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SKETCH OF

JAMES JESSE STRANG

AND THE

MORMON KINGDOM ON BEAVER ISLAND

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REPRINTED FROM VOL. XVIII, MICHIGAN PIONEER AND
HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS.

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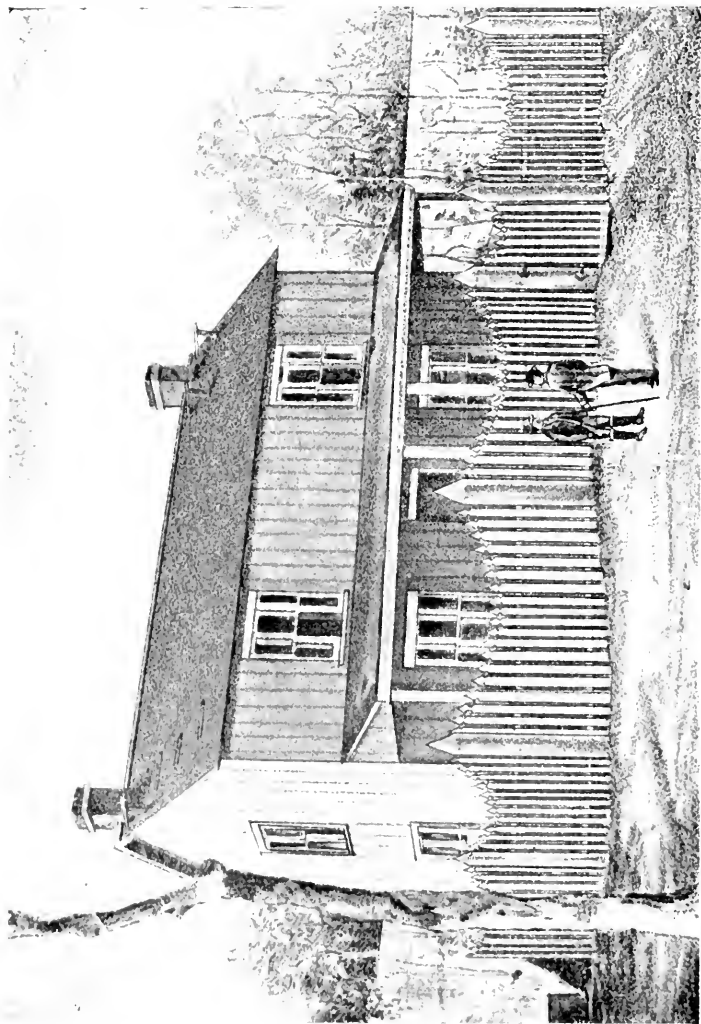
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Truly & Sincerely
James J. Strong



RESIDENCE OF JAMES J. STRANG ON BEAVER ISLAND FROM 1850 TO 1856

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SKETCH OF JAMES JESSE STRANG AND THE MORMON
KINGDOM ON BEAVER ISLAND.

REPRINTED FROM VOLUME XVIII OF MICHIGAN PIONEER AND HISTORICAL
COLLECTIONS.

[From the New York Times, September 3, 1882.]

One of the most singular episodes of western frontier history is that of the Mormon Kingdom which flourished for nearly ten years on Beaver island, at the foot of Lake Michigan, and was overturned in 1856 by the murder of its founder and the forcible dispersion of his followers. Two gentlemen of Detroit have in the last few years, as leisure permitted and in a spirit of coöperation, gathered together considerable material, documentary and otherwise, relating to the Manitou monarchy, and this fact makes possible now a detailed narrative of the incidents attending its rise and fall. Mr. Henry A. Chaney, the reporter of the state supreme court, made Beaver island the objective point of his vacation jaunt a few summers ago, and examined the relics of "King Strang's" reign and talked with a score of men who were active in the ranks of his retainers or his foes. The results of these observations and interviews were subsequently embodied in an entertaining paper which Mr. Chaney read to a local literary association known as the October club, but which has never been published. This sketch was afterward turned over by its author, with all his notes and a few pamphlets, to Mr. Charles K. Backus, the assistant commissioner of immigration of this state, who examined newspaper files and corresponded with men who were connected or came in contact with Strang or the sect which he led. With the information gathered from such a variety of sources Mr. Backus prepared the article upon "An American king" published some time since in Harper's Magazine. The story is worth telling with somewhat more of detail, and the writing of this letter has been preceded by a careful examination of the material still in the possession of Mr. Backus.

The following facts as to the early history of King Strang are given in a manuscript biography prepared by one of his sons (Charles J. Strang, of Lansing, an entirely trustworthy man), from data furnished by his

mother, with the addition of a few circumstances mentioned in a letter from a surviving sister, or recorded in the columns of old newspapers:

James J. Strang was born in Scipio, New York, on March 21, 1813, but his farmer-father, Clement Strang, removed to Hanover, Chautauqua county, in 1816, and he lived in that town until his manhood. He received only the ordinary education of a country school, followed by a short term at the Fredonia academy, but he was an industrious student, carrying books with him to his work, prominent in the local debating clubs, and noted especially for the excellence of his memory. At twelve years of age he joined the Baptist church, and was for some time an active member. At twenty-one he commenced the study of law with borrowed books, and while working on a farm two years afterwards he was admitted to the bar, and was soon married to Miss Mary Perce, who lived with him, bearing him three children, until he adopted polygamy. After his marriage he practiced law at Mayville and at Ellington, edited a paper at Randolph, worked on a farm, traveled on various business errands, and lived a somewhat roving life. At one time he taught school, and at another delivered temperance lectures; he also held for a short term the postmastership at Ellington. Finally in 1843, he emigrated to Burlington, Racine county, Wisconsin, and there entered into a partnership as an attorney with Mr. C. P. Barnes. As a boy he is described as eccentric, self confident and bright; as a young man he was energetic, glib tongued, and exceedingly anxious to make his name distinguished.

In January, 1844, some of the itinerant Mormon missionaries aroused his interest in their cause and persuaded him to visit Nauvoo, where he found Joseph Smith at the zenith of his career. Strang's conversion was prompt, and his promotion rapid. On February 25, 1844, he was baptized into the communion of the Latter Day Saints; on March 3, he was made an Elder, and commenced at once his work in the Mormon ministry. In the following June Joseph and Hiram Smith were murdered by the mob at Carthage, and Strang at once claimed to have been appointed the dead prophet's successor. The basis of his claim was afterward set forth by him in a small pamphlet (Gospel Tract No IV., Voree, Wis., 1848) entitled "The Diamond." It declares that "a letter of appointment," written by Joseph Smith at Nauvoo on June 18 and mailed there on June 19, came to Strang in the mail at Burlington, Wis., on July 9. In those times of irregular and slow postal service in the west these dates were not unnatural; their significance lies in the fact that the letter thus appeared to have been written some days before and received some days after the killing of the prophet.

It was couched in the usual phraseology of the Mormon documents, a wordy imitation of the Scriptural style, and contained an account of a celestial vision in which his impending fate was apparently revealed to the writer, and he was told that to James J. Strang "shall the gathering of the people be, for he shall plant a stake of Zion in Wisconsin, and I will establish it." The original of this letter is still in existence, and has a postscript which does not appear on the printed version. This postscript asks for occasional reports of progress, from which it would seem as if "the stake of Zion" in Wisconsin was to be a branch of the church, and as if the letter did not refer to the prophetic succession. Evidently its suppression in the pamphlet was intentional.

On the strength of this "appointment," which he declared had been foreshadowed to him in a vision at the exact hour of "the martyrdom of Joseph," Strang promptly and vigorously pushed his claims to the Mormon presidency, although not even half a year had elapsed since his baptism. He was briefly conspicuous in the struggle that ended in the triumph of Brigham Young's personal force and shrewd strategy, but was speedily driven from the main field of the contest. Lieut. Gunnison in his "History of the Mormons" (chap. v.), says:

"The struggle for the Seer succession followed. Rigdon, as second in rank, claimed promotion; also, by former revelations, declared himself assigned to be their prophet. He called a meeting and proclaimed his position as head. James J. Strang contended for the place of Seer, and showed letters over the deceased prophet's signature, assuring him that he should be the successor in the event of Joseph's death. But the college of the twelve had other views, and by a vote on the subject they declared that definite instructions and the last will and testament of Joseph had been delivered to them in secret council. It revoked all former designations and devolved the choice upon them. Under the management of their sagacious chief they elected the Peter¹ of the apostles, Brigham Young, to the responsible station. * * * This enthronement drove Rigdon with a party to Pennsylvania, where in a short time his influence vanished and the band dispersed. Strang founded a city on the prairies of Wisconsin, and had a numerous colony; he ultimately removed to Beaver island, in Lake Michigan, and assumed the title of King of the Saints, where the small kingdom still exists. These bodies and their leaders were excommunicated by the great majority under their proper Seer, as was also William Smith, another competitor for the throne, and a party in Texas headed by Lyman Wight."

In Strang's case excommunication was accompanied by the widespread circulation of pamphlet attacks upon his character. Of all the aspirants he was the only one, save Brigham Young, who displayed any genuine qualities of leadership. Defeated at Nauvoo, he returned to Wisconsin, and, maintaining his prophetic claims in published letters and in sermons, gathered a body of followers with whom he founded

the city of Voree, at what is now known as Spring Prairie, Wis. His disciples were there organized into a single community, owning all things in common and living as one family. They were called the Primitive Mormons, and the Voree Herald was established as their organ; from the same printing establishment was also issued a series of tracts setting forth the new Mormon doctrines. The sacred books of this sect were four in number, the Bible, the book of Mormon, Joseph Smith's "Book of Doctrines and Covenants," and the "Book of the Law of the Lord," the latter having been translated by Strang from eighteen metallic plates, which he claimed to have miraculously discovered, and which he said were "written long previous to the Babylonish captivity." Strang performed several "miracles" of this sort, closely resembling those with which Smith so successfully bolstered up the original imposture.

The community at Voree grew steadily under Strang's energetic leadership, but in 1846 he determined to plant a colony on the Lake Michigan archipelago, and in the following year he visited Beaver island at the head of a prospecting party. In the face of the resistance of the few traders already in possession, and amid many hardships, they thoroughly explored it and decided to settle there. This is the largest of the many islands scattered thickly through the northeastern extremity of Lake Michigan, divided into three groups, known by the names of Manitou, Fox and Beaver, and organized into the county of Manitou by the State of Michigan. It is fifteen miles in length by six in width, contains several thousand acres of fertile and well watered lands, and has one of the finest natural harbors upon the chain of great lakes. These islands now contain an isolated community of small farmers, woodcutters, traders and fishermen, are visited only irregularly by passing vessels, and are chiefly known as valuable fishing stations. Thirty-five years ago they were sparsely inhabited by Indians and Indian traders, and were camped upon occasionally by fishing parties; but little or nothing else was known of them even at the principal lake ports. Strang believed that there he could establish his church on a secure temporal foundation, and could escape that hostility of Gentile neighbors which had proved so fatal to Smith's settlements at the far west and Nauvoo. Convenient visions, duly communicated to the faithful for their edification and guidance, then ordered him not merely to gather his people at Voree, but to also take them to "a land amid wide waters and covered with large timber, with a deep, broad bay on one side of it." There was accordingly some emigration from Wisconsin to Beaver island in 1847-8, but it acquired considerable proportions in 1849-50,



JAMES J. STRANG
(FROM THE ONLY PHOTOGRAPH OF HIM KNOWN TO BE IN EXISTENCE)



and in the latter year the headquarters of the Primitive Mormons were removed from Voree to the new village at Beaver Harbor, to which the name of St. James had been given in honor of its founder. The Voree Herald was then succeeded by the Northern Islander, an exceedingly creditable specimen of backwoods journalism. The communistic principle was abandoned, and the saints became the owners of their own homesteads. In July, 1850, the government of the church was thoroughly reorganized "by the union of church and state," and the formation of a kingdom, with Strang as king. Precisely the nature of his claim to the royal title is thus stated by one of the most intelligent of his followers, Wingfield Watson, who still lives at Boyne, Charlevoix county, Michigan:

"Mr. Strang did claim to be a king only to the Mormon people, and upon the same principles, and the same only, upon which Moses, Melchisedec, Elijah, Elisha, Noah, Enoch, Peter, Joseph Smith, and all the great and leading prophets of God claimed that office since the world began, namely, by an appointment by revelation and an ordination under the hands of angels; and as none of those persons ever proposed in any way to be king only to those who, after a proper investigation of his claims and character, chose to receive him as such, so it was with Mr. Strang. By virtue of this ordination he claimed to hold the conjoint, kingly, prophetic and apostolic office held by all the above mentioned personages."

This adjustable claim of kingly authority amounted practically to this: Among his own people, and despite the occasional revolt of one or a few individuals, Strang was supreme and ruled them as he wished from first to last. They believed that obedience to his commands was a duty, and his missionaries did not hesitate to at times assert that "Strang's was the only valid government on earth." Their leader, however, carefully kept his monarchical pretensions for home consumption, and not only submitted to national and State authority, as required, but was shrewd in using the machinery of the civil law to advance his own ends as opportunity offered. The general domestic regulations of his kingdom are thus described in a manuscript prepared by his wife: The discipline of the church in the matter of temperance and morals was very strict. The use of tea, coffee, and tobacco, as well as of liquors, was prohibited. The temperance laws of the State were strictly enforced with especially good effect among the fishermen and Indians. Polygamy was introduced during the winter and spring of 1849. At first it was talked of quietly and secretly among the leaders and afterward publicly and openly among the people. It was not looked upon favorably, and there were never over 20 cases of plural marriages upon the islands. No man had more than three wives except Strang. His first wife left him in 1851, two years after he married his second; in

1852 he married a third, and in 1855 two more. No man was permitted to take more than one wife unless he showed means and ability to give them abundant care and comforts. Prostitution and lewdness were discountenanced alike in both sexes, and it was as necessary for a man to be careful of his character and reputation as for a woman. The county and township officers required by law were elected as in other parts of the State, but those positions were not used by members of the Mormon church, except when required by circumstances. Of course, in dealing with those outside of the church it was necessary to resort to the civil law. By-laws for the kingdom were adopted and published, and every household possessed a copy. They were very strict in all that regulated society, morals, and religious observances, and absolute obedience was enjoined. The seventh day was set apart as the Sabbath, and every person physically able was commanded to attend church on that day. The saints were required to pay one-tenth of all they raised, earned, or received into the public fund, and the tithing was used for improvements, taking care of the poor, and paying State, county and township taxes. No other tax was levied. Schools were organized and flourished finely. A printing office of sufficient capacity to print all the papers, books, pamphlets, tracts, etc., needed for the church was maintained, and became a strong arm in the association. No betting or gaming was permitted, but the rules were very liberal in the matter of amusements. Many improvements were made upon the Beaver, while small settlements were planted on neighboring islands. A Mormon tabernacle was also built, and Strang's cabin was raised to the dignity of a frontier palace by the erection of two additions connected with the main building by covered ways.

Between the Gentiles and the Mormons of lower Lake Michigan a warfare was waged fully as bitter as that which drove the disciples of Joseph Smith from Missouri to Illinois, and from the Mississippi to the valley of the great Salt lake. For three years the traders at Beaver island, and the Indians incited by the traders, endeavored by all means short of murder to check the Mormon immigration. Then the numerical strength changed to the side of the Saints, and they proceeded to retaliate vigorously. They soon succeeded, after first coming to an understanding with the Indians, in getting rid of most of the Gentiles, and were left practical possessors of the islands. Their relations with the fishermen and the settlers at Mackinac and neighboring points on the mainland never became friendly. Each party charged the other with gross crimes, and both, at every opportunity seized the weapons of the law to aid them in the conflict. Bloody collisions were not

infrequent, and the feud finally became a murderous one. The Mormons were well provided with pistols and muskets, and were the proprietors of a small cannon; they also had boats of their own, and, more important still, their movements were guided by definite authority, and were not those of a mob. Gradually they got the better of their unorganized enemies, and for the last half of King Strang's reign they were dreaded and not despised. Some incidents will illustrate the desperate nature of this border warfare. In 1850 the fishermen planned a Fourth of July celebration at Beaver island, which was to reach a patriotic climax in the forcible expulsion of the Mormons, but the firing of a national salute from a shotted cannon and the parade of armed Saints in large numbers brought that project to an inglorious termination.

Somewhat later a Mormon constable attempted to arrest the Gentile brothers named Bennett, who had assaulted an elder of his church. They resisted and a fight ensued, in which one of them was instantly killed, and the other lost a hand, while the officer was seriously wounded. A year or two afterwards the Mormons elected the sheriff of the (new) county of Emmet, and he undertook to summon jurors from Pine river (now Charlevoix) on the mainland. The settlers there treated this as an attempt to abduct some of their number for malicious purposes, and drove the sheriff off by a fusilade from guns and pistols which badly wounded six of his posse. The mere dread of the anger caused by this deed sufficed to promptly scatter the Pine river settlers, and the faith of the fugitives in their own prudence was soon confirmed by the erection by the islanders upon a convenient spot of a lofty gallows bearing suggestive inscriptions addressed to "The murderers of Pine river." Minor collisions and affrays were of constant occurrence, while the Mormons were denounced as mere outlaws.

On the other hand, Strang, in the *Northern Islander* and in his pamphlets, declared that his followers were a law-abiding and peaceable people, who were persecuted by gangs of drunken desperadoes, and were held responsible for offenses never committed, or for depredations which were, in fact, the work of their noisiest accusers. He also wrote letters to papers in New York, Rochester, Detroit and Chicago, defending the Mormons with no little plausibility. Strang's literary attainments were of fair character. A paper of his upon "The Natural History of Beaver Island," which can be found in the ninth annual report of the Smithsonian Institution, is written in excellent English and with an easy style. As an especially strong point upon his side

of the argument he pointed to the fact that although he and his followers were frequently arraigned in the courts on charges ranging from petty larceny to high treason, in no single case did conviction follow. A notable trial was that which took place in Detroit in the summer of 1851. In May of that year the United States authorities decided to proceed against Strang and his confederates for trespassing on the public lands, stealing timber, counterfeiting, mail robbing, etc. The armed steamer Michigan was placed under the orders of District Attorney George C. Bates, and, with a force of deputy marshals, sailed to Beaver Harbor. It was expected that the service of the warrants would be resisted or evaded by the Mormons, but all the accused promptly surrendered themselves, and a few of their chief men were taken to Detroit for trial. The testimony in the case was, however, taken at Beaver island, before United States Commissioner W. D. Wilkins by agreement between counsel, Col. A. T. McReynolds appearing with Strang himself for the defense. Over one hundred witnesses were examined, and the mass of evidence thus collected was submitted in the United States district court at Detroit, before Judge Ross Wilkins, in June, 1851. The court room was crowded, and the progress of the trial was watched with eager interest by the people of this city, and was reported at unusual length by its papers. Strang made an exceedingly effective speech to the jury, complaining bitterly of persecution and dramatically describing himself as a martyr to his religious convictions. The judge's charge was emphatic in cautioning the jury against yielding to sectarian prejudice, and the result was a verdict of acquittal. This decided triumph greatly strengthened Strang's hold upon the reverence of his followers and increased the general opinion of his capacity.

In 1852 the king became a legislator. The score of new counties of the northwestern quarter of the Lower Peninsula of Michigan formed at that time what was known as the Newaygo district. It was of immense extent, and its few centers of settlement were widely scattered. The result was that five legislative candidates were voted for, the Mormons solidly supporting Strang, who received a very decided plurality. An attempt was made to arrest him on some charge and thus keep him away from Lansing, but he used his privilege as a legislator to escape that snare. Next his seat was contested on constitutional and other grounds. He showed skill in the management of his own case in this instance, made a forcible speech before the House, and was admitted by a vote of 49 to 11. In 1854 he was re-elected, and this time he took his seat without resistance, thus serving two terms as a member of the

State House of Representatives. King Strang also dabbled in politics a little, co-operating in the main with the Democrats, who were at that time in power in Michigan. "The Mormon vote" he controlled absolutely, and used it to secure advantages for his community and to make bargains that would help on his schemes of personal or church advancement. In one or two doubtful State contests the action of the islanders under his leadership became a matter of solicitude to party managers, and one or two trips were made to St. James on political errands by that now veteran negotiator, John H. Harmon. Strang did not lack for political ambition. While at Lansing he broached a scheme for subdividing Michigan which embodied a plan for the erection of a new Mormon territory. This, of course, received no encouragement, and then he applied to Robert McClelland, of Michigan, who was then Secretary of the Interior in the cabinet of President Pierce, for an appointment as governor of Utah, promising that his administration should be attended by the uprooting of Brighamite Mormonism in the Salt lake valley.

The end of King Strang's reign came in 1856. Externally the affairs of the "kingdom" were then at their zenith, but serious internal troubles had arisen. Polygamy had proved a source of discontent, and gave excuse for revolt against Strang's rigid discipline in small matters. Jealousies also sprang up at times between him and the more intelligent of his disciples. Soon after the occupation of Beaver island the most effective of his preachers, a strolling actor named George J. Adams, became insubordinate and was excommunicated. He failed in an attempt to organize a revolt and joined the Gentiles: he made several futile attempts to break up the new settlement, but finally gave up the contest. Later, the most capable of Strang's followers, an educated Baltimorean named Dr. H. D. McCulloch, became disaffected, and he successfully stimulated the hostility to the King both on Beaver island and along the shore until it bore tragic fruit. Two men named Bedford and Wentworth had been subjected to public discipline. One of them had been severely whipped, and, as he believed, by Strang's orders, although this was denied. They were eager for revenge, and determined to kill the Mormon leader whenever it could be done with any hope of escaping the fury of his followers. The result was thus narrated in the columns of the Northern Islander of June 20, 1856:

MURDEROUS ASSAULT.—On Monday last the United States steamer Michigan entered this harbor at about one o'clock p. m. and was visited by the inhabitants promiscuously during the afternoon. About seven o'clock Capt McBlair sent a messenger (Alex St. Barnard, the pilot), to Mr. Strang requesting him to visit him

on board. Mr. Strang immediately accompanied the messenger, and just as they were stepping on the bridge leading to the pier, in front of F. Johnson & Co's store, two assassins, approached in the rear, unobserved by either of them, and fired upon Mr. Strang with pistols. The first shot took effect upon the left side of the head, entering a little back of the top of the ear, and, rebounding, passed out near the top of the head. This shot, fired from a horse-pistol, brought him down, and he fell on the left side so that he saw the assassins as they fired the second and third shots from a revolver, both taking effect upon his person, one just below the temple, on the right side of the face, and lodged in the cheek bone, the other on the left side of the spine, near the tenth rib, followed the rib about two inches and a half and lodged. Mr. Strang recognized in the persons of the assassins Thomas Bedford and Alexander Wentworth. Wentworth had a revolver and Bedford a horse-pistol, with which he struck him over the head and face while lying on the ground. The assassins immediately fled on board the United States steamer, with pistols in hand, claiming her protection. The assault was committed in view of several of the officers and crew from the deck of the steamer, also of Dr. H. D. McCulloch, F. Johnson, and others, and no effort was made to stop it. Mr. Strang was taken up by a few friends and some of the officers of the boat and carried to the house of Messrs. Prindles, where the surgeon of the steamer made an examination of his wounds and declared recovery hopeless. Process was taken out for the apprehension of the assassins, and the sheriff of the county called on Captain Mc Blair for their delivery. The Captain refused to give them up, saying that he would take them to Mackinac and deliver them into the hands of the civil authorities of the State there. The steamer left the next day, carrying off all the persons supposed to be implicated in the affair, thus affording military protection to murderers and overthrowing the sovereignty of civil law.

All the parties suspected of any share in the homicide were taken to Mackinac on the Michigan, and were there enthusiastically received by the people and speedily discharged from nominal custody. Strang was removed in a few days to Voree, where he died on July 9. He was buried at Spring Prairie, Wisconsin, and his family, which consisted of five wives and twelve children, lived in that neighborhood for a short time, but finally scattered. Shortly after his removal from St. James a mob of angry fishermen and others descended upon the Mormon settlement, burned the temple, sacked the "royal palace," and drove the subjects of the fallen monarch from the islands in hot haste. The dispersion of the Beaver island Mormons was complete, and they have since ceased to profess any organized existence. The men (or their successors) who expelled the saints are still in possession of the fruits of conquest. They dwell in the abandoned homes, substantial cabins of hewn logs, vine-clad and surrounded by little gardens. The office of the Northern Islander has become a boarding house, and is now "the best hotel" in St. James. The island nomenclature alone preserves the traditions of the fallen kingdom. The village on Beaver Harbor is still St. James. The excellent road which leads into the

interior is the King's highway. The largest of the inland lakes is called Galilee, and a trout brook which winds through a ravine near the eastern shore is the Jordan. The Mormon tabernacle is a mere mound of charred ruins; Catholicism has become the dominant religion of the island, and is represented by a handsome chapel.

STATEMENT OF THE MURDER AS WITNESSED BY CAPT.
ALEX. ST. BARNARD, OF U. S. STEAMER MICHIGAN.

[Detroit Free Press, June 30, 1889.]

Capt. Alex. St. Barnard, of St. Clair, now 80 years of age, recently gave the writer the following account of the murder of James J. Strang:

"I was an officer on the United States steamer Michigan for twenty-five years. She was the first iron boat that navigated the lakes, and she is in first-rate condition yet. During the war we were kept pretty busy cruising between Erie and Chicago. We generally took on wood at Beaver island. There were between two thousand and three thousand Mormons living there then, with their leader, King Strang, besides the Gentiles, who were mostly fishermen and wood-choppers. The Mormons lived in comfortable houses of hewn logs, and worshiped in a large temple built of the same material.

"I was well acquainted with the king, for he often came on board the ship. He was a fine looking, sociable sort of a man; but he was not very popular among the Gentiles. We heard a great many complaints from them whenever we stopped there. The Mormons were obliged to turn over one-tenth of their earnings to the king, and he demanded the same from the Gentiles. Two fishermen, who refused to surrender their hard-earned money, were taken to the woods, stripped and beaten with beech switches; and the county treasurer, who lived on the island, was ordered to deliver up one-tenth of the public money.

"The king was arrested and taken to Detroit, with his twelve apostles, where he pleaded his own case—and won it, too; and after that things were worse than ever. When we stopped as usual on one of our trips around the lakes, the complaints were so bitter that our captain made up his mind to arrest him again, and he told me to find him and bring him on board the ship. I went to the temple, first, where I was told that he had just gone home. I found him sitting in his



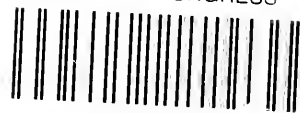
room, with four of his wives, where he received me very cordially, and when I told him my errand, accompanied me willingly. He linked arms with me and we walked along talking pleasantly. Just as we stepped on the dock and started to walk down the narrow passage between the piles of wood, two of his enemies sprang from some hiding place and shot at him. He clung to my arm until they began to pound him with the butt end of their pistols, when he let go and fell, leaving me covered with blood from my head to my feet.

“There were no telephones in those days, but the news spread in a very short time, and a howling mob of men, women and children gathered around their dying chief. Our surgeon came on shore and did what he could for the poor fellow, but nothing could save him.

“The murderers ran aboard the ship and gave themselves up—the best thing they could have done, for the mob would have pulled them in pieces if they had caught them. Of course suspicion fell on me, many thinking I had led him to his death, and I received several friendly warnings to be on my guard, but I was not molested. A detachment of troops were sent to bring the fishermen and their families on board the ship, as it was considered unsafe to leave them on the island with the excited Mormons.

“The murderers were taken to Mackinac and given into the custody of the county sheriff, Mr. Granger, who kept the Grove House at that time, and is now living at Fort Gratiot. But they were never brought to trial.”

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