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# Smith Family Log Home

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Manchester, New York

## D&C 2: Introduction

Lucy Mack Smith wrote, “Two years from the time we entered Palmyra, strangers, destitute of friends or home or employment, we were able to settle ourselves upon our land, in a snug comfortable though humble habitation built and neatly furnished by our own industry.”<sup>1</sup> The Smith cabin, built in the winter of 1818 by Father Smith and his sons, had two rooms on the ground level, a kitchen or “keeping room” on the south, and a parlor on the north. Later the Smiths added a bedroom wing. A steep, narrow stairway led to an overhead garret that was divided into two compartments.

By the twentieth century, the Smith cabin had completely disappeared—not even the foundation was visible. On June 18, 1930, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints negotiated with personnel from the Federal Land Bank of Springfield, Massachusetts, to purchase 6.2 acres of the old Smith property, including the acreage on which the Smith log home once stood.

A series of archeological digs in the 1980s uncovered the foundation. This was followed by the construction of a log cabin that had the same dimensions as that of the Smith cabin. On March 27, 1998, President Gordon B. Hinckley dedicated the rebuilt Smith Family Log Home and said, “This will do away with the legend that has somewhat grown up among us that the other house [the Joseph Smith

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<sup>1</sup> Lucy Mack Smith, History, 1844–1845. Joseph Smith Papers.

Sr. frame house] was the place where Moroni visited the Prophet. It was in this place and in the upstairs room that that event occurred.”<sup>2</sup>

Significant events occurred in or near the Smith log home—

1. In the early spring of 1820 Joseph Smith walked from the home into the nearby woods and received a vision of God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ (Joseph Smith—History 1:5–20).
2. In the home, Joseph’s sister Lucy was born on July 18, 1821, the last child born to Joseph Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith.
3. On the night of September 21, 1823, angel Moroni, “a messenger sent from the presence of God,” told young Joseph that “God had a work for [him] to do” (Joseph Smith—History 1:33).
4. Alvin Smith died in the log home on November 19, 1823. As he lay dying, he said to young Joseph, “I want you to be a good boy, and do everything that lies in your power to obtain the Record. Be faithful in receiving instruction, and in keeping every command that is given you.”<sup>3</sup>
5. From 1826 to 1830 Hyrum Smith and his wife, Jerusha, resided in the log home. Two of their children were born in the home—Lovina Smith on September 16, 1827, and Mary on June 29, 1829.
6. In the spring of 1829 Joseph Smith Sr. and his wife Lucy “began to make preparations to remove our family and effects back to the log house which was now occupied by Hyrum.”<sup>4</sup>
7. Near the home, the Eight Witnesses of the Book of Mormon were shown and handled the golden plates. Numbered among the witnesses were three members of the Smith household—Joseph Sr., Hyrum, and Samuel Harrison.
8. Oliver Cowdery completed copying in longhand the printer’s copy of the Book of Mormon from the original manuscript in the home.
9. The home was the meeting place for a Church branch in 1830.

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<sup>2</sup> “Pres. Hinckley Dedicates Historic Sites,” *LDS Church News*, April 4, 1998.

<sup>3</sup> Lucy Mack Smith, History, 1844–1845. Joseph Smith Papers.

<sup>4</sup> Lucy Mack Smith, History, 1844–1845. Joseph Smith Papers.