Stark v Green

An 1842 property dispute and the people who shaped the Saints' world

Appeal Bond No. 65 • Hancock County, Illinois • Expanded narrative edition • 1 October 2026

Why these names matter

One man named on this paper would offer Joseph Smith his personal and professional help. Another would stand trial for Joseph Smith's murder—and be acquitted. A third appears in the organizing work of an anti-Mormon meeting. Their names meet here in November 1842, on a routine appeal over property, before the crisis at Carthage. [S1, S12, S33, N1]

For a reader interested in the early Latter-day Saints, this is the document's unexpected importance. George Bachman, J. C. Davis, and Henry Hunter belonged to the surrounding community whose choices could offer the Saints assistance, subject them to political opposition, or bring them into court. Their differing paths help us see the people behind the signatures.

The immediate story is simple. James Stark had prevailed in a local property proceeding. Joab Green wanted the circuit court to reconsider. Henry Hunter joined Green in a $100 promise securing that appeal; Bachman witnessed it; Davis and his deputy handled the court paperwork. The surviving bond records that next step, not the final outcome. [S1]

The evidence does not establish that either litigant was a Latter-day Saint or that religion caused this lawsuit. Its connection to Church history lies in the lives of the participants and the county institutions they shared with the Saints.



James Stark, claimant, merchant and Disciples of Christ minister. Portrait reproduced in the online transcription of Thomas Gregg's 1880 county history. [S6]

The case in everyday language

The phrase that unlocks the case is “trial of the right of property.” This was a procedure for deciding ownership of personal property caught up in the collection of a debt. It was not, in this usage, a lawsuit deciding ownership of land. [S2–S4]

How an ownership dispute reached court

An officer could seize personal property under a court order to collect what someone owed. If another person said the seized property belonged to him, that person could ask for a prompt hearing. The practical question was whether the property could properly be used to satisfy someone else’s obligation. This explains the procedure; the bond does not identify the actual property, debtor, creditor, or officer in Stark v. Green.

Stark was the claimant: the person asserting a right to the property. The bond records a judgment in his favor on 23 November 1842 before a justice of the peace whose name appears to be “[Wm?] Berry.” Green, the opposing party, sought review in the Hancock Circuit Court. Five days later, on 28 November, the appeal bond was filed. [S1]

What the hundred dollars meant

Green and Hunter promised to satisfy the judgment described in the bond if the appeal was dismissed or decided against Green. Hunter served as a surety—a financial backer for the promise. He was not a second defendant in the captioned property case. The $100 was the bond’s penal amount, not a known purchase price, property valuation, damages award, or payment actually made. [S1]

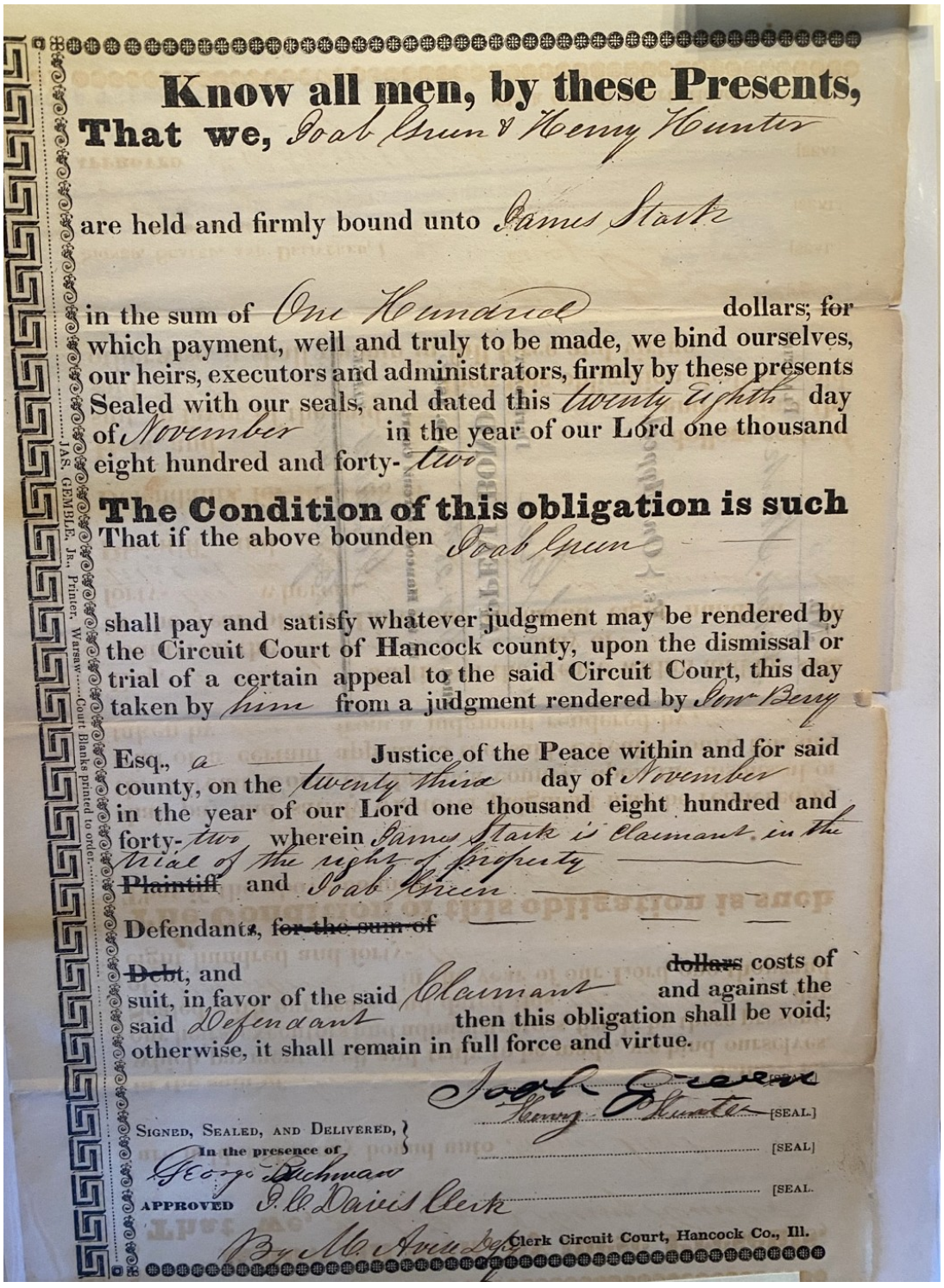
The dates fit the appeal rules: an appeal was to be requested on judgment day, with the bond provided within five days. The filing date therefore does not establish that Green waited until 28 November to ask for review. [S16]

What each signature did

Bachman witnessed execution of the instrument; the bond does not name him as either party’s lawyer. J. C. Davis approved it as circuit clerk. Matthias Avise, the deputy clerk, recorded its filing. These were different jobs. Neither a witness’s signature nor a clerk’s approval tells us who should have won. [S1, S22–S24]

The document stops at the appeal’s beginning. A later judgment, settlement, or dismissal has not been established. That missing ending is the case’s central archival question.

The original appeal bond



Know all men, by these Presents,
That we, Joab Green & Henry Hunter

are held and firmly bound unto James Stark

in the sum of One Hundred dollars; for which payment, well and truly to be made, we bind ourselves, our heirs, executors and administrators, firmly by these presents Sealed with our seals, and dated this twenty eighth day of November in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and forty-two

The Condition of this obligation is such
That if the above bounden Joab Green

shall pay and satisfy whatever judgment may be rendered by the Circuit Court of Hancock county, upon the dismissal or trial of a certain appeal to the said Circuit Court, this day taken by him from a judgment rendered by Jon^a Berry Esq., a Justice of the Peace within and for said county, on the twenty third day of November in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and forty-two wherein James Stark is Claimant in the trial of the right of property ~~Plaintiff~~ and Joab Green ~~Defendants~~, ~~for the sum of~~ ~~Debt~~, and ~~dollars~~ costs of suit, in favor of the said Claimant and against the said Defendant then this obligation shall be void; otherwise, it shall remain in full force and virtue.

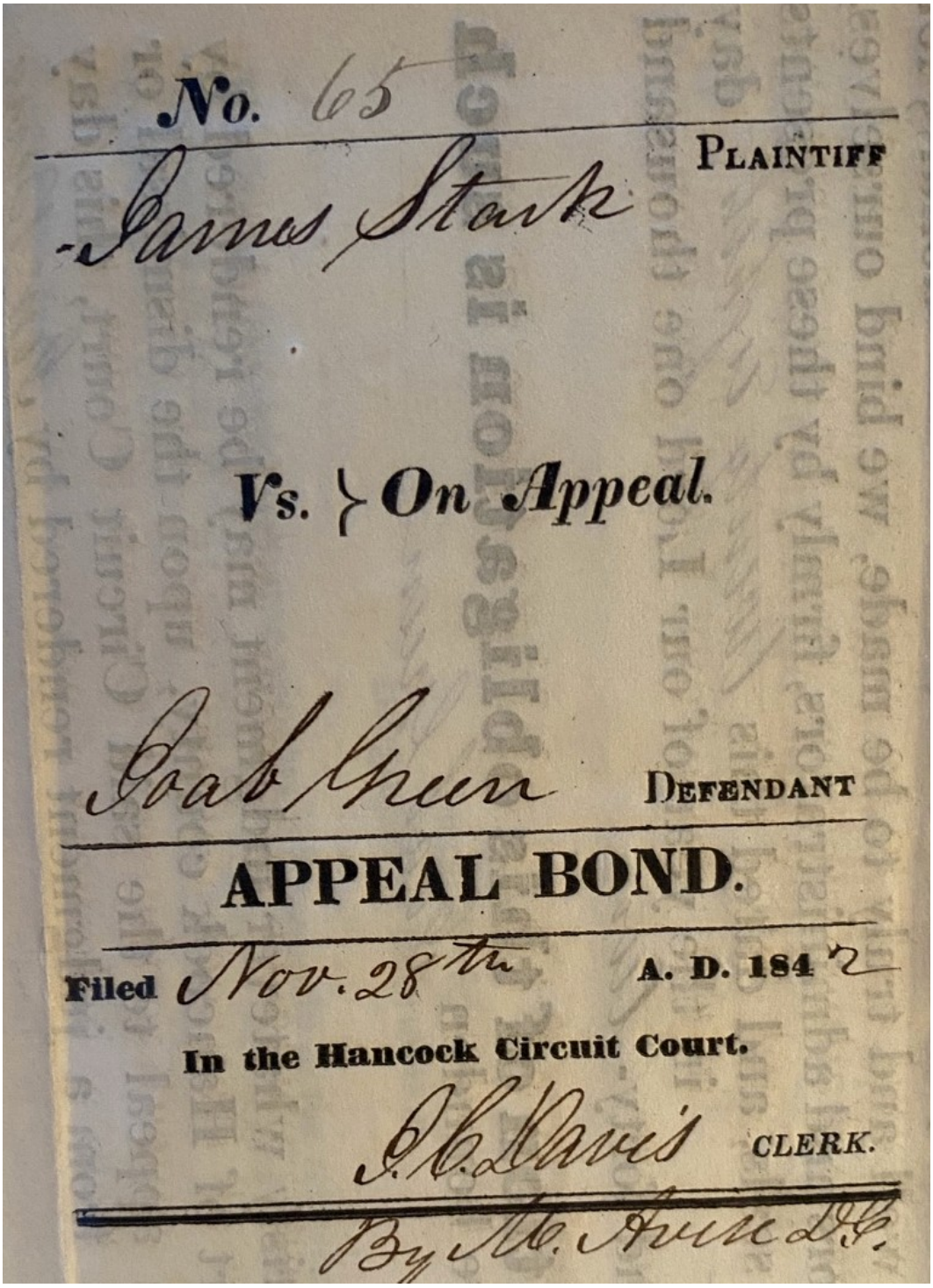
Joab Green [SEAL.]
Henry Hunter [SEAL]

SIGNED, SEALED, AND DELIVERED, In the presence of
George Richman [SEAL.]
APPROVED D. C. Davis Clerk
By M. Ayres Dep. Clerk Circuit Court, Hancock Co., Ill.

JAS. GEMBLE, Jr., Printer, Warsaw.—Court Blanks printed to order.

Front. Appeal bond dated and filed 28 November 1842. Researcher-supplied photograph. [S1]

The reverse of the bond



No. 65

James Stark PLAINTIFF

Vs. } On Appeal.

Joab Green DEFENDANT

APPEAL BOND.

Filed Nov. 28th A. D. 184 2

In the Hancock Circuit Court.

J. C. Davis CLERK.

By M. Ann D.C.

Reverse. Docket No. 65 identifies James Stark and Joab Green and records the filing. [S1]

George Ogden Bachman and the work of friendship

Bachman becomes most vivid when we hear him address Joseph Smith as a friend. Less than two months after witnessing Green's appeal bond, he sent Smith a letter promising help. The man whose signature occupies a small space on the legal paper now steps forward as someone willing to use his profession and his contacts on Smith's behalf. [S1, N1]

Origins and legal formation

George Ogden Bachman was born about 1802, possibly in New York, to Jacob Bachman and Sarah Borzenbanack. The uncertainty surrounding his birth and death contrasts with the unusually rich paper trail of his professional life. By the 1840s he practiced law in Springfield and Hancock County. Lawyers in this circuit culture traveled, formed temporary partnerships, drafted pleadings, witnessed instruments, and represented clients whose cases might pass through several county seats. [S21; S30]

His signature on the Stark-Green bond is that of a subscribing witness. It does not label him counsel for either party. A lawyer was a natural person to supervise or witness the execution of an appeal bond, but professional plausibility cannot replace the instrument's language. The historical value of the signature is that it places Bachman inside Hancock's legal machinery by November 1842, at the opening of the most consequential period of his county career.

A letter from Carthage

On 21 January 1843 Bachman wrote from Carthage to Joseph Smith in Nauvoo. He enclosed a copy of a letter he had sent the previous day to General Moses Wilson in Missouri. Smith had recently won discharge in an extradition proceeding, but John C. Bennett was seeking renewed action against him. Bachman tried to discredit Bennett with a Missouri contact and wanted Smith to know what he had done. [N1, B1]

His chosen comparison was the friendship of Jonathan and David. Jonathan's arrows had warned David of danger; Bachman hoped that his own intervention had likewise hit its mark. His promise of both professional and personal assistance gives the bond's witness a voice and a purpose beyond routine legal business. A reading transcript of the letter appears in the documentary section. [N1]

> *"You may rely on the Secrecy— and and assistance of the writer and command his services at all times both professional and personal"*

George Bachman to Joseph Smith, 21 January 1843. Original repetition retained. [N1]

The enclosed letter also reveals the limits and prejudices of that friendship. Bachman attacked Bennett through fears of abolitionism and slave rebellion, claiming that he himself had witnessed the Southampton County, Virginia, violence of 1831. That is Bachman's own claim, not an independently established episode in his early life. His appeal sought to turn the anxieties of a slaveholding audience against Bennett. Help for Smith and hostility toward abolitionism coexist in the same correspondence. [B1]

Bachman had advertised legal services in The Wasp by November 1842. The documentary trail does not establish his baptism or Church membership. His letter is valuable precisely because it records assistance without requiring us to make him a convert. [N1]

A lawyer working across factional lines

The Joseph Smith Papers links Bachman to a broad range of litigation: municipal prosecutions, debt and property disputes, chancery matters, and cases involving Joseph Smith, Robert D. Foster, Francis M. Higbee, William Clayton, and other figures on different sides of Nauvoo conflict. He worked

at times with attorney Onias C. Skinner, and Nauvoo financial records preserve payments or accounts associated with Bachman and Skinner. This is the profile of a working circuit lawyer rather than a simple factional agent. [S21; S30]

Two small financial records make that professional relationship concrete. On 23 October 1843, Joseph Smith, acting as mayor, ordered the city treasurer to pay Bachman and Onias Skinner ten dollars for services in the city's cases against Amos Davis. This Amos Davis was a different man from the circuit clerk Jacob Cunningham Davis. In a statement prepared about 25 March 1845, Bachman charged Smith's estate four ten-dollar fees, naming litigation involving Francis M. Higbee, Charles A. Foster, and Alexander Sympson. These papers show actual legal work and its cost. [B2–B3]

The Sympson litigation provides an especially useful connection within this report. Bachman's name appears with Almon Babbitt and Skinner as counsel for Smith in the civil action. Meanwhile, Joab Green and Henry Hunter appear on the grand jury involved in the related perjury prosecution. That places men from the 1842 bond in different functions within Smith's later legal difficulties; it does not prove personal coordination among them. [S8]

Nauvoo property and the Smith estate

Bachman purchased Nauvoo lots on 2 July 1844, only days after the Smith murders, and again on 26 September 1846. Those purchases demonstrate a direct economic relationship with property in the city even as much of the Latter-day Saint population was preparing to leave. The dates invite interpretation, but the deeds alone do not establish speculation, sympathy, or hostility. They establish that Bachman saw value or utility in Nauvoo real estate during moments of profound transition. [S21]

In April 1845 the probate court allowed a claim submitted by Bachman against Joseph Smith's estate. The claim confirms a financial relationship arising from professional or other dealings before Smith's death. Again, a debt owed by an estate is not evidence of political friendship or enmity; it is evidence that Bachman's legal and commercial work reached directly into the affairs of Nauvoo's most prominent resident. [S21]

An inquiry into the deaths of Joseph and Hyrum

Bachman also served on the coroner's jury concerning the Smith deaths. The Joseph Smith Papers dates the surviving verdict record to approximately 24 October 1844 and identifies its text through an 1890 newspaper publication. This is a later investigative record, and should not be staged as though we had established Bachman standing over the bodies on 27 June. His inclusion places him in the county's formal inquiry into the killings. [B4]

That duty gives his earlier letter particular poignancy. A man who had offered to warn and assist Joseph Smith later helped the legal system address the manner of his death. The connection is supported by the records; Bachman's private reaction is not preserved in the material examined. His name also appears among documents associated with the 1845 trial, but each appearance must be read for its particular role. [S21, S30, B4]

Later traces and unresolved ending

The edited biographical directory follows Bachman only beyond March 1857. A George O. Bachman later appears in Michigan records as a lawyer who entered Episcopal ministry, performed marriages, and became rector at Corunna in 1866 before dying during the following year. The unusual full name and the reported movement from law into ministry make the identification attractive, but an explicit record joining the Hancock attorney to the Michigan clergyman has not yet been located. The later ministry is therefore retained as a promising hypothesis, not incorporated as certain biography. [S31; S32]

Why Bachman matters here

The witness on this bond was part of the practical world on which Nauvoo depended: lawyers, legal advice, correspondence, property, fees, and official investigation. His importance emerges from those specific actions. The surviving record permits us to show him offering friendship and performing paid work, while leaving his inner convictions and unresolved later identity open. His life gives the Saints' legal history a human connection beyond the Church's own membership.

Jacob Cunningham Davis from courthouse to Congress

Davis was twenty-two when Green's appeal entered the circuit court. Within two years the clerk's name would appear in a murder prosecution, and within fourteen he would enter Congress. His life carries the reader from the ordinary administration of Hancock County into the crisis at Carthage and then into the political world that survived it. He was Jacob Cunningham Davis, a separate individual from the attorney and pamphleteer George T. M. Davis. [S1, S33–S35]

Virginia origins and an unusually early rise

Jacob Cunningham Davis was born 16 September 1820 near Staunton in Augusta County, Virginia, the son of William C. Davis and Sarah or Sallie Van Lear. He attended local schools and, according to congressional biography, the College of William and Mary. By 1838 he had moved to Warsaw, Illinois. He studied law, gained admission to the bar, and entered public life with remarkable speed. In 1841, at about twenty-one, he became clerk of the Hancock County Circuit Court. [S22; S33; S34]

That youth matters when reading the Stark-Green bond. The signature J. C. Davis Clerk represents a man scarcely older than many apprentices but already responsible for the intake and authentication of circuit-court business in one of Illinois's most volatile counties. The office gave him access to litigants, lawyers, sheriffs, juries, and political intelligence. It also placed Matthias Avise and other deputies within an administrative hierarchy operating under his name.

Clerkship and the machinery of Hancock justice

Davis's approval of the appeal bond was administrative, not a ruling on Stark's ownership claim. The clerk determined that the document entered the circuit process in acceptable form; Avise handled filing and docketing. Comparable 1841-1843 records show the same division of labor. Through this office Davis's name appears on disputes involving Latter-day Saints, non-Mormon merchants, municipal appeals, ordinary debt, and criminal proceedings. The clerk's archive was one place where a divided county still operated through shared forms and procedures.

Jacob B. Backenstos replaced Davis as clerk in May 1843. Davis had already moved into state politics: Hancock voters elected him to the Illinois Senate in 1842. His simultaneous emergence as lawyer, court officer, and politician demonstrates how tightly frontier institutions overlapped. The same networks that made a young man useful in the courthouse could propel him into the legislature. [S22; S33]

When an office affected Joseph Smith personally

The importance of the clerk's office becomes clearer through an incident only a month after the Stark–Green bond. In December 1842 Smith sought a writ of habeas corpus through Hancock County while preparing to contest extradition. According to the Joseph Smith Papers account, the local writ remained unsigned because the circuit clerk had gone to Springfield following his election to the

senate. This was an administrative obstacle with consequences for Smith’s arrangements. It is not evidence that Davis deliberately withheld help. [D1]

Relationship with Nauvoo and political opposition

Davis's relationship with the Latter-day Saints was neither static nor reducible to personal hatred. During the early 1840s Hancock politics required ambitious non-Mormon leaders to negotiate the Saints' concentrated vote. By 1844 Davis stood firmly within the Warsaw military and political opposition. His legislative career and local position made him more consequential than an ordinary newspaper partisan: he could translate county demands into state-level action.

This evolution should not be read backward into every clerk's signature. When Davis approved Green's bond in November 1842, he performed a routine statutory duty. The document does not tell us whether he knew Stark or Green politically, much less whether he favored either man's claim. The later drama gives the autograph significance, but it does not change the original legal act.

Warsaw Rifle Company and Carthage

In June 1844 Davis commanded the Warsaw Rifle Company. The unit formed part of the militia force mobilized during the crisis surrounding the destruction of the Nauvoo Expositor and the surrender of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. When Governor Thomas Ford left Carthage for Nauvoo on 27 June, the Smith brothers remained in the jail under guard. An armed body later stormed the jail and killed them. Davis's command position made his conduct an immediate subject of accusation and later prosecution. [S33; S35]

Davis’s position as captain of the Warsaw Rifle Company made his actions during the June crisis a matter of public consequence. A command title establishes authority within that unit; it does not by itself settle what he ordered, knew, or did at every stage of 27 June. Those questions belong to the evidence of the subsequent prosecution. The movement from clerkship to military command is nevertheless central to understanding why his name mattered to the Saints. [S33, S35]

An arrest on Christmas Day in Springfield

On Christmas Day, 25 December 1844, Hancock County sheriff Minor R. Deming arrested Jacob Cunningham Davis in Springfield, Sangamon County, where Davis was attending the Illinois legislature as a state senator. The scene belongs at the state capital, away from the Hancock County courthouse where he had once served as clerk. The surviving committee report places him at the seat of government in the discharge of his senatorial duties; it does not specify the building or room in which Deming took him into custody. [D2–D3]

Deming acted under a Hancock Circuit Court writ dated 20 November 1844 and signed by clerk J. B. Backenstos. It named Davis with other defendants and directed officers to take and keep them for appearance at the courthouse in Carthage on the third Monday of the following May, to answer a murder indictment. This was an arrest in the prosecution arising from Joseph Smith’s killing. Deming’s return supplied the date in his own official words: “I did, on the 25th day of December, A. D. 1844, take the body of the within named Jacob C. Davis.” [D2–D3]

The arrest immediately drew the Senate into the question of custody. On 26 December a select committee composed of John Dougherty, Edwin B. Webb, and Norman B. Judd summoned Deming to its committee room in the capitol. It required him to bring Davis, explain his detention, and produce his authority. Deming exhibited the writ and claimed that his office and that process authorized the arrest even while Davis attended the legislature. The committee’s printed report preserves both the warrant and his return; the Senate subsequently ordered Davis’s release. [D2–D3]

Here the former clerk was on the receiving end of legal process, while his standing as a senator brought powerful colleagues into the dispute. For the reader, the episode shows the intersection of

county prosecution and state political authority through a specific event, place, and set of participants. The Senate's intervention concerned his custody; it did not acquit him of murder. That charge still awaited the trial of May 1845. [D2–D3]

The prosecution and the acquittal

Davis stood trial with Thomas C. Sharp, Mark Aldrich, William N. Grover, and Levi Williams in May 1845. The prosecution sought to hold them responsible for Joseph Smith's murder. On 30 May the jury acquitted all five. For readers of Church history, the accusation and the verdict must remain together: Davis was prosecuted in connection with the killing, and the trial ended in acquittal. [S35, D2]

The verdict does not authorize a biographer to invent exonerating facts, just as the indictment does not establish guilt. A fuller account can follow the testimony and arguments as evidence offered by particular witnesses and lawyers. In this report the surest narrative is the documented change in Davis's position: court officer, senator, militia captain, accused man, acquitted defendant, and later congressman.

A durable political career

The murder indictment did not end Davis's career. He served in the Illinois Senate from 1842 to 1848 and again from 1850 to 1856. In 1856 he won election as a Democrat to the Thirty-fourth Congress to fill the vacancy created by William A. Richardson's resignation. His brief congressional service, from 4 November 1856 to 3 March 1857, completed an extraordinary ascent from twenty-one-year-old county clerk to national office. [S33; S34]

Davis married Judith P. Mitchell Foree on 9 December 1852 in Clark County, Missouri. After Congress he moved to Clark County and resumed legal practice, combining law with farming. He died at Alexandria, Missouri, on Christmas Day 1883 and was buried in Mitchell Cemetery. The move across the Mississippi did not represent retreat from professional life so much as the continuation of a regional career spanning the Illinois-Missouri border. [S33; S36]

Why his later life belongs in the story

Stopping at the murder trial would conceal an important part of Davis's biography. He continued in the Illinois Senate and eventually represented the state in Washington. His marriage, move to Missouri, legal practice, farming, and death at Alexandria on 25 December 1883 give the reader a complete arc beyond the crisis. His congressional biography records burial in Mitchell Cemetery near Alexandria. [S33–S34]

Davis matters to this document because the same young man who authenticated routine county business later exercised military and political authority during the Saints' most dangerous years in Illinois. His career helps explain the weight a local office could carry. The bond supplies an early, firmly dated point in that career; it does not supply a verdict on the man's later conduct.

Henry Hunter in the organizing of opposition

Henry Hunter is harder to recover than either Bachman or Davis, but he need not remain a passing name. The surviving papers show a man willing to put his credit behind Joab Green, a Henry Hunter chosen for an anti-Mormon committee, and a juror of that name serving in the county's criminal justice system. Most strikingly, a Nauvoo newspaper publicly included him among men it called the leading "anties." Together these records give his public life substance, even though his family identity remains unsettled. [S1, S8, S12, H1]

The first clear act was a financial promise

On 28 November 1842 Hunter joined Green in an obligation to James Stark for one hundred dollars. He was Green's surety, not a second defendant in the property case. If the appeal failed or was dismissed, the bond required satisfaction of the resulting judgment. Hunter therefore risked his own credit to make another man's appeal possible. The instrument does not tell us whether friendship, business, or kinship explained his willingness. It does establish a relationship substantial enough to be put in writing. [S1]

That act is a useful starting point for a biography because it shows Hunter doing something specific. He was not merely a name copied into a list. He accepted an obligation. When Green and Hunter recur on the May 1844 grand-jury roster, their earlier association becomes part of the county's visible network of trust and public service. [S1, S8]

At the Carthage courthouse in August 1843

On 19 August 1843 an anti-Mormon meeting assembled at the courthouse in Carthage. Reuben Graves presided, William D. Abernethy served as secretary, and Valentine Wilson, Walter Bagby, and Hiram Boyle addressed the gathering. A motion by F. J. Bartlett led to the appointment of nine men to prepare resolutions. Henry Hunter was one of them. The printed account identifies a role in organizing the meeting's business, not simply a place in an anonymous audience. Identification with Green's surety is probable because of the name, county, and close date, but a residence or family record linking the appearances would strengthen it. [S12]

The next action is essential. After withdrawing briefly, the committee asked to be discharged without a formal report, citing the limited time and the importance of the subject. A replacement committee of six was appointed. Hunter's name does not appear on that second committee. His first appointment establishes participation; it does not establish authorship of the later resolutions or reveal his reason for joining the request to withdraw. [S12]

What the movement proposed

The later proceedings, printed under a 7 September dateline, show the direction this organization took. Resolutions attacked Joseph Smith's authority, promised resistance that could become forcible, sought cooperation from neighboring counties, and pledged assistance with a renewed Missouri demand for his arrest. They also created a central corresponding committee and precinct committees to exchange information and summon aid. Warsaw's named precinct representatives were Thomas C. Sharp and Mark Aldrich. [H2]

This machinery matters because it shows how public hostility could become organized action. Speeches were followed by appointments, resolutions, instructions for correspondence, and a means of calling supporters together. Hunter belongs in the account at the documented August organizing stage. He is not named on the published central corresponding committee or the listed precinct committees. The later resolutions are evidence of the movement's program, not a surviving statement personally signed or written by him. [S12, H2]

The printed chronology itself needs care. The August proceedings proposed reconvening on 6 September; the subsequent meeting is headed 7 September. The documentary section retains that discrepancy instead of silently choosing a single date. Neither date changes the secure fact of Hunter's appointment on 19 August. [S12]

How Nauvoo readers encountered his name

The Nauvoo Neighbor supplies the other side of the encounter. Its 18 October 1843 issue printed a notice listing people associated with what it called the "mobocratic meeting at Carthage." Henry

Hunter appeared among them. The paper closed by calling those listed some of the leading “anties.” The notice appeared again on 25 October. For readers in Nauvoo, Hunter’s name was thus publicly presented as part of the opposition. [H1]

This evidence adds contemporary reputation to the committee appointment. Yet the distinction between a newspaper’s characterization and a demonstrated act remains important. “Mobocratic” was the paper’s hostile description. It is not proof that Hunter personally used violence. Nor do two printings of the same notice constitute two independent eyewitness accounts. They demonstrate circulation and repetition of a public identification. [H1]

A juror in the weeks before Carthage

In May 1844 Henry Hunter and Joab Green appeared on the grand jury associated with the perjury indictment against Joseph Smith. The roster also names Edward Hunter and William Marks, both Latter-day Saints. This is an instructive setting: men with different religious and political connections could be selected for the same county body. The surviving list does not record how Henry Hunter, Green, or any other individual voted. The prosecution did not result in a conviction of Smith. [S8]

The separate entries for Henry and Edward are particularly valuable. Edward Hunter’s Church career must not be borrowed to complete Henry’s biography. Likewise, Thomas Hunter, involved in a different Nauvoo case, must remain separate. Henry’s political association rests on the Carthage meeting record and the Neighbor notice; his grand-jury service adds civic context rather than proof of an individual vote against Smith. [S8, S18, H1]

A land record and the unfinished family story

The Nauvoo Neighbor of 2 April 1845 lists a Henry Hunter as patentee of the east half of the southeast quarter of section 33, township 4 north, range 5 west: eighty acres valued at $240, with $1.44 in tax shown. The current owner is recorded by a ditto for “unknown.” Daniel and Jesse Cain appear in nearby entries in the same section. These are useful land and family research leads, but they do not prove kinship or that the patentee was still living on the tract. [H3]

The township is 4 north, not 3 north as stated in the earlier extended biography. The intermediate heading in the tax table establishes the correction. More fundamentally, a patentee’s name can remain attached to a tract after ownership changes. This entry should therefore be treated as a possible property connection for the political participant, not as a verified residence or occupation. [H3]

A compiled genealogy has suggested a Cain–Hunter–Green connection, including a possible marriage of Joab Green to Keziah Cain. It remains a lead requiring an original marriage, deed, probate, or household record. Henry’s parents, spouse, children, birth, death, and religious affiliation have not been securely joined to the bond signer. The precise tract now offers a better route to that identification than a broad search for a common name. [S19, H3]

The importance that the evidence supports

Hunter’s importance is local and organizational. He backed a neighbor’s appeal, was probably the man entrusted with committee work at an opposition meeting, and was publicly named by a Nauvoo paper among the opposition’s leading men. That is enough to give him a meaningful place in this history. It is not enough to make him a commander, an author of the final resolutions, or a participant in the jail attack. His biography should grow through further documents that establish his actions, rather than through the reputation of other men who shared the political stage.

Where the Saints enter the story

The surviving bond does not identify a Church member among its principal participants. The most direct connection to named Saints comes through Bachman's correspondence and through the county's later grand jury. These records show people from Nauvoo and the surrounding county participating in the same legal institutions. [S8, N1]

Joab Green and a grand jury that included Saints

Joab Green appears in the 1842 Hancock tax index and on the May 1844 grand-jury roster. That roster also includes Henry Hunter, Edward Hunter, and William Marks. Edward Hunter and Marks were Church members; Marks was Nauvoo's stake president, and Edward Hunter would later become the Church's Presiding Bishop. Henry and Edward were distinct men. [S7–S8, N3–N4]

The grand jury returned a perjury indictment against Joseph Smith in May 1844. An indictment authorized prosecution; it was not a conviction. Individual jurors' votes are not established, so the roster cannot show that Green, either Hunter, or Marks personally voted for the charge. The case was dismissed after Smith's death. [S8]

This is a more revealing connection than simply assigning every name to a faction. Church members and men associated with opposition could serve on the same county body. We can identify their presence without claiming to know every decision they made inside it.

Two Greens who must remain separate

Joab Green has sometimes been confused with Job Edward Green, a documented Latter-day Saint. The Nauvoo petition bearing "Job E green" and the family's later migration records do not establish that he was the Joab Green in this appeal. Similar names cannot supply the missing connection. Joab's Church membership remains unproved. [S13–S15]

James Stark and the politics of a divided county

Stark settled at Augusta in 1842 as a merchant and a minister of the Christian Church, or Disciples of Christ. That denomination should not be mistaken for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. His store and ministry gave him a lasting place in community life. [S5–S6]

Thomas Gregg's later county history describes Stark's successful 1846–1847 legislative candidacy as part of an Anti-Mormon ticket. That is a documented political association, four years after this bond. It helps explain his relationship to the wider Hancock conflict, but cannot establish the motive for his earlier ownership claim. [S6]

Reading the names across time

The bond becomes more meaningful when its date remains visible. Later events illuminate the lives of its signers, but should not rewrite what they were doing in November 1842.

23 November 1842 A justice of the peace enters the property judgment in Stark's favor. [S1]

28 November 1842 Green and Henry Hunter secure the appeal; Bachman witnesses the bond; Davis and Avise process it. [S1]

21 January 1843 Bachman offers Joseph Smith personal and professional assistance. [N1]

19 August 1843 Henry Hunter is named to the first committee at an anti-Mormon meeting; that committee requests discharge. [S12]

18 and 25 October 1843 The Nauvoo Neighbor publicly names Henry Hunter among the leading “anties.” [H1]

May and June 1844 Green and Henry Hunter appear on the grand-jury roster. On 27 June Joseph and Hyrum Smith are killed at Carthage. [S8, S35]

30 May 1845 Davis and his fellow defendants are acquitted in the murder trial. [S33, S35]

1846 and 1847 Stark’s legislative service follows election on an Anti-Mormon ticket, according to Gregg. [S6]

The missing ending and the next useful discovery

The best next source is the original case packet for Appeal Bond No. 65, together with the Hancock Circuit Court docket and the justice’s docket for November 1842. Those records could identify the property, explain the original seizure, preserve testimony, and reveal how the appeal ended. A constable’s return could supply the missing practical details. [S20]

Until then, the strongest story is already visible: a property claim brought together a merchant preacher, an appellant and his financial backer, a lawyer who offered help to Joseph Smith, and a young official whose later career intersected with the prosecution for Smith’s murder. The original below lets the reader examine the evidence from which that story begins.

Letters and published records behind the biographies

The following reading transcripts reproduce selected nineteenth-century texts from the cited digital editions. Original spelling and repetition are retained; line wrapping and newspaper column layout are not reproduced. Excerpts are identified, and bracketed editorial additions are distinguished from the historical wording. These are public records and correspondence, not reconstructed dialogue.

George Bachman to Joseph Smith on 21 January 1843

Letter text from the Joseph Smith Papers. The inserted “You” is shown in angle brackets, and the uncertain reading “cas[e?]” follows that edition. [N1]

Carthage Ill. January 21st 1843

President Joseph Smith)

Respected Friend)

Inclosed I send You a copy of a letter written by me to General Moses Wilson, which I wish You to read and then file as a testimonial, of the Esteem and respect of Your friend And Jonathan said unto David let us make a covenant and if there be evil intended against <You,> I will draw the bow and shute an Arrow beyond You, so that you may surely know that Evil is intended;

I some times draw the bow and hit the mark, and hope that I may have done so in this cas[e?] You may rely on the Secrecy— and and assistance of the writer and command his services at all times both professional and personal when You may think proper so to do. rest assured of the high Esteem and best wishes of Your friend

George Bachman

The letter turns a signature into a relationship. Bachman claims friendship, explains his intervention, and offers further help. Its biblical language is evidence of how he framed the relationship; it does not establish Church membership.

The first Carthage committee on 19 August 1843

Excerpt from the meeting proceedings, Warsaw Message, 20 September 1843, p. 1. [S12]

> *On motion of F. J. Bartlett, a committee of nine was appointed by the chair to draft and report resolutions for the action of the meeting. F. J. Bartlett, Walter Bagby, Valentine Wilson, G. M. Swope, R. T. Madison, J. A. Bebee, John Wilson, Henry Hunter, and Jno. Cameron, were appointed that committee.*
>
> *After a short absense, the committee submitted the following REPORT: Your committee respectfully request to be excused from making a formal report at this time, owing to the short time allowed them, and the importance of the business that has called us together, and ask to be discharged from further duties; and recommend that a committee of six be appointed to draft resolutions and make a report to an adjourned meeting.*
>
> *Whereupon the following gentlemen were appointed to compose that committee, viz: Walter Bagby, F. J. Bartlett, Stephen Owen, Stephen H. Tyler, Valentine Wilson, and Joel Weston.*

The sequence establishes the limit of Hunter's documented role: appointment to the first committee, followed by its discharge. It does not make him the author of the replacement committee's report.

The opposition program and its correspondence network

Selected resolutions from the later meeting, printed under 7 September 1843 in the Warsaw Message, 20 September 1843, pp. 1–2. The original resolution numbers below are editorial labels; the quoted texts are separate excerpts. These are organizational statements, not Henry Hunter's personal correspondence. [H2]

Resolution 2

> *That while we would deprecate anything like lawless violence, without justifiable cause; yet we pledge ourselves in the most solemn manner, to resist all the wrongs, which may be hereafter, attempted to be imposed on this community by the Mormons, to the utmost of our ability; peaceably if we can, but forcibly if we must.*

Resolution 7

> *That a corresponding committee be appointed to communicate with the different parts of this county, and also with other counties; and we would also recommend to all surrounding counties to appoint like committees, for the purpose of a mutual interchange of views, in regard to the subjects embraced in these proceedings.*

Additional resolution on Missouri

> *Resolved, That the President of this meeting be requested to communicate with the Governor of Missouri, and respectfully request him to make another demand upon the authorities of this State, for the body of Joseph Smith, commonly called the Mormon Phrophet; and in the event of a requisition and an order, for his arrest, and delivery to the proper officers of the State of Missouri, we offer our services to enforce said order—and pledge ourselves to sustain the supremacy of the laws, at all hazards, and under all circumstances.*

The named central committee was R. F. Smith, F. J. Bartlett, H. T. Wilson, F. A. Worrell, and Walter Bagby; Colonel Root of McDonough County was subsequently added. Hunter is not listed among them. The resolution instructing the chairman to write Missouri is evidence of an intended communication, not proof that a particular surviving letter was sent. [H2]

A published letter showing the dispute over military force

Thomas Ford to Thomas Reynolds, 26 July 1843, excerpt, as republished beside the meeting proceedings in the Warsaw Message, 20 September 1843, p. 2. This is contextual correspondence between governors; Henry Hunter was neither its author nor its recipient. [H2]

> *The request for a military force is declined.—The reasons which have influenced me in coming to this determination will be furnished to you at large, as soon as I can obtain leisure to do so.*

Ford's refusal helps explain why the opposition's subsequent program called for a renewed Missouri demand and offered local assistance. The juxtaposition lets readers see the debate over legal authority and force without attributing the governors' correspondence to Hunter.

Henry Hunter named in the Nauvoo Neighbor

Complete short notice as transcribed for the 25 October 1843 issue; the same notice appears on 18 October. Unusual capitalization follows the digital transcription and has not been certified against the newspaper image. [H1]

> *NOTICE.*
> *The following is a list of the names of those concerned in the mobocratic meeting at Carthage.*
> *WALTER BAGBY, (valentine Wilson.)*
> *F. J. Bartlett.*
> *REUBAN GRAVES.*
> *WM. D. Abernethy.*
> *HIRAM boyle.*
> *JOHN CAMERON.*
> *R. T. Madison.*
> *Henry hunter.*
> *JOEL WESTON.*
> *Stephen Owen.*
> *STEPHEN H. Tyler.*
> *EdsoN WHITNEY*
> *J. A. Bee bee.*
> *Jesse Gillman,*
> *Charles COMSTOCK.*
> *These are some of the leading 'anties.' There are some small fry that we have not yet inserted.*

The notice is evidence of how a Nauvoo newspaper presented Hunter to its readers. Its accusation of "mobocratic" activity should remain attributed to the paper. The notice does not supply an individual account of violence by Hunter.

Faithful transcript

Original wording and cancellation marks are retained from the project transcription. Square brackets identify uncertainty or editorial descriptions; line arrangement is approximate. The photographs control if a reading differs. [S1]

Know all men, by these Presents,
That we, Joab Green & Henry Hunter

are held and firmly bound unto James Stark

in the sum of One Hundred dollars; for
which payment, well and truly to be made, we bind ourselves,
our heirs, executors and administrators, firmly by these presents
Sealed with our seals; and dated this twenty Eighth day
of November in the year of our Lord one thousand
eight hundred and forty-two

The Condition of this obligation is such
That if the above bounden Joab Green

shall pay and satisfy whatever judgment may be rendered by
the Circuit Court of Hancock county, upon the dismissal or
trial of a certain appeal to the said Circuit Court, this day
taken by him from a judgment rendered by [Wm?] Berry
Esq., a Justice of the Peace within and for said
county, on the twenty third day of November
in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and
forty-two wherein James Stark is Claimant in the
trial of the right of property
~~Plaintiff~~ and Joab Green
Defendant, ~~for the sum of~~
~~Debt, and~~ ~~dollars~~ costs of
suit, in favor of the said Claimant and against the
said Defendant then this obligation shall be void;
otherwise, it shall remain in full force and virtue.

Joab Green [SEAL.]
Henry Hunter [SEAL.]

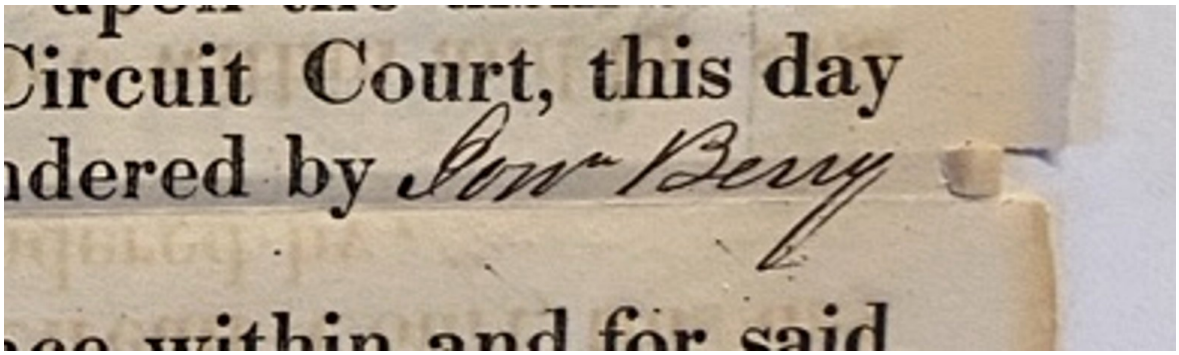
SIGNED, SEALED, AND DELIVERED,
In the presence of
George Bachman

APPROVED J. C. Davis Clerk
By M. Avise Dep Clerk Circuit Court, Hancock Co., Ill.

Reverse docket and reading notes

No. 65
James Stark PLAINTIFF
Vs. } On Appeal.
Joab Green DEFENDANT
APPEAL BOND.
Filed Nov. 28th A. D. 1842
In the Hancock Circuit Court.
J. C. Davis CLERK.
By M. Avise D Clk

The justice’s name



Detail of the justice’s name. The reading “[Wm?] Berry” remains tentative. [S1]

The justice's given-name abbreviation appears, on enlargement, most consistent with 'Wm' before 'Berry.' Because no independent Hancock justice-of-the-peace roster or matching docket entry was located online, the report retains the cautious reading '[Wm?] Berry' rather than silently expanding it to William.

The printed labels 'Plaintiff,' 'for the sum of,' 'Debt, and,' and the dollar blank were cancelled because this was not a standard money-debt appeal. The manuscript substitutes 'Claimant' and 'trial of the right of property.'

The front names both Green and Hunter as persons bound to Stark, but the condition refers specifically to 'the above bounden Joab Green' as the person who must satisfy the eventual circuit-court judgment. The reverse caption likewise lists only Stark and Green. Hunter is therefore a surety/co-obligor, not a party captioned as defendant.

The $100 figure is the penal amount of the bond. It should not be treated as the value of the property, the amount of the underlying execution, or the amount of any judgment.

Printer’s imprint on the front: “JAS. GEMBLE, Jr., Printer, Warsaw.—Court Blanks printed to order.” The printed blank was adapted by hand for this particular proceeding. [S1]

Sources and documentary notes

S labels retain the numbering of the extended biographical edition. N labels identify sources added or revisited for this narrative edition. The supplied bond is the controlling source for the case; later biographies and political records provide context, not proof of its motive.

S1. Original appeal bond, James Stark v. Joab Green, Hancock Circuit Court, Appeal Bond No. 65, filed 28 Nov. 1842. Researcher-supplied photographs; front and reverse examined at high resolution.

S2. Illinois General Assembly, legislation regulating trials of the right of property; see the 1835 statutory compilation and related Illinois enactments. The surviving bond uses the same statutory terminology.

S3. Papers of Abraham Lincoln, "A Bill to Amend An Act Regulating the Mode of Trying the Right of Property," 13 Feb. 1839, Legislative Digital Archive. Online source

S4. Pearce v. Swan, 2 Ill. (1 Scam.) 266 (1836), illustrating Illinois justice-court trial-of-right-of-property procedure and appeal.

S5. Papers of Abraham Lincoln, "Stark, James," biographical entry. Online source

S6. Thomas Gregg, ed., History of Hancock County, Illinois (Chicago: Charles C. Chapman, 1880), 524-525, online Restoration Movement transcription. Online source

S7. Hancock County ILGenWeb, 1842 tax index, entries for David, James, and Joab Green, p. 168, 4N5W. Online source

S8. Joseph Smith Papers, Introduction to State of Illinois v. Sympson, Sympson v. JS, and State of Illinois v. JS for Perjury; grand-jury list citing Hancock Circuit Court Records, vol. D, p. 64. Online source

S12. Warsaw Message, 20 Sept. 1843, republication of Anti-Mormon meeting proceedings; Henry Hunter on committee appointed at Carthage, 19 Aug. 1843. Online source

S13. Joseph Smith Papers, Petition from John Pack and Others, 28 Feb. 1844; signature transcribed "Job E green." Online source

S14. Nauvoo Equivalences database, entry for Job Edward Green (1812-1876). Online source

S15. Church History Biographical Database, Florette Pierce entry, listing Job Edward Green and family in the James C. Snow Company, 1852. Online source

S16. Lambert v. Dabbs, 302 Ill. App. 400 (1939), quoting the statutory trial-of-right-of-property appeal rule: appeal prayed on judgment day; bond within five days. Online source

S18. Joseph Smith Papers, Introduction to City of Nauvoo v. Hunter, documenting a separate Thomas Hunter in Nov.-Dec. 1842. Online source

S20. FamilySearch Catalog, Hancock County Circuit Court, Civil and criminal files, 1830-1860; 113 microfilm reels; originals in Hancock County courthouse; files arranged in no set manner. Online source

S21. Joseph Smith Papers, "Bachman, George Ogden," biographical entry. Online source

S22. Joseph Smith Papers, Summons, 24 Feb. 1844 [Davis v. JS et al.], note identifying Jacob C. Davis as previous clerk, replaced by Jacob B. Backenstos in May 1843. Online source

S23. Joseph Smith Papers, Introduction to Sweeney v. Miller et al.; 1842 records identify Matthias Avise acting on behalf of Jacob Davis. Online source

S24. Joseph Smith Papers, Introduction to State of Illinois v. C. L. Higbee; Sept. 1842 subpoenas with manuscript additions in Matthias Avise handwriting on behalf of Jacob Davis. Online source

S30. Joseph Smith Papers, biographical directory and linked legal documents for George Ogden Bachman, including litigation, Nauvoo property, estate claim, and coroner-jury references.

S33. Joseph Smith Papers, 'Davis, Jacob Cunningham,' biographical directory. Online source

S34. Biographical Directory of the United States Congress and U.S. House History, Art and Archives, Jacob Cunningham Davis. Online source

S35. Joseph Smith Papers, State of Illinois v. Williams et al. and associated 1844-1845 murder-investigation and trial records.

N1. Joseph Smith Papers, Letter from George Bachman, 21 January 1843, with historical introduction and enclosed letter of 20 January to Moses Wilson.

N2. U.S. House of Representatives, History, Art and Archives, Jacob Cunningham Davis.

N3. Joseph Smith Papers, Edward Hunter biography.

N4. Joseph Smith Papers, William Marks biography.

Portrait source. James Stark, in the online transcription of Gregg, History of Hancock County (1880), 524–525, hosted by Abilene Christian University.

S17. Nauvoo Neighbor, 2 April 1845, delinquent Hancock lands for 1844; Henry Hunter entry. The correct grouping is township 4 north, range 5 west. See H3.

S19. Compiled genealogical lead: Descendants of Johannes Jaegar (Hunter), listing Joab Green and Keziah Cain. Used only as an unverified lead; not relied on for identity. Online source

S31. Past and Present of Shiawassee County, Michigan, account of Rev. George O. Bachman at Corunna; treated as a possible later identity requiring a bridging record.

S32. Livingston County, Michigan, marriage returns naming Rev. George O. Bachman as officiant in the 1860s; used only with the same identity caution.

S36. Wilford Woodruff Papers subject entry for Jacob Cunningham Davis, family and marriage summary.

B1. George Bachman to Moses Wilson, 20 January 1843, copy enclosed to Joseph Smith; Joseph Smith Papers, Appendix: Letter, pp. 2–4. Online source

B2. Pay Order to Nauvoo City Treasurer for Bachman & Skinner, 23 October 1843, Joseph Smith Papers. Online source

B3. Statement of Account from George Bachman, circa 25 March 1845, Joseph Smith Papers; four fees totaling $40. Online source

B4. Coroner’s Jury Verdict, circa 24 October 1844, State of Illinois v. Williams et al., Joseph Smith Papers. Source note identifies publication in San Francisco Chronicle, 11 September 1890, p. 1. Online source

D1. Petition to Thomas Ford, 31 December 1842, historical introduction, Joseph Smith Papers; unsigned Hancock habeas corpus writ during Davis’s absence in Springfield. Online source

D2. Introduction to State of Illinois v. Williams et al. and State of Illinois v. Elliott–C, Joseph Smith Papers, especially discussion and note 36 on Davis’s Christmas 1844 arrest and Senate release order. Cites Journal of the Senate of the Fourteenth General Assembly (1844), 117–118, 121–122, and Reports Made to the Senate and House (1845), 157–158. Online source

D3. “Arrest of the Hon. Jacob C. Davis,” Senate select committee report, 26 December 1844, printed in Reports Made to the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Illinois (Springfield:

Walters & Weber, 1845), 157–158. Page images checked directly; includes the 20 November writ and Deming's 25 December arrest return. Online source

H1. "Notice," Nauvoo Neighbor, 18 and 25 October 1843, vol. 1, nos. 25–26; digital transcriptions, BYU Studies. The repeated notice names Henry Hunter among the leading "anties." Online source

H1a. Earlier printing of the same notice, 18 October 1843. Online source

H2. Warsaw Message, 20 September 1843, pp. 1–2, anti-Mormon meeting proceedings, resolutions, corresponding committees, and republication of Thomas Ford to Thomas Reynolds, 26 July and 14 August 1843; Wikisource transcription. The August meeting schedules 6 September, while the resumed proceedings bear a 7 September heading. Online source

H3. Nauvoo Neighbor, 2 April 1845, p. 1, "List of Lands," township 4 north, range 5 west, section 33, Henry Hunter patentee entry; BYU Studies transcription. Earlier edition's township 3 north is corrected here. Online source

Identity and interpretation

The bond securely establishes the legal roles. Bachman's identification with George Ogden Bachman is very strong; Henry Hunter's connection to later Hancock entries is probable rather than a fully resolved vital identity. Joab Green's identification with Job Edward Green is not established. No religious motive, specific disputed property, or final appeal disposition is supplied by the bond.

The 1843 meeting account is especially important to read in sequence: the first nine-member committee, including Henry Hunter, withdrew without a formal report. The replacement six-member committee reported the subsequent resolutions. This edition distinguishes appointment from authorship. [S12]