



ON THE TRAIL
HARMONY and the
SUSQUEHANNA

By Jan Pinborough
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On a chilly May morning, Joshua and Emily G. visited a place called Harmony, Pennsylvania, where some very special things happened almost 184 years ago.

Joseph and Emma Smith moved here to be closer to Emma's parents and to escape people who wanted to steal the gold plates. They lived in a small house near Emma's parents.

Inside that small house, Joseph worked on translating the gold plates while Oliver Cowdery wrote down his words. When Joseph and Oliver read about Jesus Christ telling the Nephites about baptism, they wanted to have the authority to baptize. On May 15, 1829, they went outside to pray about it.

As Joseph and Oliver knelt in the maple woods near Emma's parents' home, they had a sacred experience. First they heard the voice of Jesus Christ. Then John the Baptist appeared. He put his hands on their heads and gave them the Aaronic Priesthood and the authority to baptize. Now the priesthood was back on the earth!

Next John told them how to baptize each other. The two men walked down to the nearby Susquehanna River. First Joseph baptized Oliver, and then Oliver baptized Joseph. Now baptism with proper priesthood authority was on the earth once more.

This sacred experience was an important part of the **Restoration** of the Church. ♦

The Restoration is when Jesus Christ's original Church was brought back to earth.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRENT WALTON

Come along to explore an important place in Church history!

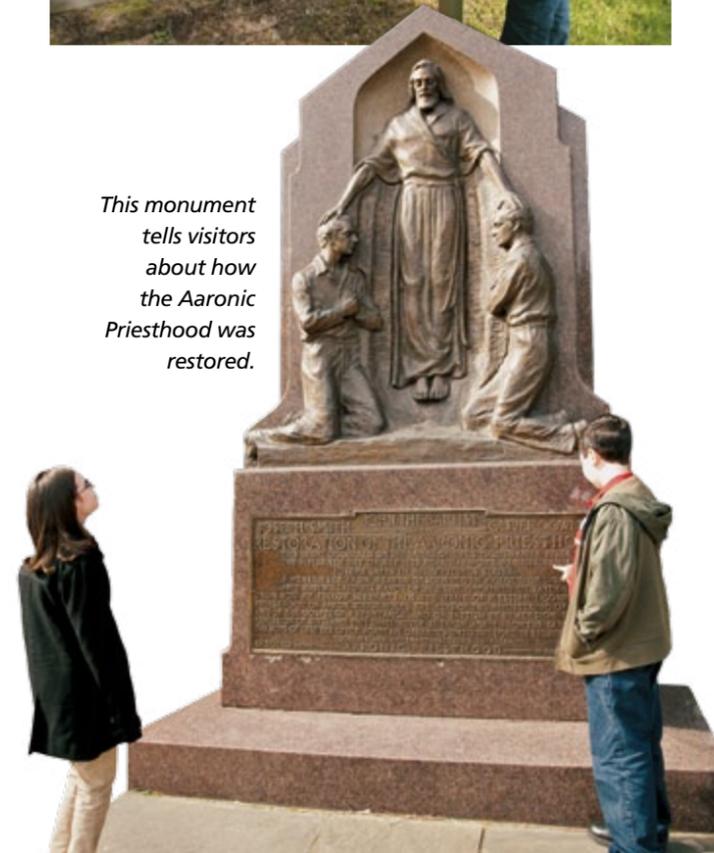
The river where Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were baptized was very cold on the day Emily and Joshua visited!



Emily and Joshua look at the gravestone of Joseph and Emma's first child, Alvin, who died at birth.



Emma Smith's parents' home once stood here. Nearby was the house where Joseph translated much of the Book of Mormon—and where he received 15 sections of the Doctrine and Covenants.



This monument tells visitors about how the Aaronic Priesthood was restored.

HOW THEY GOT THERE:

Emma's brother drove Emma and Joseph to Harmony in a wagon. To avoid the mob, they left two days early and hid the gold plates in a barrel of beans.



WHY IS THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD IMPORTANT?

It gives the power and responsibility to do these things for Heavenly Father:

- Prepare, bless, and pass the sacrament
- Collect fast offerings
- Preach the gospel
- Baptize
- Watch over and help people as a home teacher

WHAT WAS SPECIAL TO EMILY

- Emily admires how Emma Smith helped others and took good care of her children. Someday Emily wants to be a nurse who takes care of babies.
- Last year Emily's dad baptized her. Now she has visited the spot where the first baptism happened in the latter days!



WHAT WAS SPECIAL TO JOSHUA

- In a few days, Joshua and his dad will get to camp out nearby to celebrate the restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood.
- In just a few months, Joshua will receive the Aaronic Priesthood himself!

