

James Webb
21 March 1777 - 17 March 1845
by Elaine Johnson

James was born in Hartford, Hartford, Connecticut. He was the son of James and Elizabeth Webb. His parents' families were from Connecticut originally but had lived in Colchester, Nova Scotia, where they were married and their first few children were born. They moved south just in time for the American Revolution.

His older brother, Bliss, purchased land in Chatham in 1787. It is a small town now called East Hampton. The 1790 census lists James as one of two males under sixteen in the household of his father in Chatham. In 1793 his father inherited land there. " A few Baptist families by the name of Morgan, Webb and Welch, who had lived for a time in Nova Scotia, but were previously from Colchester in this state, moved into East Hampton about 1775. A Baptist Church was formed among these Sept. 10, 1784." [David Fields, 1819] The Webb family was still in Chatham in the year 1800. James married Betsey Favill in 1802. Their first child was born in Brookfield, Chenango, New York, southeast of Syracuse. The second child was born in Hanover township, Chautauqua county, at the westernmost end of New York. Their last child was born in Manheim. Betsey died that year leaving James to raise their children.

James married Hannah Griswold in 1810. Chautauqua county was mostly wilderness. Dense old trees had to be cleared by ax before farms could be planted with horse and plow. Only the strong survived. James and Hannah prospered there for twenty-four years. Nine children were born to James and Hannah in Hanover township. Only one died as a child.

In the late spring of 1831, Kirtland, Ohio, an unimportant little town fifty miles west, suddenly became the home of the 'Mormons' who sent missionaries into the surrounding country to explain the restored gospel. James was fifty-seven years old when he and his family heard these teachings. He was baptized in 1834. They left the farm they had worked so hard to create and moved to Kirtland. Their last two children were born there. "James WEBB (1777-1845). Born at Hartford, Hartford Co., CT. Resident of Kirtland 1836-1838. Received anointing in Kirtland Temple 25 January 1836 and elder's license 5 April 1836." [Kirtland Elders' Quorum Record 1836-1841, Pg.105] They remained in Kirtland until 1838 when they went to Missouri and built a new home in Adam-on-di-Ahman. Francis A. Webb quoted Chauncy G. as saying about his father, "My father, James Webb, took great pride in his family, and he loved to tell that no Webb was a shirker, they did much more than their part rather than less."

Mob violence against the members of the church become extreme. Governor Boggs ordered the state militia to move on Far West. They were betrayed and the leaders were arrested. On 2 November 1838 General Parks was ordered to turn his brigade against "Di-Ahman." The people were compelled to surrender and leave their homes and go to Far West and from there to leave the state or face execution. Most of their cattle had been taken by the mobs and few were

able to take more than they could carry. By the nineteenth most of the people from Adam-ondi-Ahman were in Far West living in tents and wagons.

From there the Webbs were forced to flee to Illinois. They went first to Payson, Illinois, where their son Lorenzo died in December 1839. The Webbs were living in Quincy in 1840. The 1842 tax list for Nauvoo and the surrounding area gave the location of his land as 6N 8W. James settled his family in La Harpe, Hancock County where he died of a fever. His obituary appeared in the *Nauvoo Neighbor*. He was buried in grave 14, lot 6, of block 14 in the Old Pioneer Cemetery in Nauvoo.