

Dedication of Graves and Monuments
for
**Sarah Shannon, Weare and Jeremiah Leavitt, and
Benjamin Fletcher**

by
Lyman Platt
Wilton Center Cemetery, Wilton Center, Illinois
Wednesday, September 17, 2003

Before I give the dedicatory prayer this morning, I would like to say a few words as part of the dedicatory process.

We are here today to honor grandmother Sarah Shannon Leavitt, Weare Leavitt, and his son Jeremiah Leavitt, who died at 12-Mile Grove. Grandmother Sarah was one of the great matriarchs of this dispensation, along with grandmother Smith, and grandmother Knight, who gave their lives in bringing their children to Zion. It is a wonderful honor, worthy of her sacrifice, that we have each been allowed to gather here to dedicate for the first time her resting place by the power of the holy Melchizedek priesthood.

It was my privilege to attend the first session of the dedication of the Mexico City temple a few years ago. My father, stepmother, wife and I were seated behind the wives of the General Authorities in the Celestial Room. As President Hinckley arose to address the assembly, he began by looking around the room, and with prophetic eyes and great emotion said: "Do you feel them? They are here! Father Lehi, Nephi, Alma, Helaman, his sons Lehi and Nephi, Mormon and Moroni. They are all here! Do you feel them?" I ask you the same question today---do you feel them?

The following poem was written yesterday, in preparation for this occasion:

Sacred places where loved ones rest
The glorious morn awaits them there.
Sacred groves; revered history,
Hallowed now through priesthood prayer.

Sacred hills, undaunted courage,
Death was sweet to young and old.
Precious memories, loved-ones departed,
Now recalled in stones first cold

Then warmed by words of love and spirit
Imbued with life: the resurrection;
Called forth in arms of love so tender,
To live eternal: Oh, sweet perfection!

Please join me as we dedicate this monument.
Father in Heaven,

We are gathered here this morning at this sacred grove to dedicate this monument. By the power of the holy Melchizedek priesthood which I bear, I so do, that it may stand as a symbol of the faith and courage of grandmother Sarah Shannon Leavitt, her son Weir Leavitt and her grandson Jeremiah Leavitt, who gave their lives in pursuit of the truth; who died while en route to join the Saints. I dedicate it in remembrance of their lives and those who, with them, left

Canada to follow their convictions and testimonies. May our own life be sanctified as we remember this occasion; as we remember their sacrifices as the forerunners of this dispensation and of this family. May we be worthy of their trust as we gather the now extensive posterity into a united, sealed, and exemplary branch of the House of Israel and of the kingdom of our God. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.