

## Chapter 7

### **TRAGEDY AND VICTORY**

“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” (John 15:13.)

On June 27, 1844, the Prophet and Patriarch sealed their testimonies with their blood. Although the assassination of these leaders was a tragic event in a land of liberty, their martyrdom was an everlasting victory.

The series of events that led to the death of Joseph and Hyrum began on June 10, 1844 with the destruction of the *Nauvoo Expositor*. Only one issue of this newspaper was published by apostates on June 7th in a building located on the north side of Mulholland between Bluff (Woodruff) and Page streets. Apostates had played a key role in the expulsion of the Saints from Kirtland and played a major role in the imprisonment of Joseph Smith and other leaders in Missouri and the expulsion of the Saints from that state. In Nauvoo a group of dissenters announced that they were going to expose Mormonism, its beliefs and practices. An announced objective of that paper was the abolishment of the Nauvoo charter. In the first and only issue, without citing any specific facts, Joseph Smith was accused of dishonesty, immorality, and being responsible for causing misery and the eventual death of women in Nauvoo.<sup>1</sup>

The early nineteenth century was an age of violence. During the thirty-five years that encompassed the Mormon occupation of Nauvoo, sixteen presses in Illinois were destroyed by mobs, and one mob killed Elijah Lovejoy, an