

## "Mormons in Carroll"

Carroll County Times Article for 10 December 2000

By Jay A. Graybeal

Several years ago when a Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints opened in Hampstead, many people, including this writer, thought that it was the first in the county. A newspaper article entitled, "Mormons in Carroll" in the March 17, 1888 issue of the American Sentinel reveals that the church already had established itself in Tyrone:

"T. A. Williams and Joshua Horner, Elders of the church of Jesus Christ, of Latter day Saints, were entertained by your correspondent of Tyrone, Md., on the evening of March 12th, at which time the following account of the belief was given and the origin of Mormonism was discussed: Joseph Smith, the founder of the sect, was a native of Vermont State, and was born in the year 1805. He afterward moved to New York State, where, at the age of 15, while the neighborhood in which he lived was engaged in a religious revival, he claims in answer to prayer to have a visitation of Heavenly messengers, who inform him that in the near future he is to be made an instrument in the hands of God in re-establishing the everlasting Gospel, which is spoken of by John in Revelation 14:6. At the age of 22 he receives from the hands of a messenger of God a record of the ancient inhabitants of the continent of America, from the confusion of tongues at the town of Babel to 420 years after the birth of Christ. It is a history of the hand dealings of God with the descendants of the tribe of Joseph, who was sold into Egypt, of which the native Indian of the present day is a remnant, and gives a full account of the coming of Jesus Christ, after his death and ascension, to the American continent, and setting up his Gospel among the people of America the same as at Palestine. This same Jos. Smith also testifies that he received the power and authority to preach and administer in the ordinances of the Gospel by ordination at the hands of John the Baptist, and apostles Peter, James and John, who conferred it upon him in the year 1829.

The articles of faith are as follows: We believe in God the eternal Father, and in his son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost. We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam's transgressions. We believe that through the atonement of Christ all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws, and ordinances of the Gospel. We believe that the ordinances are, first, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, repentance, third, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. We believe that a man must be called of God by 'prophecy and by the laying on of hands,' by those who are in authority, to preach the Gospel and administer in the ordinance thereof. We believe in the same organization that existed in the primitive church, viz: apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, etc. We believe in the gifts of tongues, prophecy, revelation, visions, healing, interpretation of tongues. We believe the Bible to be the word of God, as far as it is translated correctly. We also believe the book of Mormon to be the word of God. We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the kingdom of God. We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the ten tribes; that Zion will be built upon this continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth and that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradistic glory. We claim the privilege of worshiping Almighty God according to the dictates of our conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, when or what they may. We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers and magistrates, in obeying, honoring and sustaining the law. We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men; indeed we may say that we follow the admonition of Paul, 'We believe in all things, we hope in all things.' We have endured many things, and hope to be able to endure all things. If there is anything virtuous, lovely or of good report or

praiseworthy, we seek after these things. The preachers travel as did the ancient disciples, without purse and scrip, and having freely received freely preach the Gospel, and look to that life to come for their reward. They report some five hundred missionaries similarly engaged throughout the Christian and heathen world. The priesthood of the Mormon church is organized into the following quorum: The first presidency, the 12 apostles, the high councils, the seventies, high priests, elders, priests, teachers and deacons. Infant baptism is condemned, but the children of the saints are considered old enough at 8 years to be baptized. Baptism for the dead is practiced, a living person being publicly baptized as the representative of one or more deceased persons. Washington, Franklin and other famous persons have thus been vicariously baptized into the church. The Mormon church was formally established at Manchester, Ontario county, N. Y., in April 1830. They emigrated to Great Salt Lake Valley, in Utah Territory, where they have built up a large and flourishing community. At home and abroad they are supposed to number over two hundred thousand souls."

The church practice of baptizing the dead has resulted in the accumulation of an unparalleled collection of genealogical records about millions of deceased people worldwide. These records are easily accessible and can be of assistance in compiling a family history.