

OFFICE OF  
*The First Presidency*  
*of the*  
*Church of Jesus Christ*  
*of Latter-day Saints.*

67 East South Temple St.

*Salt Lake City, Utah,* March 15th, 1911

Mr. Walter M. Davis,

Iowa City, Iowa.

Dear Sir:-

Yours of the 9th inst. to President Joseph F. Smith was duly received in which you make inquiry concerning an old bell that formerly belonged to the Presbyterian church of your city, and which, you say, was originally stolen from the church and concealed by being thrown into the river, and later taken out and sold to a party of our people who were on their way to Salt Lake City; and you also say that you are advised that it is now installed in some building in this city, and that the people of your church are very anxious to acquire possession of this bell again because of its historical connections.

Quite a number of years ago inquiry was made of the then President of our Church about this same bell about which you have now written to President Joseph F. Smith. The inquiry, I distinctly remember, was made by the late Colonel Sells, then a resident of our city who, if I remember correctly, had some personal knowledge of the bell, and who, from inquiry made by himself of workmen in the employ of our Church, conceived the idea that this old bell was in our possession, and was at the time in a discarded condition on our temple square which, at that time, was in a state of chaos containing, as it then did, piles of old building material

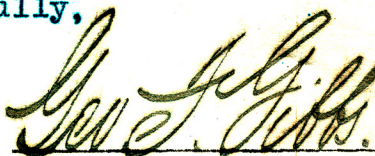


of all kinds, and in order to satisfy the Colonel a search was made, but without avail. In fact no one in our office or the Presiding Bishop's office, or any of the workmen on our temple block knew anything about such a bell, and I believe Colonel Sells became satisfied that it was not only not in our possession, but that none of our people of long residence here knew anything at all about it, and it was my understanding that he thus reported to his friends who had asked him to give attention to this matter.

I may say that meeting house bells are very little used by us as a community; that in fact we never hear the sound of one except it be in some far-off little settlement where the standard time is not given daily, a thing we at this office used to give in early days by means of our own telegraph line.

Hoping this will be satisfactory to you, I am,

Yours respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Geo. J. Gibbs", written over a horizontal line.

Secretary.