Junius And Joseph
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Acknowledgments

The origins of this study can be traced to a 1980 local history piece written for the Hamilton, Ohio Journal-News by historian Jim Blount. Ed Michaels brought the article to our attention in early 1995; he had kept the clipping tucked away with his genealogical research notes and only unearthed it in 1994, the 150th anniversary of the murder of the founding prophet of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Blount’s account, “Hamilton Marshal Killed Mormon’s Joseph Smith,” provided us with the first suggestion that the assassination of the Prophet Joseph was driven more by national political interests than disagreement over Mormon theology, economics, or even polygamy. As practicing Latter-day Saints, we intend this work to assist in a re-evaluation of the final months in the life of the first Mormon prophet.

This study would not have been possible without the generous assistance of countless individuals. First and foremost we must thank our wives and families for their forbearance as well as encouragement during numerous research trips to consult court records, historical society files, and church archives in Ohio, Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri, and Utah.

At times we were almost overwhelmed by the difficulties of navigating the complicated terrain of early Mormonism. Our journey was made easier by the insightful writings of Mervin D. Hogan, D. Michael Quinn, Scott H. Faulring, Lyndon Cook, and Will Bagley, each of whom unknowingly provided the catalyst for some critical breakthrough moments during the various phases of this project. Numerous colleagues and friends also offered assistance along the way. Chief among them were Gordon C. Thomasson, Carl Pletsch and Ryan J. Barilleaux. They willingly read early drafts of the manuscript and provided thought-provoking commentary. Gordon, in particular, always found time for late-night reflection and was generous with much needed moral support and practical advice.

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supplied transcripts of manuscript materials related to the death of Joseph Smith, Jr.; Bill Slaughter assisted in the selection of images. Rachel Hoover, Brigham Young University Museum of Art, Provo, UT, generously supplied transparencies of C. C. A. Christenen’s paintings of Carthage jail. Sally McPherson, formerly of the Center for Hancock County History, Western Illinois University, Macomb, IL, provided an ideal setting for research and consultation during our visits. Stan Larson, Manuscripts Division, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah Libraries, Salt Lake City, UT, guided us through the labyrinth of Mervin Hogan’s self-published monographs and papers. Ed Via, of Miami’s Interlibrary Loan department, located many hard-to-find sources. Duncan R. Oliver assisted in the early Ohio research. Beth Oliver ably rendered the maps and reconstruction of Carthage jail. Sue Gambrell proofread the manuscript. Pamela Fox, former dean of the School of Fine Arts at Miami University, and Jerry Morris, former chair of the Department of Art at Miami, provided much-needed research and travel support.

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The advent of the Internet and publications on CD-ROM has eased access to many previously obscure and rare resources. Fortunately, these research tools have not yet replaced the need for hands-on examination of primary source material. In addition to the repositories mentioned above, the following institutions also provided generous assistance throughout the course of this project:

Alton Area Historical Society and Research Library, Alton, IL
American Jewish Archives, Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, OH
Ball State University Libraries, Muncie, IN
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven, CT
Butler County Historical Society, Hamilton, OH
Butler County Records Center, Hamilton, OH
Cincinnati Historical Society, Cincinnati, OH
Cincinnati Public Library, Cincinnati, OH
Family History Library, Salt Lake City, UT
Grand Lodges of Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, and Ohio
Grant County Public Library, Williamstown, KY
Grant County Courthouse, Williamstown, KY
Hancock County Courthouse, Carthage, IL
Illinois Historical Survey, Urbana, IL
Illinois State Archives, Springfield, IL
Illinois State Historical Library, Springfield, IL
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Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Miami University Archives, Oxford, OH
National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. and Chicago, IL
Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, OH
Quincy Public Library, Quincy, IL
Smith History Room, Oxford Branch, Lane Public Library, Oxford, OH
Southern Illinois University Library, Edwardsville, IL
University of North Texas Libraries, Denton, TX
Warren County Historical Society, Lebanon, OH

Last of all, we must thank our friends and acquaintances who, with much tolerance and endless patience, withstood years of seemingly incessant talk, of Nauvoo, 1844, Joseph Smith, and the four gunmen at the well. This book is also for you.
In the next canvass, we shall be influenced by no party consideration . . . so the partizans in this county, who expect to divide the friends of humanity and equal rights, will find themselves mistaken—we care not a fig for Whig or Democrat; they are both alike to us, but we shall go for our friends, our tried friends, and the cause of human liberty, which is the cause of God. We are aware that “divide and conquer” is the watchword with many, but with us it cannot be done.

Joseph Smith, December 1841

I am a Whig, and I am a Clay man. I am made of Clay, and I am tending to Clay, and I am going to vote for Henry Clay; that’s the way I feel . . . But I won’t interfere with my people religiously, to affect their votes, though I might to elect Clay, for he ought to be president . . . I am a democrat myself. I am a Washington democrat, a Jefferson democrat, a Jackson democrat, and I voted for Harrison [in 1840], and I am going to vote for Clay [in 1844].

Joseph Smith, August 1843

Tell the people we have had Whig and Democrats [as] Presidents long enough. We want a President of the United States . . . There is oratory enough in the Church to carry me into the Presidential chair the first slide.

Joseph Smith, January 1844

[O]ur candidate for this high office, has been butchered . . . to prevent him from being elected.

John Taylor, “The Next President”

Times and Seasons, August 1844