



Shadrach Roundy

1789–1872

D&C 124:141

Shadrach Roundy, a member of the Board of Trustees of the Free Will Baptist Church in Spafford Corners, New York, first learned of the Restoration from Pastor John Gould. In the winter of 1830, Shadrach went to Fayette, New York, to speak with Joseph Smith about the Restoration. It took Shadrach awhile to accept the fact that Joseph was a Prophet of God. He was not baptized until January 30, 1832, by William E. McLellin. Shadrach was ordained an elder by Orson Hyde and Samuel H. Smith on May 16, 1832. Following his ordination, he sold his property in Spafford Corners and moved his family to Willoughby, Ohio, located a few miles from Kirtland.

Shadrach took the occasion to often visit the Prophet Joseph in Kirtland. Joseph wrote, “A few days since, Elder Shadrach Roundy brought me a quarter of beef. ... I invoke the blessings of the Lord to be poured out upon him.”¹ In 1836, after being ordained a seventy,

¹ Shadrach Roundy. “Great and Obvious Travails of Shadrach Roundy in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,” 1. Church History Library.

Shadrach moved his family from Ohio to Far West, Missouri. Within two years, he was forced by a mob to abandon his property. In the chaos that ensued, he took the time to arrange for his “available property, to be disposed of by ... providing means for the removing from this State of the poor and destitute.”²

After trekking across the state of Missouri to the Mississippi River, Shadrach and his family settled in Warsaw, Illinois, before moving upriver to Nauvoo in 1840. In Nauvoo he opened a mercantile establishment and prospered. He is perhaps best remembered, however, for his unfailing protection of the Prophet Joseph Smith and his service as a captain of the Nauvoo police force. According to family tradition, Shadrach is credited with “saving the Prophet from being kidnapped and probably from being murdered.”³

On January 19, 1841, Joseph Smith received a revelation calling Shadrach to serve in the bishopric with Vinson Knight and Samuel H. Smith (D&C 124:141). In 1842 Shadrach also served as a temporary member of the Nauvoo High Council. Following the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, he was ordained a high priest.

Shadrach was among the first to help Latter-day Saints cross the Mississippi River to the Territory of Iowa as they began their journey to the West. On that journey, Shadrach served as the bishop of the Winter Quarters 5th Ward. He joined the vanguard company of pioneers led by Brigham Young to the Salt Lake Valley. This was the first of five crossings of the plains for him. Shadrach believed his service in the pioneering movement was a fulfillment of the prophecy uttered by Joseph Smith: “There are some men here,” Joseph said, pointing to Shadrach, “who shall do a great work in that land [the Rockies].”⁴

From 1849 to 1856, Shadrach was bishop of the Salt Lake 16th Ward and a member of the first territorial legislature. In his later years, he was ordained a patriarch. Shadrach died on July 4, 1872, in Salt Lake City at age eighty-three. His obituary in the *Deseret Evening News* stated that his cause of death was “old age, at 7:00 yesterday (4th of July) at his residence in the city. ... For some years his health had been feeble; but, though weak in body, he was always strong and cheerful in spirit. ... Thinking himself stronger than he was, [he] exerted himself in his garden, caught cold and was prostrated.”⁵

² Everette Ellsworth Roundy, *The Roundy Family in America, from the Sixteen-Hundreds* (Dedham, MA:1942), 220.

³ Roundy, *The Roundy Family in America*, 222.

⁴ Smith, *History of the Church*, 5:86.

⁵ “Obituary,” *Deseret Evening News*, July 5, 1872.