother would have expected? Probably not, but they were good enough. He had plans to meet with Sally Chase as she returned from school, and he didn't want to miss her. Sally was well known in the community for her peep stone and its power to locate lost items. Joseph had heard of a couple of different people she had let handle the stone, and he hoped she'd be willing to let him be one of them. The stories he had heard said that no one besides Sally could see anything with her stone, but Joseph was confident he would see something. His heart skipped a beat as the excitement of peering into the stone seemed close at hand.

School let out at 3:30, and he had to walk a bit from where he lived to intercept her on her way home. He grabbed his Dad's white stovepipe hat and headed out the door. It was too warm to wear the hat, but he hoped he would need it if things went as planned.

"Where do you think you are going?" asked his mother.

Joseph turned to see her glaring at him. "I, uh, I was... going out to check on the hens," he stammered.

His mother looked at him intently, her eyes burning right through his soul. She craned her neck to see what he was holding behind his back. Joseph hesitated, hoping she would accept his answer and let him go. She stared intently for a few more moments, specifically eyeing the hat, then shaking her head, "Fine, be gone."

Joseph thanked his lucky stars and hurried out the door. He picked up his pace as soon as he was out of view. He didn't want to miss Sally. *Better to be early, than late and miss her*, he thought. As he neared the area, he spied Sally in the distance heading in his direction. Joseph let out a sigh of relief; he hadn't missed her. She was walking with her friend Jane Carlton, and as they both looked in Joseph's direction, Sally acknowledged him with a smile.

When they arrived where Joseph was waiting, Joseph asked Sally if she could talk for a minute. Sally said she could and looked at Jane, who nodded and said goodbye, but not before she shot a look of disgust at Joseph. It was a bit awkward, but Joseph knew well that his family was the brunt of many nasty rumors in the area. He couldn't care less what Jane thought about him or his family. Joseph gave her a mocking look as she walked off but then turned his attention to Sally.

Sally was a couple of years older than thirteen-year-old Joseph. Of course, she attended school, and Joseph didn't, at least not very often. His family believed in teaching the kids at home while they worked. He didn't mind. His mother taught them to read and write, although writing was not Joseph's

strong suit. Joseph could spin a yarn as detailed as any story you might find in a book but ask him to write it out, and it never came out the same. He accepted the gift he had, and didn't worry about the gift he didn't have.

"How are you, Sally?" Joseph asked as politely as he knew how. He held the hat firmly in one hand while trying to hide it behind his back.

Sally smiled at him, "I'm fine, and you?"

"I am doing very well," Joseph answered, but he wanted to get straight to business. "Do you have your peep stone with you?"

"Of course," she replied, almost with disbelief that he would question it.

"May I see it?" Joseph was trying to use his best manners. He wanted to be her friend so badly, but he had no idea what she thought of him. Sally looked around to ensure they were alone and pulled a folded-up piece of leather out of the pocket on her dress. Joseph could hardly contain his excitement. She carefully unwrapped it, and Joseph caught the first glimpse of the famous stone. It was round and shiny and had a deep dark green color. It was every bit as magnificent as he had imagined. She held it out as if it would be OK for him to hold it.

"May I?" Joseph asked tenuously.

Sally laughed. She found Joseph's manners delightful and knew how hard he was trying to please her. "You may," she said, smiling.

Joseph carefully plucked the rock from its resting place with his free hand and held it up to his face to examine it closely. It was a unique stone. He held it up to the sun, squinting. The deep green color almost seemed translucent as it changed hues in the sunlight.

Joseph's family had talked many times about peep stones. It was common for the family to discuss such things in the evenings after finishing the daily chores. Joseph's mother, Lucy, said she believed there was a peep stone for every person located somewhere on this earth. Joseph was sure she was correct. Even though he knew how peep stones worked, he wanted to hear Sally explain it. "How do you make it work?" he asked.

Sally smiled at him. She had noticed the hat he had unsuccessfully hidden behind him. She was sure he knew the answer to his question, but she went ahead with her response anyway. "I place it inside the bottom of a stovepipe hat... like that one in your hand." Sally laughed, and Joseph, knowing he had been caught, blushed.

She motioned for Joseph to give her the hat and the stone, which he did. She took the hat and placed the stone inside it. "I place my face to the top of the hat like this." She demonstrated the technique by

putting her face to the brim of the hat. "... to exclude outside light, and then I see a vision of what I am looking for. Do you want to try it?"

Joseph did his best to contain his enthusiasm. "May I?"

She nodded in approval. Joseph took the hat and looked at the precious stone still lying inside it. He took a deep breath as he buried his face into the hat's brim. Nervous and excited, this was the moment he had been waiting for, as he waited to see what would happen.

Sally was also curious to see what would happen. She had let a few people try out her seer stone, but no one had ever seen anything. It seemed to only work for her, although if she was candid with herself, she knew it was less hit and more miss when it came to the actual results.

Joseph gave no clues as to what was happening. Sally tried to read his body language, but he stood almost motionless and even more silent. This was different than any other time she had let someone try using the stone.

With his head buried in the hat, Joseph was amazed by how much light still came through. At first, he wondered if that was the issue. He had always been told you had to exclude the outside light, and this white hat let a lot of sunlight through the fabric. He could still see the actual stone quite easily.

He concentrated harder, determined to make it work. The harder he focused on the stone, the more the light seemed to interfere with seeing the vision. Closing his eyes tightly seemed to help. He saw patterns of light and dark dancing through his closed eyelids. *Was that the vision?* he silently asked himself. Joseph was concentrating so hard he had forgotten about Sally.

"So, do you see anything?" Sally asked, breaking his concentration.

Joseph let the hat fall from his face and smiled. "That was amazing!" Sally took a step back and looked at him with a surprised look that Joseph ignored. "I saw a vision," he told her. "I saw the location of my very own peep stone! It's located about 150 miles from here in a remote section of western New York by Lake Erie. It's under the roots of a tree... or maybe a large shrub. The roots are as big as my arm." He held up his arm for effect. He told her that the rock became luminous and got brighter and brighter until it had become as intense as the midday sun.

Sally looked astonished. This was the first time someone had seen something with her stone, and she wasn't sure what to think. Was Joseph going to start competing with her? She was practically famous around the county for her scrying. She was worried that someone else might start horning in on her territory.

Joseph was beaming. He wasn't entirely sure why he had exaggerated his experience, but the look on Sally's face was worth it. He suddenly felt important and respected. These were rare feelings for anyone in the Smith family. He just had to get one of these stones for himself.

CHAPTER THREE: A STONE IN A WELL

~ 1820, Palmyra, New York ~

Life on the farm was so far from what fourteen-year-old Joseph wanted in life, making it almost unbearable. Fortunately, his oldest brother Alvin and his father seemed to feel the same way. Oh, they all did their best to keep the farm running as smoothly as possible, but it didn't take much coaxing to get any or all three of them to stop what they were doing and search for buried treasure instead.

For the most part, the family got along quite well. They made the best of what they had while always dreaming of more. But, when it came to scrying, finding lost or hidden objects, and foretelling the future through crystals and similar things, Alvin, Joseph, and Father Smith seemed to forge a stronger bond than the others.

The three were starting to gain a reputation in the surrounding area as successful treasure diggers. Even without any evidence, they thrived on the attention they received for their perceived abilities. After all, success was relative, and people were willing to pay for the hope of something better.

Folklore of buried treasure often included stories of a man left behind to guard the treasure. After finding a secure location, pirates would slit the throat of one of their men and toss the body in with the riches. Joseph often used these tales to explain why treasure digging was so tricky. It was one thing to be a seer and locate the buried treasure, but quite another to overcome the Treasure Guardian and successfully retrieve it.

Folks believed it, which helped make Joseph seem successful even when he wasn't. Religion and folk magic often walked hand in hand.

Since that first experience with Sally Chase, Joseph had convinced himself that he had supernatural abilities. He knew he had more to learn, but success was just around the corner. Joseph convinced himself the vision he saw with Sally's stone was real, even though he knew what had actually happened that day. The exaggerated story fit his inward feeling that he was destined for greatness.

Joseph knew that while Sally could find the treasure's location with her stone, she was powerless against the Guardian Spirits, who could carry the prize away with no warning whatsoever. The trick was to learn the deeper magic that would allow you to bind the Guardian Spirits long enough to retrieve the treasure. Joseph was thirsty for any knowledge of that level of magic. He took every chance that presented itself to learn more. But Joseph's first order of business was to get his very own seer stone. Without it, he was just a boy filled with dreams.

Joseph decided it was time to retrieve the stone from his vision so he could become a scryer himself. He left Manchester at the age of sixteen and returned several days later with his newfound stone. It was small and white, and Joseph claimed it had the power to dissolve time and distance. He compared it to having an “All-Seeing Eye.”

Unfortunately for Joseph, it didn't elevate his reputation as much as he had hoped. Since no one was with him on his trip to retrieve it, there was no one to collaborate the miraculous find. Joseph needed something more to tell people so that they would believe in his abilities. Fortunately for Joseph, that situation was about to present itself.

After a discouraging day of chores, Joseph sat for dinner. Alvin walked in and announced that he had some good news. Willard Chase (Sally Chase's older brother) wanted to hire the Smiths to help him dig a well. Joseph glared at Alvin. How was this good news? Digging a well was back-breaking, hard work. His bad day had just taken a turn for the worse. Joseph knew that the family needed money, and this was an opportunity to help out in that area, but that didn't mean he would look forward to it.

Joseph's father smiled at Alvin. Money was scarce, and this opportunity would help tie things over. “That is great news, Alvin,” Father Smith proclaimed. “How many of us does he want to help him?”

“He said two men would work well,” Alvin replied.

“Perfect! Why don't you and Joseph take on this task for the family? When do you start?”

“He is ready for us tomorrow,” Alvin said while shooting a glance at Joseph. Joseph glared back, but Alvin ignored it.

“Praise be,” said Father. “It's settled.” Joseph groaned, and Father Smith shot him a warning glance. Joseph looked away and slumped into his chair; he knew there was no way out of it now.

The following day, Alvin and Joseph got up early and went to Willard's place to help dig the well. Willard Chase had already begun, using divination with his trusty rod to find the perfect spot. Willard had a reputation for being strong with the rod for finding the right location to dig a well.

Just as Joseph had thought, it was hard work, but Willard was also interested in treasure digging and scrying, so it was not as bad as Joseph had expected. While working on the project, they traded stories about local treasure lore, which helped pass the time. As the hole got deeper, they traded off digging while the other two would pull the bucket filled with dirt up using a rope and pulley, empty it, and then send the bucket back down. Digging was the hardest, so trading between three people

made it easier to endure the time spent in the hole. The hole was getting deep, and Willard figured they were getting close to reaching the water.

On the second day of digging, it was time for Alvin and Joseph to head home. Joseph and Alvin were both at ground level, and Alvin called down to Willard.

“I think we’ll call it a day and head for home,” Alvin shouted.

“Understood,” Willard called back. “We’re getting close; tomorrow might be a short day.”

“We’ll still plan on it,” Alvin called back.

“Agreed,” Willard called up.

The two said farewell to Willard and turned to go home. Willard decided to dig just long enough to fill one more bucket, and then he’d climb up, empty it, and call it a day. Willard paused to catch his breath and took a swig of water from a leather skin bag hung over his shoulder. At this point, they had reached a depth of about twenty feet. He pulled a handkerchief from his pocket to wipe the sweat from his forehead when something caught his eye. It was a small stone sticking partially out of the disturbed soil just to the right of his shovel.

He reached down and picked it up. It was about the size of a hen’s egg and was deep brown. It was smooth with tiger stripes across it. He poured some water over it and rubbed it dry on a section of his pant leg that wasn’t covered in mud. He studied the stone and marveled at its very unusual finish and shape. It reminded him of some of the peep stones he had seen. He smiled at his luck and then stuffed it in his pocket.

The earth around his feet was growing damp, and even some puddles of water were starting to show. The well was close to the final depth it needed. He finished filling the bucket and climbed up the ladder. He used the rope to pull the bucket up and scattered the dirt. The darkening sky told him it was time to return home. He fingered the newfound stone in his pocket. Willard knew Alvin and Joseph would be interested in a rock like this, and he couldn’t wait to show it to them.

The morning sun was peeking over the horizon as Joseph and Alvin ate a filling and tasty breakfast. Mother had gotten up early to make sure they left the house with full bellies. Mother had gone outside to feed the hens, so the two found themselves alone at the table. They were chatting about nothing in particular as they finished up their meal. The rest of the family was starting to stir, but they had chores to attend to, so they wouldn’t be joining the two early risers.

“I think this will be the last day of digging, brother,” Alvin said as he picked up his cup of coffee and finished what was left.

Joseph nodded. It hadn't been as bad as he had expected, but he would be glad to finish the project. He held out hope that the well was deep enough and that it would be a short day. Joseph stuffed the last bite of oatmeal in his mouth, took a final swig of coffee, and they both got up from the table and headed out the door. When they arrived at the deep hole, Willard was already digging. Alvin called down to him from the top of the hole and caught Willard's attention. Willard smiled, set down his shovel, and climbed the ladder to meet them.

"I just started. Let's pull the bucket up, and then we'll start our rotation. Water should start filling in soon, and we'll need to pull up the last bucket and get whoever is down there out once it begins to fill," Willard said as he brushed some mud from his shirt.

"That sounds like a plan," Alvin replied. "I'll take the next shift digging." Willard nodded.

When Alvin got to the bottom, the ground was soft and muddy, with puddles of water starting to show. "Boy, you are right; we could hit water anytime."

"Be ready. When it starts to fill, it will fill fast," Willard warned.

Joseph tried to see down the well, but it was too dark at the bottom to make out any detail. He liked hearing they were almost done, hopeful to avoid a shift digging if they hit water soon.

Alvin started filling the bucket and called up to the others to pull it up when it was full. Joseph pulled the bucket up, and Willard grabbed it and scattered the dirt around. He handed the empty bucket back to Joseph, who slowly lowered it to Alvin. Alvin started filling the bucket with his shovel when the bottom of the well suddenly started filling with water.

"Pull the bucket up!" Alvin shouted. "It is filling fast."

Joseph pulled as Alvin scampered up the ladder, soaked from the waist down. Willard smiled. He could hear the sound of water as it filled the bottom of the well. Alvin held out his hand as he reached the top of the ladder, and Willard grabbed it and helped him up out of the hole.

"Great job, you two!" Willard exclaimed. "We have a new well!"

They congratulated each other as they shook hands and patted each other on the back as they admired their work. The water had stopped flowing in, and you could see the water level easily. The three men used their shovels to clean up the area around the well and get it ready for Willard to put the cap in place.

"You two were a great help. I have some workers lined up to help me line the hole with stones, but the hard part is over."

"We appreciate you thinking of us; we can always use the work," Alvin replied. "I guess we'll be on our way if you don't need us for anything else."

Willard thanked them again, and the two turned to leave when Willard suddenly remembered the stone. "Hey, I did want to show you two something I found just as I finished up last night," Willard exclaimed. The two brothers stopped and turned around. Willard pulled a piece of leather from his pocket and unwrapped it to reveal the unusual rock. Willard's cleaning and polishing efforts had paid off; the stone was unique. It eerily reminded Joseph of the time when Sally had pulled the piece of leather from the pocket of her dress the day she had let Joseph see her peep stone. As soon as Joseph saw the stone, his heart skipped a beat. It was remarkable. "Can I hold it?" Joseph asked excitedly.

"Sure," Willard replied, handing the stone to Joseph.

Joseph fingered the stone and then held it up to the light, much like he had with Sally's rock. It felt smooth between his fingers, and the brown color with stripes made it look truly unique and marvelous. This was a peep stone; he just knew it. Maybe the stone just might be meant for Joseph. He couldn't believe his luck!

Joseph pulled his hat off his head and placed the stone inside it. Alvin and Willard intently watched, knowing what Joseph was about to try. Joseph pulled the hat up to his face and then buried his face into the brim. The two onlookers waited with bated breath. "Oh, my!" Joseph exclaimed. "This is amazing!" he continued.

"What?" asked an excited Alvin.

Joseph didn't say another word for what seemed like an eternity. Finally, he dropped the hat away from his face, and his expression was one of awe-struck amazement. "You must let me keep this stone," Joseph said, looking at Willard.

"What did you see?" implored Alvin.

Joseph ignored his older brother, discreetly waving his hand to quiet him, and focused on Willard. "Can I keep it?" Joseph asked Willard again.

Willard, bewildered, stared at the boy. He didn't want to part with the stone; it was very unique, if nothing else. *But*, he thought to himself, *if Joseph can see visions in this stone, maybe it is meant to be his.*

Joseph could see that Willard was wrestling with his question. Willard wondered what Sally, his younger sister, would think of him if he gave the stone to Joseph. He remembered how Sally had voiced concern that Joseph was trying to compete with her, and she was not too happy about that prospect.

"I don't know, Joseph, it's a unique stone, and I just can't see myself parting with it." The thought even crossed his mind that Joseph might be willing to purchase it. Surely this stone would be worth

something if Joseph saw visions with it. But Willard knew too well the Smith's financial situation. Joseph and the Smith family didn't have two extra nickels to rub together.

"You just gotta let me keep it," Joseph began. "It's obviously meant for me. Did you see any visions with it?" Joseph asked with sudden hope that this might be the angle to get the stone, confident Willard couldn't see anything with it.

Willard looked hard at Joseph. Honestly, he hadn't even tried to look into the stone. He had once attempted to use Sally's stone but hadn't seen anything. He believed his sister could see something with it but had concluded that he wasn't born with the same gift. He was better with a divination rod.

Joseph continued looking intently at Willard. His father had once told him that when you are bargaining, keep your stupid mouth shut. Let the other person decide the next phase in the bargain. An awkward silence was hanging in the air, and Willard was the first to break it. "No, I didn't even think to try that, but I doubt I would see anything even if I tried," he said somewhat dejectedly.

Joseph smiled. He knew he was winning the war of wills. "Please, Mr. Chase, you just gotta let me keep it. You won't regret it, I promise." Joseph added the "Mr. Chase" to show respect for his elder, even though Willard was only about seven years older than Joseph. He thought it might help soften his resolve.

"I'll tell you what," Willard began. "I'll loan it to you on one condition." He had emphasized the word loan to drive the point home. "This is still my stone; I'm just letting you borrow it. If I ask you to return it, you must agree to give it back to me on the spot!" Joseph nodded in agreement. He didn't care what the condition was; he had to have this stone. Willard continued, "If I ever want it back, you have to promise, and I mean promise, that you will immediately give me the stone back, no questions asked! Agreed?"

That's it? Joseph thought. This was easier than he had expected. "Of course. I swear it on everything holy," he answered excitedly. Willard smiled and put out his right hand. Joseph quickly grasped his hand, and they shook on it; the agreement was struck. It was an agreement that Willard would regret later, despite Joseph's promise.

Acknowledgments

Without the amazing talents of historians and the work of many to publish documents from Joseph's life, this book would not have been possible. People like Dan Vogel, Brent Metcalf, Grant Palmer, Gerald and Sandra Tanner, Richard Bushman, Fawn Brodie, and LDS Discussions were crucial to this effort. Podcasts like Mormon Stories, Radio Free Mormon, Mormonism Live, and others have all helped build the storyline you will read on these pages. I acknowledge their hard work and dedication to the truth.

There are many I need to thank. I started my journey over ten years ago, long before Reddit and Facebook were what they are today. I researched the church's truth claims long before the CES Letter, Letter For My Wife, or Reddit were even a thing. Back then, I had the Post Mormons Discussion online group and MormonThink as my main support lines. There is so much more today. Community is so essential, and the fact that we can support each other as post-Mormons in so many different ways is remarkable.

Tom Phillips was a bit of a hero for me. His posting on the internet long ago about his second anointing is what started me on a journey to find the truth. Such an innocent question made me examine everything I thought I knew. I applaud his bravery early on in being willing to expose a secret I had never been taught.

I want to thank my wife, Dawn. She has helped me tremendously in writing this book. She has proofread every word, multiple times, as I change, add, delete, and rewrite things over and over. She is also that person who prods me to keep going when I am weary of the process. Her suggestions have made for stronger storylines and better character portrayals. It is nice to have someone I trust to read drafts that still need to be polished and to give me feedback on direction and tone. Her contribution was immense.

My daughter Robin took on the task of reeling me in and editing my many awkward and wordy sentences. She spent hours doing it, and the book is better for it.

Ryan, Tiffany, Robin, Tom, Katie, and Dawn were my go-to chat group to review the covers and offer countless suggestions for the cover and the back blurb. The cover evolved because of their willingness to offer critiques and suggestions.

I also want to thank Joseph Ganci. He heard about my book online and contacted me to see if he could lend his expertise to the project. He has a background as a professional proofreader, and his suggestions and corrections were immeasurable. It was indeed an act of kindness for him to spend time helping me make the book better.

I had several Beta Readers who took on the task of reading the book when it was getting close to completion. I thank them for their comments and suggestions. A couple of them really took the time to go the extra mile. Linda Smith and Zacahcry Hastings provide great feedback that caused me to change certain things around to make the book flow better. That, along with further grammar and typo corrections made for a better final product.

About the Author

Mark Fouyer is a father of five beautiful children with eleven grandchildren. He has owned and operated a recording studio for over thirty-five years. His love of music steered him in that direction. He has composed and recorded hundreds of songs. He always wanted to write a novel and started one in the late nineties. Like many want-to-be authors, he worked on it on and off (mostly off) until he finally got serious and buckled down to write *Love Lost - The Accidental Time Traveler*. It was self-published on Amazon and, with very little promotion, sold over two thousand copies.

Mark was a lifelong member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (the Mormons) into his mid-fifties. He was dedicated to the church and served in countless positions in his local ward and stake. His journey out of the faith was long and hard, with numerous hours of research and prayer. As he learned more about his church's history, he realized the story he had been taught was not the entire story.

He began writing down all his thoughts and discoveries, leading to his second book, *Searching for Glory*. He plans to continue writing on various topics and ideas, with two books currently in the early writing stages.

Keep up to date with the Author by visiting his website:

markfouyer.com

Other Books Recommended by the Author

While my first novel has nothing to do with religion or the LDS church, it is a fun read that has garnered many positive reviews on Amazon. It is a time travel novel set in modern day. You can check it out here:

<https://tinyurl.com/sfgmf42>

My daughter has written two amazing books that I think people who enjoyed *Searching For Glory* would also enjoy. Written for young adult/adult audiences, the two books will take you on a journey of discovery and make you think about God in different ways. Truly worth the read.

Gods of The Garden - Robin Strong

<https://tinyurl.com/sfgmf40>

Scrolls of Prophecy - Sequel to Gods of the Garden - Robin Strong

<https://tinyurl.com/sfgmf41>

CHAPTER NOTES

Originally, I had the chapter notes after each chapter. I kept getting feedback that it tended to interrupt the flow of the story and so I ultimately moved them to the end of the book. In the beginning, the book was as much a documentary as it was a historical novel. I wanted to show that I was using actual historical evidence to draw my conclusions. I'll admit, it was my attempt to quell critics. In the end, I had to agree that it disrupted the storyline and that it probably wouldn't make much difference to those who think I am drawing incorrect conclusions.

I still think they are important and if you want to understand where I got my information, you can find that along with links to many of the documents I read.

CHAPTER ONE NOTES:

Murder at Carthage

Most of this chapter is taken from two sources. One is a Brigham Young University paper that shows both Willard's and Taylor's written accounts:

<https://tinyurl.com/sfgmf>

The second account I used came from Wikipedia concerning the three men who were part of the mob who were shot and wounded by Joseph:

<https://tinyurl.com/sfgmf2>

I followed the written accounts of the two survivors very carefully, as they seemed to be the most reliable sources for what happened inside the room. Both Taylor and Richards talked about holding the door, yet they were surprised that it was never entirely rushed and breached. John Taylor concluded that their cowardice kept them outside the door.

I drew a different conclusion concerning that part of the story. I believe the mob was held outside by the fear of the unknown. There were three wounded members of the mob with shots delivered from Joseph's revolver. They had no idea how the prisoners possessed a gun and likely wondered if any others inside also had weapons. I think this kept them outside the door until they accomplished their goal. I created the dialog on the mob's side based on that conclusion.

A fascinating article about this event can be read at the link below. It takes on a crime-scene-type investigation and is quite thorough. I read this after I wrote this chapter while researching for a later chapter and decided it might interest those who want to dive intensely into the murder. They came to some of the same conclusions I did concerning those unwilling to force the door open.

<https://tinyurl.com/sfgmf3>

After writing this chapter, I heard about a documentary titled Who Killed Joseph Smith. Using forensic and ballistic evidence, the documentary attempts to prove that much of the two main eyewitness accounts do not match what the evidence shows. After watching both parts of the documentary, I have to agree that Willard and John appear to be making at least part of their story up. However, I don't agree with his theory that those two men killed Joseph Smith. Is it possible? Sure, almost anything is possible, but I think his theory has as many holes in it as Willard and John's versions. For me the most likely reason for their contradictory stories is that they embellished and did their best to paint Joseph and Hyrum as martyrs and themselves as heroes. But, it is a fascinating take and worth the time if you are interested.

Part One <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bXfTw01ogPk>

Part Two <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K5sDJddLojI>

Concerning the Mason Distress Call:

John Taylor, a Master Mason himself, who was in the jail with Joseph at the time it happened, wrote:

...These two innocent men [Joseph and Hyrum] were confined in jail for a supposed crime, deprived of any weapons to defend themselves: had the pledged faith of the State of Illinois, by Gov. Ford, for their protection, and were then shot to death, while, with uplifted hands they gave such signs of distress as would have commanded the interposition and benevolence of Savages or Pagans. They were both Masons in good standing. Ye brethren of "the mystic tie" [Masonry] what think ye! Where is our good Master Joseph and Hyrum? Is there a pagan, heathen, or savage nation on the globe that would not be

moved on this great occasion, as the trees of the forest are moved by a mighty wind? Joseph's last exclamation was "O Lord my God!"

If one of these murderers, their abettors or accessories before or after the fact, are suffered to cumber the earth, without being dealt with according to law, what is life worth, and what is the benefit of laws, and more than all, what is the use of institutions which savages would honor, where civilized beings murder without cause or provocation?

According to Heber C. Kimball:

Masons, it is said, were even among the mob that murdered Joseph and Hyrum in Carthage jail. Joseph, leaping [from] the fatal window, gave the Masonic signal of distress. The answer was the roar of his murderers' muskets.

<https://tinyurl.com/sfgmf4>

Many leaders within the church at the time of Joseph's death believed the prophet's last words were a plea for help from fellow Masons. Joseph was undoubtedly well-versed in Masonry and a Master Mason himself. We will never know for sure, but it is a very plausible possibility that leaders within the faith made that very argument when this all happened.

CHAPTER TWO NOTES:

Treasure Digging

There is documentation of Joseph knowing about and looking for Captain Kidd's and other buried treasures. It was prevalent at the time for some people to believe in folk magic and buried treasures. Smith would later become a Glass Looker and hire out to find such treasures. However, in somewhere between 20 and 40 treasure digs, he never once succeeded in finding a single treasure.

Even church historian Steven E. Snow notes that "By 1825, young Joseph had a reputation in Manchester and Palmyra for his activities as a treasure seer, or someone who used a seer stone to locate gold or other valuable objects buried in the earth." (Steven E. Snow, "Joseph Smith in Harmony," Ensign Magazine, September 2015)

Family Economics

Joseph's family was poor; though Joseph was primarily deprived of formal education, he was instructed in reading, writing, and the ground rules of arithmetic in his youth. Joseph's mother said that he was often "given to meditation and deep study." Joseph's parents had both been teachers at one time, and Hyrum became a teacher after formal education. Reasonably qualified people home taught the family.

Sally Chase

I took some liberties with this story. There is not a lot of documentation about Joseph's relationship with Sally Chase. There is acceptable evidence that they met, and Joseph was allowed to use her stone for himself. Joseph claimed to see the location of his peep stone during that experience. We only have a few details about when and how it occurred, so I created pieces for the storyline.

CHAPTER THREE NOTES:

Willard Chase and the Peep Stone

In this chapter, I have Willard Chase finding the stone after the boys leave for the day. He then shows it to them the next day. This was merely a way of enhancing the story. It is more likely that they were together when they found the stone, but it has no real bearing on history. There is plenty of evidence pointing to how Joseph got his seer stone and that the church still has the same stone in its possession today. Willard was the original finder of the stone, and Joseph begged Willard to let him have it.

Lending the stone

This is a minor change to what possibly happened. There are documents showing that Willard found the stone and agreed to lend it to Joseph with the conditions. Joseph kept the stone for about two years until Willard requested it back. Joseph gave him the stone back at that time. According to Willard, -

“Sometime in 1825, Hiram (sp) came to me and wished to borrow the same stone... I told him if he would pledge me his word and honor, that I should have it when called for, he might take it.”

Chase then describes a dispute over the ownership of the stone:

“In the fall of 1826, a friend called upon me and wished to see that stone... On going to [Hyrum] Smith’s and asking him for the stone, he said, “you cannot have it;” I told him it belonged to me, repeated to him the promise he made me, at the time of obtaining the stone: upon which he faced me with a malignant look and said, “I don’t care who in the Devil it belongs to, you shall not have it.”

<https://tinyurl.com/sfgmf8>

I don’t go into the future problem with the stone as it isn’t relevant except for showing that Hyrum didn’t keep his word to Willard and that the church has possession of the stone to this day. They revealed they were in possession of it in a press release in August 2015. Until then, the church had gone as far as to deny that Joseph was involved in treasure digging with a peep stone. As time went on, they eventually had to come clean and admit it was true and even shared photos of the stone during that press release.