

## Chapter 8

### **“THE KEYS ARE RIGHT HERE”**

While sitting in a railway station in Boston, Massachusetts, with Wilford Woodruff on 27 June 1844, Brigham Young became sorrowful and “felt a heavy depression of spirit.” At the time, he did not understand the reason for his despondency; and even on 9 July, nearly two weeks later, when he first heard that Joseph and Hyrum Smith had been killed, he dismissed the report, assuming that it was a just another vicious rumor. He did not comprehend the tragedy of Carthage until almost three weeks following the martyrdom when he read a letter on 16 July that described in some detail the murder of the Prophet and Patriarch. The first thing he thought of was whether Joseph had taken the keys of the kingdom with him. But as he and his companion, Orson Pratt, leaned back on their chairs and pondered the loss of a dear prophet and friend, Brigham Young slapped his knee and said, “The keys of the kingdom are right here with the Church.”<sup>1</sup> That recognition of authority and leadership was unitedly embraced by nine of the Twelve Apostles, the nine who met as a quorum in Manchester, England in April 1841.<sup>2</sup>

When Wilford Woodruff learned of the tragedy in Carthage, his immediate response was similar to Brigham Young’s:

He [Joseph Smith] told us that he was going away to leave us, going away to rest. Said he, “You have to round up your shoulders to bear up the