
Selah J. Griffin

1799–?

D&C 52:32; 56:5–6

Selah, a blacksmith by trade, resided in Morgan Township, Ohio, before moving to Kirtland. On June 7, 1831, the Prophet Joseph Smith received a revelation calling Selah and Newel Knight to journey to Jackson County, Missouri: “And let my servants Newel Knight and Selah J. Griffin both be ordained, and also take their journey” (D&C 52:32). After being ordained an elder by the Prophet Joseph, Selah learned that Newel Knight was unable to fulfill the mission. Selah was reassigned to journey with Thomas B. Marsh as his missionary companion (see D&C 56:5–6). Of their mission, Elder Marsh wrote, “Many believed our testimony, but we did not wait to baptize any.”¹

At a conference held on August 24, 1831, Bishop Edward Partridge requested that Selah “tarry a while after arriving in this land if the Spirit so direct him.”² Apparently, Selah felt directed, for he and his family were soon residents of Jackson County. They were numbered among the Latter-day Saints driven from their homes in November 1833. Selah wrote,

In November they Strip[ed] us of guns and Drive us a crost [*sic*] the river in to Clay County the loss of property sustained in Jackson County [\$150.00] dollars of book accounts Lost worth [\$200.50] of Crops and two guns worth 75 dollars and Black Smith Shop and tools to the

¹ Thomas B. Marsh, “History of Thomas Baldwin Marsh,” *Millennial Star* 26 (June 11, 1864), 376.

² Donald 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 Co., 1983), 14.

amount of hundred Dollars Lost in the whole amounted was Seven hundred And Seventy five dollars is My loss By the mob.³

Wanting Church leaders in Kirtland to know of the suffering of exiles from Jackson County now living on the banks of the Missouri River, Selah journeyed to Ohio to report. In Kirtland, he was ordained a seventy and assigned to the Second Quorum of Seventy.

As a newly ordained seventy, Selah returned to Missouri and once again suffered with the Saints from Missourian bigotry. After being driven from Missouri, Selah wrote an affidavit itemizing his losses:

I was obliged to leave hom[e] which I had paid the gove[r]nment for Being a Blacksmith I had five hundred dollars of Book a[c]counts taken from me and one Set of Black smith to[o]ls worth on[e] hundred Forty [dollars] of land in Caldwell County The improvements there on worth fore [sic] hundred dollars."⁴

Selah never received any recompense for his losses. Upset by what he had suffered for his religious beliefs, Selah forsook his affiliation with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He remained in Illinois when the Saints ventured west. By 1860 he was residing in Montezuma, Illinois. His whereabouts after 1860 are unknown.

³ Clark V. Johnson, ed., *Mormon Redress Petitions: Documents of the 1833–1838 Missouri Conflict* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1992), 454.

⁴ Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions*, 454.