

The World of Joseph Fielding: Chapter 6

Elder Pratt Returned to Canada After a Short Absence

During Elder Pratt's short visit to Kirtland in June of 1836, Elder Pratt found his wife healed after seven years of illness. Elder Pratt wrote about the work in Canada which had progressed in his absence from Church headquarters, of miracles of healing and conversion, and also of large crowds seeking to hear the truth. Thankful accompanied him when he returned to Toronto

Elder Hyde wrote, "When Elder Pratt returned to Canada, my wife came with him, and joined me in that country. We continued to labor in Markham, Scarborough and Toronto during the [summer] season."¹ In September Joseph wrote, "Elder Parley P. Pratt still continued his labors in Upper Canada, Toronto, and vicinity, with good success."²

Orson Hyde

Orson Hyde was born in Connecticut in early 1805, being 11 months older than Joseph Smith. His mother died after the birth of Orson's younger brother, and his father, a veteran of the War of 1812, could not adequately care for his large family. Orson was taken in by a local family where he worked as a farm laborer. The man moved to a farm in the Western Reserve, of which Kirtland was a part, and sent for his nephew and Orson, who was at that time fourteen, to meet him there. The two boys walked the entire six hundred miles from Connecticut to Kirtland.³

The Great Western Reserve comprised land granted by King Charles II in 1662 to the colony of Connecticut. The grant extended Connecticut's western border throughout the then-unknown continent, stretching three thousand miles to the Pacific Ocean. During the following century, parts of this strip were ceded away, but until 1800 the state of



Orson Hyde was fourth in seniority in the original Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

Connecticut held firmly to the portion of the Reserve which passed

through Ohio. At that time, acreage was deeded to Connecticut soldiers who had fought in the Revolutionary War. Kirtland Township was created in 1803 and those looking for new land began moving farther west into the land south of Lake Erie.

King Charles II granted the colony of Connecticut all the land westward. During the next century and a half, other colonies chipped away at this reserve. The portion in Ohio was ceded to Revolutionary War Veterans in 1800.

A hard worker, Orson left the service of his caretaker and was employed in and around Kirtland. Concerned about his salvation, he first joined with the Methodists. Then he joined the Cambellites, a congregation led by Sidney Rigdon. After observing that many of his

friends had joined the Mormon Church with Sidney Rigdon, Orson studied and prayed and was baptized in late 1831 by Brother Rigdon. He served several short missions, including one in 1832 with Samuel Smith. He marched with Zion's Camp in 1834 and was ordained an apostle in 1835, falling in seniority behind Heber C. Kimball.⁴

Elder Hyde wrote of his first connection with the Canadian saints in his autobiography:

In the spring of 1836, I took a mission to the state of New York, in company with several others of the Apostles. I labored in the vicinity of Rochester. Fell in with Joseph and Hyrum at Buffalo. . . and took dinner with them at a hotel. I next proceeded to Canada to join Elder Parley P. Pratt, who had previously gone there, and had called for help. Elder Pratt and myself labored in company for a season.⁵

Missionary Work in Canada in 1836

Both Elder Pratt and Elder Hyde recorded details in their autobiographies of a learned Presbyterian minister, Mr. Browning of Scarborough, who challenged them to a debate concerning their doctrine.⁶ Elder Pratt was too busy preaching elsewhere when the appointed time came, but Elder Hyde kept the appointment. He found the assembly so large that the meeting had to be held outdoors. The two men agreed on several ground rules, the first being that the Bible was to be recognized as the standard of truth. They also set a template for when and how long each party would be allowed to speak and refute. Elder Hyde began, standing on a large platform before a crowd of thousands.

In his opening remarks, Elder Hyde declared:

[First, the] true Church of Christ is composed of apostles, prophets, elders, teachers and members, who have been baptized (immersed) in the name of Jesus Christ, and who have received his spirit by the laying on of hands. . . . [Second], a true Church of Christ believed in visions, angels, spirits, prophesyings, revelations, healings and miracles of every kind, as described by the New Testament. [Third], any creed or religious body differing from this New Testament pattern could not be considered the Church of Christ, however sincere they might be.

Elder Hyde then asked that his opponent affirm or deny the premises he had established. The minister attempted to bring forward slanderous articles from the press, but Elder Hyde said they could not be admitted, as both parties had agreed to use the Bible as the standard. For two hours the opposing minister tried in vain to:

introduce the poisonous slanders which so often prevail in blinding the public mind, [but] they were utterly silenced. Elder Hyde then proceeded to address the vast assemblage at considerable length. . . .

At the end of the debate, forty people were immediately baptized.⁷

In September 1836 Elder Pratt preached a Sunday sermon concerning the Second Coming. He

prophesied that the people would see:

. . . signs in the heavens very soon, such as were spoken of by Jesus Christ in the New Testament. . . . After thus preaching I returned in the evening to the house of Brother and Sisters Fielding, at the hour of 9 p.m. We sat up for an hour or two conversing on these important things and rejoicing, when, on going out at the door and looking abroad, we beheld a most wonderful scene in the heavens, and, as it continued for some time, we finally went to some of the nearest neighbors and called them out to behold it.

A wave of white light extended like a rainbow from east to west over the entire horizon, a little south of the meridian. It was in appearance about twenty feet wide, and seemed agitated in its motions like a wave of the sea. At length it removed like the motions of a great swell of the sea towards the south and disappeared, when lo! another similar light appeared immediately on the place of the former, and after remaining stationary with agitated motions for some time, it rolled away to the south and disappeared like the former, and was replaced by a third. Thus the same scene was renewed and continued for hours. We finally all retired to rest, while it yet continued to be exhibited.

Reformed Minister William Caird Preaches in Canada about the Need for Apostles

Elder Pratt wrote an entire chapter in his biography pertaining to his encounter with William Caird, the minister from England whom James Fielding had mentioned in his letter. Parley began this chapter by telling of a dream from God which occurred in July while he was staying at the home of Joseph Fielding. In this dream he was told to trust further dreams, and this particular dream brought him courage.

In October, as he and Thankful were preparing to return to Kirtland, Elder Pratt learned that William Caird would be returning to Canada from England. Mr Caird, during his first visit to Canada, had announced a second visit, and the time had come for that. Coincidentally, Mr. Caird's visit to Toronto would align with Elder Pratt's visit there. Interestingly, in James Fielding's 1835 letter to Joseph, he mentioned William Caird, saying, "The hand of the Lord is still mightily with Mr. Caird. . . All are sent as 'Swift Messengers'. . . ."

Elder Pratt wrote, "[Mr. Caird] had preached many things, and told the people that God had raised up apostles in England and organized the true church, and was sending preachers from thence unto all the world to prepare the way for the coming of the Son of Man."

The people had been very receptive to his message and had wondered about the timing of Mr. Caird's visit to Canada where he preached of the need for apostles, and then of Elder Pratt's subsequent visit, stating that he was an apostle. All that Elder Pratt had heard about Mr. Caird was very positive, and Parley wanted to meet him. Although Mr. Caird did not believe that baptism by immersion was essential for salvation, Elder Pratt "felt in high hopes that he would be an instrument in the hands of God to receive and spread the truth."⁸

Elder Pratt learned Mr. Caird was in Kingston, two hundred miles east of Toronto. Although he was expected to return to preach in Toronto, he did not arrive. Parley then determined that he

would travel by steamer to Kingston and meet Mr. Caird.

That very night Elder Pratt had a detailed dream where he saw a great serpent. After describing the lengthy dream, Parley said he awakened with the impression that Mr. Caird was the serpent. The dream was not what he had expected, as he had believed the words of those who had heard Mr. Caird speak. These friends felt that the minister was a sincere and honest person and could be valuable in spreading the truth.

After pondering this, he fell asleep and experienced another dream where he took the steamer to Kingston and had a difficult encounter with Mr. Caird. Elder Pratt felt like he was being shown Mr. Caird's true character, and in the morning he told his associates that he no longer had any desire to travel to Kingston, that Mr. Caird would not accept the truth of Mormonism. However, "they rather insisted on my going," and found the means for him to travel. John Goodson, likely being one who had heard Mr. Caird speak six months earlier, accompanied him.

They traveled overnight, arriving in Kingston at dawn. They "sent [Mr. Caird] a line seeking an interview," but he did not respond. That evening they attended his sermon where he denounced Mormonism and stated that the Mormon imposters "had deceived some of his friends in Toronto."

Parley, feeling confident after his dream and then again after hearing this sermon, returned to Toronto. However, Mr. Caird followed Elder Pratt to Toronto. Elder Pratt printed handbills and hired young men to deliver them at Mr. Caird's sermons. Mr. Caird's friends strongly encouraged the minister to meet with Elder Pratt, but he refused.

Parley rented a large meeting hall for two consecutive evenings and advertised that he would prove Mr. Caird to be a false teacher. Elder Hyde presided as chairman. Elder Pratt wrote:

Long before the hour of the first appointment had arrived, the house was thronged to that degree that ten dollars was in vain urged upon any one who would vacate their seat, even on the stairs which led to the hall. I took for a text the saying of the Apostle John, 'Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, the same hath not God.' I then reviewed the doctrine of Christ and of His Apostles, in details, showing what were the ordinances, gifts, powers, precepts, promises, and commandments of Jesus Christ, as contrasted with the public teachings and doings of this man, Caird.

The second meeting was also filled to overflowing, where the scriptures were taught.

Thus was fulfilled to the letter this strange and wonderful double dream. And thus the truth prevailed over the counterfeit, while the people's minds were settled as to which was the Moses and which was the magician.⁹

Joseph Fielding Travels to Kirtland with Elder Hyde and Elder Pratt in the Fall of 1836

Elder Hyde wrote that he, Elder Pratt and their wives returned to Kirtland in the fall, after raising up several branches of the Church."¹⁰

Joseph Fielding traveled to Kirtland with the two apostles and possibly with other new converts, leaving his sisters comfortably situated in their Charleton home. During his stay in Kirtland, Joseph attended a meeting arranged by Joseph Smith, Senior. Father Smith occasionally held blessing meetings, where those in attendance received their patriarchal blessings. One such occasion was Tuesday, November 1st in the Kirtland Temple.

On that day, Father Smith laid his hands on Joseph Fielding and gave him his patriarchal blessing. Joseph was told his “Descent has been from Abraham through the Loins of Joseph.” He was also told that although he had “no posterity now, yet God will bless thy Descendants . . . and thy Posterity shall become mighty Men and Women in the Earth.”¹¹



Joseph Fielding received his patriarchal blessing in the Kirtland Temple under the hands of Joseph Smith, Sr.

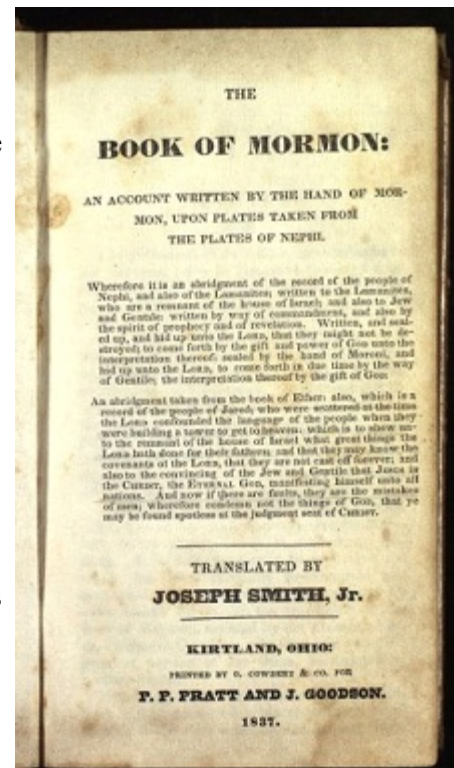
John Goodson and Parley P. Pratt Publish the Second Edition of the Book of Mormon

John Goodson likely traveled with Joseph Fielding to Kirtland. He was ordained a Seventy just before Christmas under the hands of Joseph Young, the older brother of Brigham Young and one of the Presidents of the Seventy.¹² Brother Goodson had gone into business with Parley P. Pratt,¹³ and through the winter of 1836-1837, John and Parley worked together to prepare a second printing of the Book of Mormon. Using the original printer’s manuscript, they corrected typographical and grammatical errors from the first edition, printing about three thousand copies. It appears that their own money was involved in this publication.¹⁴

During his stay in Kirtland, Joseph Fielding would have met Joseph Smith and other faithful apostles and leaders. Most likely Joseph returned to Canada before winter set in.

The new Canadian converts continued to preach in the Elders’ absence. Isaac Russell called at the home of Theodore Turley, a native-born Englishman who had resettled in Canada with his wife and family and who served as a lay minister for the Methodist Church. Brother Turley later wrote, “[Isaac Russell] came to me and said he had been warned in a dream that he must come to my house and preach.” He then encouraged the members of his congregation to listen to Isaac. “They sang, prayed and listened to the message.”

Theodore said to himself, ‘That is the truth and I shall be



Apostle Parley P. Pratt and new convert John Goodson invested their own resources into the publication of the 1837 edition of the Book of Mormon.

condemned if I do not accept it.” Theodore and his wife Francis were both baptized on March 1st, 1837 and later that year the couple named a son Isaac after the missionary who converted them.¹⁵

Joseph Fielding also assisted in the missionary work. He wrote:

I had traveled sometime with Bro. Taylor in Canada and had seen much of the power of God manifested, in speaking with tongues, healing the sick, preaching, and prophesying in tongues. Brother T. was mighty and in interpretation and in prophesying and in healing, he scarcely ever failed. I have known several cases quite remarkable, one in my own house, but nothing of this kind ever seemed to have any effect on unbelievers, though they often said if they could see such a thing they should think it was of God. I found that if they did not believe our testimony, it was in vain to expect them to believe at all.¹⁶

Elder Kimball’s Prophecy to Elder Pratt Is Fulfilled: Thankful Has a Son

Elder Pratt wrote:

The truth had now triumphed in Canada, as was predicted on my head on starting from Kirtland, Ohio. Several branches of the Church had been organized, and elders had been ordained to take care of the flocks and to continue the work. I took an affectionate leave of my friends in that country, and, with my wife, returned home. Where I had labored, the Lord had opened the hearts of the Saints sufficiently to pay up my debts, as had been predicted, and at the turn of the season, less than a twelvemonth from the date of Brother Kimball’s prophecy, my wife bore me a son, and we called his name Parley. He was born early the morning of March 25th, 1837.

A few days before the birth, Thankful saw a vision in which she was overwhelmed in a pillar of fire, which was repeated the following day. Thankful believed the vision was a message that she would soon be freed from her difficult life. After her baby was dressed, and Thankful had “looked upon it and embraced it,” she quietly passed away. She was buried near the new temple.

John Taylor Appointed to Preside Over the Canadian Saints

Elder Roberts. in compiling John Taylor’s biography, wrote, “All through the summer of 1836, [John Taylor] was actively engaged in the ministry, and when in the autumn the apostles departed for Kirtland, he was appointed to preside over the churches they had founded.”

That fall the widower John Goodson married twenty-year-old Margaret Dawson, Isaac Russell’s niece, the daughter of his sister Fanny.

Apostasy Plagues Members of the Church During a Financial Panic

During the winter of 1836, many members of the Church in Kirtland fell into apostasy. One cause can be attributed to a financial panic swept through the United States. Banks in New York City alone lost over one hundred million dollars.

The bank in Kirtland failed, and many blamed the young prophet Joseph for their financial difficulties. Others deliberately conspired against the Church. Eliza R. Snow wrote of this time, “A spirit of speculation had crept into the hearts of some of the Twelve, and nearly, if not every quorum was more or less infected.”¹⁷ Elder Pratt was one who listened to those who were falling away.

John Taylor and Isaac Russell Visit Kirtland and Strengthen Elder Pratt

In March of 1837, John Taylor, at that time twenty-seven years old, visited Kirtland with Isaac Russell. John and Isaac stayed in the home of Joseph Smith and were taught by him.¹⁸ A member of the Church less than ten months, John was full of faith in his new-found religion.

While in Kirtland, John saw firsthand the deviousness of the apostates and tried to challenge them. He became a strength at that time to many who were spiritually struggling. He later said, “I was pained on the one hand to witness the hard feelings and severe expressions of apostates, while on the other, I rejoiced to see the firmness, faith and integrity and joy of the faithful.”¹⁹

Elder Pratt sought out Brother Taylor and “told him of some things wherein he considered the Prophet Joseph in error.”²⁰ It is possible that Elder Pratt’s faith was shaken during his period of mourning for his wife Thankful.

John replied:

I am surprised to hear you speak so, Brother Parley. Before you left Canada you bore a strong testimony to Joseph Smith being a prophet of God, and to the truth of the work he has inaugurated, and you said you know these things by revelation, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. You gave to be a strict charge to the effect that though you or an angel from heaven was to declare anything else I was not to believe it. Now Brother Parley, it is not man that I am following, but the Lord. The principles you taught me led me to Him, and I now have the same testimony you rejoiced in. If the word was true six months ago, it is true today. If Joseph Smith was then a prophet, he is now a prophet.

John described the situation by saying “He with many others were passing under a dark cloud.”

During this visit to Kirtland, Warren Parrish, Joseph Smith’s secretary, preached a sermon in the temple against Joseph Smith. After his remarks, John Taylor asked permission to speak. He stood at the pulpit and reminded the congregation of the body of knowledge they possessed about the principles and ordinances of the gospel which they had learned from Joseph Smith. Perhaps with a touch of sarcasm he suggested, that they, with their “learning and intelligence, could not find” this information, and he asked how could they continue to grow without their prophet? “While the apostates were neither convinced nor silenced by the remarks of Elder Taylor, the faithful Saints were strengthened.”²¹

Before the trials in Kirtland were resolved, John Taylor returned to Canada with his friend Isaac Russell. John mentioned that others traveled with them, but he did not provide names.²²

Parley P. Pratt Returns to Canada with News of a Mission to England

Elder Pratt returned to Canada at this time, possibly with John Taylor's group, but apparently no longer considered an apostate by any means, as the trial of his faith was apparently short-lived. He wrote:

In the spring of 1837, soon after the death of my wife, I returned to Canada to visit the Saints and to confer on the subject of a mission to England. Several of the Saints in Canada were British, who had friends in England. Letters had already been sent to them with information of the rise of the Church, and of its principles. Several of the Canadian Elders felt a desire to go on a mission to their friends in that country.²³

The Fielding Siblings in England Learn of Their Canadian Siblings' Conversions

Joseph, Mary and Mercy appear to have delayed writing letters of their conversation to their siblings in England, possibly because they chose to wait until Joseph returned from Kirtland. It wasn't until the end of 1836, six months after their baptisms, that their sister Ann Fielding Matthews in Bedford, her husband Timothy, and their brother James in Preston learned of Joseph, Mary and Mercy's decision to join the LDS Church. Ann's response was written in early 1837. It is likely that her letter was not received in Canada until late winter or early spring.

Ann began her letter by chastening her siblings concerning the length of time between letters.²⁴ "Your long silence caused much painful anxiety. . . ." She told them that two months earlier her husband had contacted a friend in Toronto to see if he could learn if their siblings were still alive. "Indeed we thought it hardly possible that you could, if you were in the Land of the Living, have received so many Letters . . . without answering them." Ann added that she "felt afraid to pray for you," concerned that prayers for the deceased would offend God. It appears that in Mary's last letter to her sister Ann, she had mentioned their fortunate circumstances in Canada and had promised to send ten pounds to Ann's family. The money had not arrived and Ann was bitter about that, saying it would still be welcomed.

Interestingly, before berating her siblings for their conversion, she told them of some very spiritual experiences which she had received during the previous month. Ann described an early morning prayer where she felt the love of God with great power. In a succeeding experience, she felt the Spirit teach her from Mark 10:30, "With the same Baptism that I am baptized with, that ye be baptized with." A third sacred experience left her waiting for the fulfillment of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. Ann then twice quoted the phrase "latter rain," which appears many times in the Old and New Testaments. In context, these passages are often interpreted as reference to the last days when the fulness of the Lord's truths would be restored to the earth.²⁵ Ann concluded her feelings about these experiences with these words, "These, my dear Mary, are not only my views, but there are many others in the Church who are waiting for the promise of the Father."

Just a few days after these experiences, Ann received the long-awaited letters from America. It doesn't appear that Ann connected her spiritual experiences to be a preparation for her siblings' words. As she read of their conversion to Mormonism, Ann wrote, "At first my mind seemed alternately to rejoice and mourn at one time. . . . It is possible that my beloved Brother & Sisters

have fallen into delusion. Are they about to depart from the truth of inspiration given to us in God's Holy Word to follow cunningly devised fables, which the story of finding the Plates at the first glance seems to suggest?"

Ann described her own fervent beliefs that she was "waiting for a revival of primitive Power, the Gifts and the mighty Power of God to be manifested visibly in the eyes of a wicked World. . . Yes, [I am thoroughly] convinced that God is about soon to bestow the Baptism of the Holy Ghost upon the waiting members of his Church."

It is clear that in their letters, the Toronto siblings encouraged Ann and Timothy to emigrate to Kirtland so they could embrace the great blessings available there. Ann firmly rejected their offer. "I do not see it necessary that we should go over to America or that anyone should come from there." She was certain that the Lord could bring about the spiritual restoration for which she was waiting without her having to leave her home. Her concluding remarks defended her position on this subject, and she quoted the ancient apostle Peter: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."²⁶

Her husband, the Reverend Timothy Matthews, wrote a separate letter, saying that he had read their letters many times. The plural "letters" confirms that each sibling wrote.²⁷ He also referred to a letter from an Elder, indicating that he had read a letter John Taylor had written at the request of Joseph Fielding. In this letter, Brother Taylor gave an account of the "ministration of angels to the Prophet Joseph Smith."²⁸

Reverend Matthews began his response by saying, "We are exhorted to 'prove all things, to hold to all that which is good,' to try the faith, and to know the times in which we live. I assure you I am alive to every thing that relates to the Kingdom of Jesus, and bringing forth at latter rain which shall usher in the harvest, before the vintage is gathered."

He then asked a series of questions, the first of which was if the "baptism of the Holy Ghost descended as in the days of Old." He asked how many were present if this event happened, clearly referring to the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2.

His next question was, "How were the Apostles chosen?" He asked if there were more than twelve, and then asked how missionaries were chosen. He asked the meaning of the word "Elder." He wanted to know if class meetings were held. This was very important in the Methodist Church, versus the Anglican Church where the priest addressed the congregation with no discussion.

Reverend Matthews then wrote, "I have another question to propose. If this Church was organised as far back as 1830, how did you not hear of it before, and how is it that a Church possessing such Miraculous Power should not have been more known before now?" Timothy then shared the sentiments of his wife, stating, "I cannot believe that we should come to America. That appears the more visionary part of your Letter, next to the metal plates," and he asked if they had seen them. He explained that he had an important work to do in England, "but I am the Lord's

Servant, and am willing to go or come wherever the Lord commands me.”

The Reverend Matthews was extremely concerned about “a sentence in the Elder’s Letter, where he says that all who are received unto the Church must be baptized.” He continued:

Does he mean to say that those who have been baptized are to be baptized again? I hope I have misunderstood him, as I cannot believe that our friends [referring to Joseph, Mary and Mercy] have consented to be baptized again when the Scripture says, ‘There is one Lord, one faith, one Baptism. I would never consent to be rebaptized. Is it possible that you have submitted to this? If you have, let us know in your next [letter].’²⁹

Timothy had been baptized into the Anglican Church on the 5th of July, 1795, in the ancient church of Stow cum Quy, just five miles from Cambridge. While clearly this ordinance carried great significance to him, he was only ten days old at the time.³⁰



Timothy left the subject at hand and began telling of his own concerns. “I am anxiously looking for the Baptism of the Holy Ghost.” He mentioned visiting their brother James in Preston, preaching with him in the open air at a park and also to James’s congregation, which was “flourishing.”

The Reverend Timothy Matthews was baptized at the age of 10 days in this Norman church in Stow cum Quy.

Timothy concluded his letter by saying, “Great events are at hand. May we be found ready.” He signed the letter, “Your very faithful & Affectionate Brother in Christ.”

James Fielding Warmly Receives News of His Brother Joseph’s Conversion

James Fielding received the news of his siblings’ conversion in an entirely different way than had their sister Ann and her husband. James and Joseph had previously exchanged letters discussing Joseph’s dismissal as a Methodist class leader in Toronto over teachings about prophets, apostles and gifts of the spirit from the New Testament. Perhaps at first, this new church’s teachings sounded consistent to James and his feelings of new need for apostles.

James read the letters Joseph had written “of Joseph Smith, the Book of Mormon, etc.,” to his congregation in Preston. He “exhorted them to pray that God would send Men to preach those things, etc., telling them that he knew the Brother who sent them to be a Man of Truth and they might depend on what he said with all Confidence.”³¹

Perhaps not aware that conversion to the LDS Church would mean leaving his congregation, it appears that James felt that Joseph’s words, which aligned with his own teachings from the New Testament, could be a tool to ensure his congregation’s loyalty.

Joseph Fielding is Called to Serve a Mission in England

Joseph Fielding wrote, “In March [1837] I left my farm and while I was stopping in Toronto, word came from the Church in Kirtland, by Elder Parley P. Pratt, that the way was opened for them to go to other nations, and it was determined that some should go to England as soon as possible.”

Joseph continued:

It had been my earnest prayer ever since I came into the Church, but especially during the winter, that the Lord would open the way, the glad Tidings to go to my native country, particularly to my Brethren in the flesh; my Sisters and myself had written to them once on the subject, but I was afraid to write to them more lest I should not do it with that wisdom which the subject required, and so might do harm instead of good.

After meeting with Elder Pratt, Joseph was encouraged.

I now felt much delighted and perhaps too sanguine as to the prospect of those glorious things being made known to my relations, thinking of course that those important things which gave me such pleasure would also be very delightful to them. I also had some desire to be one among those that should go, but felt myself very ill qualified to go on so important a mission, and had I not known the Lord takes the weak things of the world to confound the strong I never would have thought of entering on such a work. While I was thinking upon it, Elder Pratt said he believed it was the mind of the Lord that I should go if I wished it. I did wish it, but was much afraid. I desired, however to know and do the Will of God.³²

At this time, at a conference held in Churchville, Upper Canada, Brother John Taylor prophesied with much of the Spirit and great power upon several of us present. He said the Spirit of God should be upon Bro. Fielding and he should lift up his voice in his native land, etc. I have not heard a prophecy delivered more manifestly by the Spirit of God than this was. From this I began to believe that the Lord had called me to go to England. At meeting in Toronto also, this was confirmed by Elder Pratt and others. In short there appeared to be but one opinion on the subject. This together with my way having been opened so unexpectedly, fully satisfied me of my call, and I was ordained to the office of Priest. I had engaged with Brother Taylor and others to enter into business at Kirtland, but now I had to decline it, and removed to Kirtland to wait until the Elders were ready to start.³³

Exodus from Canada to Kirtland

At this time many of the Canadian saints emigrated to Kirtland. As with the Fielding siblings, many relocated to Toronto before proceeding to the States. Joseph was able to make satisfactory arrangements to sell his farm and used the proceeds to move to Kirtland.³⁴ An overland trip would have been more than two hundred and fifty miles, but much of their journey was likely traveled by steamer via the two Great Lakes, Ontario and Erie. Many families departed Canada at

this time, including Joseph Fielding and his two sisters.³⁵

Joseph wrote:

I took some time for getting instruction on the great and important matters of the gospel connected with the last days, and soon saw that we were living in an important period of the world, more so than any other preceding time, and that in order that the gentiles might share in the coming kingdom and glory of Christ, they must come into the covenant which has been made in the last days with the House of Israel, and that they as well as Israel would have to be gathered in order that they may escape the things which are coming on the Earth, and that the Lord had even pointed out a place for their gathering, viz., with the remnant of the House of Joseph now found in America with other branches of the tribes of Israel. For this I felt very thankful, as I had often wondered how the righteous would be preserved in the midst of those calamities which the prophets so often speak of. I found that they were even beginning to gather as near as they could get to the place appointed. I found that the Lord had told his servants that after their testimony should come the testimony of judgments. I therefore began to prepare for leaving Canada, thinking I would make the best I could of my business, for the next year, but by the Providence of God, quite unexpectedly to me, my way was made plain, so that I got clear of my temporal concerns comfortably³⁶

John Snider, his wife Mary and their four children left at this time, as did Robert Blashel Thompson. Fanny and John Dawson, and eight of their children joined their daughter Margaret and her husband John Goodson in Kirtland. Fanny gave birth to a ninth child in Kirtland.

John and Leonora Cannon Taylor Remain in Canada

John and Leonora Taylor did not emigrate, as John was a presiding elder and heavily involved in missionary work. There were still hundreds of members of the growing Church in Canada, with several branches.³⁷

Isabella Walton, Isaac's older sister, also did not leave Toronto at this time. However, Isabella's widowed sister Sarah and her teenaged daughter Eliza emigrated. Their father William Russell had died the previous spring. Their widowed mother Isabella Peart Russell left Isaac's household and resettled in Durham with her two sons and daughter Ann, never joining the Church.

Isaac Russell and his wife Mary left Charleton with the other LDS converts. They took with them their three children, the youngest being Samuel, who had been born in the Charleton settlement. Forty-five years later, Samuel Russell, while serving a mission to Canada, visited Charleton.

Samuel wrote:

One year hence, the effect of [Elder Pratt's] mission, the inroad which the Gospel had made under Mr. Pratt was to leave the little settlement desolate, as if a holocaust had passed over it, never to be forgotten by the old settlers, a feeling existing even at this date [1882] like an old wound which can never be healed.³⁸

There he saw the home where he had been born and the barn his father had built. An orchard of a hundred apple trees which Isaac had planted were still producing fruit. Joseph Fielding's nearby home was no longer standing, nor was the log meeting house the settlers had built and where Parley P. Pratt preached. The home of Samuel's aunt, Frances Dawson, had also been demolished.

Samuel came upon Peter Wardlaw, one of the original Charleton settlers. Samuel spoke with him and his wife Julia³⁹ and later recorded their conversation. Julia had remembered Isaac Russell and knew he had left with the Mormons after Elder Pratt's visit. She asked Samuel, "Where is Mr. Pratt now?"

Mr. Wardlaw answered his wife by saying, "He was shot."⁴⁰

Samuel, married to Elder Pratt's daughter Lucy, wrote, "This seemed to give satisfaction."

Mrs. Wardlaw, aware that Brigham Young had died, asked, "Who is your leader now?"

Samuel responded, "One of your old citizens, John Taylor."

Mrs. Wardlaw said, "Oh, I know him. How many wives has he got?"

Samuel said, "Cannot say exactly. Three or four, I suppose."

She said, "Oh, why don't they shoot him?" Then treading carefully because she wasn't sure of Samuel's religious views, she said, "You don't believe as we do."

Samuel, not wanting to offend, but likely not revealing that he was also married to Lucy's sister Henrietta, answered, "No, not exactly. We would not like to shoot a man for marrying. Would rather shoot him for not marrying."

Mrs. Wardlaw then said, "Oh, I didn't mean that, but they took away all our neighbors."

Samuel, perhaps seeing a teaching opportunity, said, "Well, the scriptures say the Gospel shall gather two of a family and one of a city."

Mrs. Wardlaw explained, "Oh, they not only took two of a family, but all the family, and not only the family but all the families."

Samuel then added, "The same feeling the writer found existing whenever the subject was mentioned."

Chapter 6 Endnotes Pages 88 to 100:

1. Autobiography of Orson Hyde.

2. History of the Church, Volume II, pages 463-467. Journal History, 28 November 1878, image 138.

3. Autobiography of Orson Hyde. Orson stated that his father was injured in the War of 1812 and drowned “four or five years after.”
4. Autobiography of Orson Hyde.
5. Autobiography of Orson Hyde.
6. Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt, pages 131-133.
7. Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt, pages 131-133. Elder Pratt and Elder Hyde both gave the location of this event as Scarborough. Elder Hyde recorded the Priest’s name as Jenkins. Elder Pratt, who said the priest had five or six other clergymen as assistants, gave his name as Browning. Elder Hyde stated that four persons were baptized immediately after the debate.
8. Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt, Chapter 19, pages 133-140.
9. Elder Pratt stated that ten years later he visited William Caird in Scotland, “where I found him. . . living in private life and of no notoriety.”
10. Autobiography of Orson Hyde, “When Elder Pratt returned to Canada, my wife came with him, and joined me in that country. We continued to labor in Markham, Scarborough and Toronto during the season, and returned to Kirtland in the fall, after raising up several branches of the Church. Engaged this winter in reading Hebrew.”
11. Joseph Fielding’s blessing states that he received it under the hands of Joseph Smith, Senior, on 1 November 1836 in the House of the Lord. There is no other mention which I could find of Joseph’s trip to Kirtland in the fall of 1836. Traveling with Parley was logical, but is an assumption on my part.
12. Early Church Information File, LDS Film #1750678, card 1127, although I read this film online. “John Goodson Ord. Seventy 20 Dec 1836, Kirtland, Oh. By Prs. Jos. Young.”
13. *The Mormon Economy in Kirtland, Ohio*, by R. Kent Fielding, Utah Historical Quarterly, October 1959, page 341. Mr. Fielding mentions men who had gone into business in Kirtland, and specifically named “Parley Pratt and John Goodson.” No other information was given about John in this article. Parley P. Pratt later stated that John Goodson left for his 1837 mission from Toronto, implying a return there in the next six months.
14. [http://eom.byu.edu/index.php/Book_of_Mormon_Editions_\(1830-1981\)](http://eom.byu.edu/index.php/Book_of_Mormon_Editions_(1830-1981)). “The exact number of copies is unknown today, but was likely three to five thousand books. Hundreds of grammatical changes and a few emendations were made in the text.” The fact that John Goodson used his own resources to finance this edition of the Book of Mormon explains why he took copies with him from England when he left his mission early.
15. Biography of Theodore Turley and Francis Amelia Kimberly, found on his page at Family Tree. Theodore Turley ID# is KWJV-HKX.
16. Joseph Fielding Diary, page 4.
17. Most of the information about the winter of 1836-1837 in Kirtland came from History of the Church, Volume II, Chapter 34, pages 481-495.
18. Life of John Taylor, page 39. “[They] met the Prophet Joseph Smith, who entertained him at his house. . . .”
19. The Life of John Taylor, pages 41-42. One passage stated that John Taylor was entertained in the home of Joseph Smith. An old definition of the word “entertain” means to provide lodging. In context, I believe this is the correct meaning. John mentioned at the end of his account of his experience in Kirtland that he returned to Canada with Isaac Russell and many others. I could not learn who the others might have been.

20. Life of John Taylor, pages 39-40.

21. Life of John Taylor, pages 40-41.

22. Life of John Taylor, page 41. My personal feeling is that Joseph wouldn't have left Mary and Mercy alone during a Canadian winter and would have returned before this time.

23. Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt, page 143.

24. Ann's lengthy letter was dated 18 January 1837 and was the seventh letter in the Fielding Family Letters Collection, MS D 2779 Folder 6. The handwriting, for the most part very clear and legible, was that of her husband's, who in a short note identified himself as his wife's "amanuensis."

25. Ann used this phrase twice, and I was surprised to find it nine times in the Bible. Ann used it in such a way that indicated she knew Joseph, Mary and Mercy would be familiar with it. Perhaps these verses were favorites of their parents. In James 5:7, the passage is quite clear in its meaning, "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain."

26. Acts 2:38-39

27. Joseph Fielding Diary, page 3.

28. Life of John Taylor, pages 46, 75.

29. Ann and her husband Timothy's letters are the seventh and eighth letters in the Fielding Family Collection, MS D 2779, Folder 6. I found the Reverend Matthews' letter very interesting. The gift I am most grateful for as a member of the LDS Church is the gift of the Holy Ghost, the rights of which are conferred after baptism by proper authority. These are foundational doctrines in the LDS Church. It is clear that Ann and her husband were waiting for this great gift, and yet they were so consumed by their own traditions and beliefs that they could not accept that this gift was available to them, even when the source was Ann's own trusted siblings. Timothy's reference to the words of Paul to the Ephesians in chapter 5 was stunning to me. It is clear from LDS Church history that other converts felt this way. The result was the revelation known today in the Doctrine and Covenants as Section 22, "Wherefore, although a man should be baptized an hundred times it availeth him nothing, for you cannot enter in at the strait gate by the law of Moses, neither by your dead works."

30. Occasionally the birth date of the infant was recorded along with the christening date. During this particular time period there was no standardized form (which in any case did not include a box for the birth date), and the priest had to add an extra column or squeeze in that birth date if he wanted to include it. In the case of Timothy Richard Matthews, the priest thankfully did. The christening place was Sutton, Cambridge, and his parents, Timothy Matthews and Ann Hall, were named. This record was easily found using the search feature of FamilySearch.org and is on film 1040549.

31. Joseph Fielding Diary, page 124, under the date of 31 August 1841, just as Joseph is preparing to return to Nauvoo after four years as a missionary in England. Joseph spoke these words in a sermon in Tootingham where James had severely and harshly preached against the Mormons.

32. Joseph Fielding Diary, page 3.

33. Joseph Fielding Diary, page 4.

34. Joseph Fielding Diary, page 37. In an 1839 entry, as the apostasy of Isaac Russell is coming to light, Joseph reveals some of his personal feelings and judgments about Brother Russell. Joseph had observed that Isaac was not a good caretaker of his property, nor did he properly care for his family. He felt the Spirit of the Lord wasn't with

him and that this was a sign to which some heed should be given. At that point in the journal, I had been reading two years' of Joseph's personal thoughts. He observed how he felt someone was obeying the tenets of the Church and then how well they fared temporally, even if it was minimal, and he believed there was a connection. These words were coming from the pen of a man who, at this particular time in his life, had nothing and lived judiciously off the charity of the members in England. He was careful in what he said. But his conclusions about Isaac Russell were that as a result of Isaac's lack of spiritual integrity, he had been forced to sell his property in the Charleton settlement "on discount, his House, and his Land on Credit, for which he has never got his Money. . . ." Since Joseph considered himself to be a humble servant of Jesus Christ, and from his writings I believe that he was not a hypocrite, I came to the conclusion that he himself was able to sell his own Charleton property and get satisfactory funds from it. In thinking more about this, it is possible that the money Joseph was so eager to have to fund his mission, which comes up as he and the apostles are heading to New York on their departure to England, funds which John Taylor was bringing to him, might have been money from the sale of his property. There is no information as to how that situation was resolved, only that it was. To conclude and to clarify, Joseph would not have made this very personal judgment on Isaac Russell if he, Joseph, had not been able to successfully transact the closing of his Charleton farm. As a follow up to this, Isaac Russell wrote a letter to his wife in October of 1837. This letter is preserved as part of the Isaac Russell Collection MSS 497 in the vault of BYU's Special Collections. In this letter, Isaac refers to "emberesment of my afares" which he said were caused "by the wickedness of Jacson and Charlton." It can be easily assumed that Isaac Russell believed his losses in the sale of his farm were caused by the treachery of his neighbors.

35. Church and Sect in Canada, by S. D. Clark, University of Toronto Press: 1948, page 308 had a few interesting paragraphs to say about the Mormons in Toronto during this time period. "The Mormon movement entered the country the same time as the Irvingite movement, and the latter grew rapidly for a few years. Inroads were made upon the following of the evangelical churches. 'Some of the victims of this Irvingite delusion...became an easy prey to a still worse one, with which it had some features in common, and which, about the same time, began to be propagated throughout the country. We refer to Mormonism, by the seductions of which many most interesting persons and families became ruinously entangled during the [years 1835-36] and several following years. In some places whole classes were broken up by this hateful epidemic.' [Source is Carroll, *Case and his Cotemporaries* (sic), Volume III, page 486. I have been unable to locate a copy of Volume III, which is also used as a source to describe William Patrick Poyntz.] The Wesleyan-Methodist Conference in 1837 reported a loss of fifty-two members to the Mormons. Ferguson wrote of his work on the Matilda circuit in 1839-40: The Mormons had annoyed us considerably, and had induced some of our people to embrace their vagaries and to set out for the 'Promise Land.' . . . In consequence of the strict disciplinary course we pursued, and the efforts of the Episcopalians and Mormons and others we experienced a decrease of forty-two."

36. Joseph Fielding Diary, page 3.

37. History of the Church, Volume II, page 491, states that a conference in Upper Canada, in the district of Johnstown, was held June 10th, 1837, where members from seven branches attended with over three hundred members. Johnstown was over two hundred miles from Toronto, so it was surely in a separate district, and there were likely many districts.

38. Biography, Samuel Russell.

39. Samuel wrote that he spoke with Elizabeth Wardlaw, Peter's wife. I have checked genealogical records and believe that Peter's wife was Julia Clarke, not Elizabeth Clark, as Samuel wrote in the biography. Peter and Julia had a daughter named Elizabeth who might have participated in this conversation.

40. Elder Pratt was murdered during a mission to Arkansas in 1857.