

THE BIOGRAPHY OF ISAAC RUSSELL

1807-1844



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Written by Paul C. Russell
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PREFACE

The life of Isaac Russell has, since his death, been clouded by mystery and controversy both in his family's history as well as in the history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. However, through the efforts of the Church to preserve and record its history, the life of Isaac Russell now comes forth in a new light.

The mystery and controversy of Isaac Russell is, Why were Isaac and his family excommunicated after the return from his mission in England, and what were the events that led up to this? The difficulty in documenting his life is that records are scanty and incomplete, and what has been written about him remains inconclusive due to this fact. In addition, much of the historical record on Isaac is negative, due to his "apostasy."

George Walton Russell, the son through whom I descend, and the oldest son of Isaac and Mary, kept a history of the family in his journals. Later in his life, the journals were lost when saints that had colonized in Chuichupa (the Mormon colonies in Old Mexico) were driven from their homes in July of 1912. The saints there only had two days warning and could only carry effects to the total of 150lbs. All the family's treasured books and journals were left behind and were lost.

The first life history of Isaac Russell was written by his daughter Isabella Russell Johnson, and was completed in October of 1919. Due to the fact that the family records had been lost, memories, and family stories of her father, were all that Isabella had to rely on. Therefore dates and events are sometimes inaccurate and incomplete. Nevertheless, a substantial amount of information has become available and other evidence uncovered that sheds a new light on the life of Isaac Russell.

This biographical history of Isaac Russell will be of particular interest to Isaac's descendants. It is also important in further developing the history of the Church for this period, and provides a testimony of its truthfulness.

Because Isabella's history spanned the life of Isaac, her history will be used as foundation to this

biography.¹ Therefore, much of it will be quoted and subsequently added to, embellished and revised. My purpose in writing this history is not only to enlighten the interested reader, but to provide and preserve all the obtainable facts. This history is therefore intended to be as complete as possible, and an extensive use of quotes is made to preserve his life record.

My process of writing this history began when a close friend, and mission companion (Danny Caldwell), was working in a local Provo bookstore for a document dealer who had sold the Isaac Russell papers to the BTU Archives in the late 1980s. I inquired about the papers of my great-great-grandfather and was told by the LDS Archives curator (David J. Whittaker) that I could not access the un-cataloged collection. However, I was hired by David to process and catalog both the Isaac Russell and Samuel Russell collections that were owned by BYU. For a descendant of Isaac Russell, I was living a dream and witnessing the promises of Elijah in my quest to turn my heart to the fathers.

As a side note, the Isaac Russell Collection contains numerous letters written between Isaac and Mary during Isaac's mission to England and other miscellaneous correspondence. The collection also contained correspondence of Parley P. Pratt and numerous pictures.

Paul C. Russell
(a descendant of Isaac Russell through George Walton Russell)

Isaac Russell, the son of William Russell and Isabella Peart, was born 13 April 1807 at Windy Haugh,² near Alston, Cumberland, England. He was the youngest of thirteen children, six sons and seven daughters. In 1817 the family emigrated from England to what was then known as Upper Canada - settling first in the Cavin Township,³ near the town of Millbrook, Durham County, then at Toronto, York County, Ontario.

At the age of fifteen Isaac began an apprenticeship with Robert Petch, a builder and cabinet maker, who was also his brother-in-law. After seven years of apprenticeship, Isaac married Mary Walton, 25 June 1829, she being eighteen years of age. Mary is the daughter of John Walton and Ann Millican, and was born 17 April 1811, in Alston, Cumberland, England. Her mother died 7 November 1812, leaving Mary and her older brother George. Her father then married Mary Natrass 9 May 1815, after which he and his family emigrated to Upper Canada, on the ship Neston. They settled near Millbrook.

"After his marriage, Isaac Russell bought a lot and built a house near the east side of Victoria Street, some two or three blocks north of Adalade Street, where with his family and his aged parents, he resided until about the year 1833 or 1834, when he bought a farm of one hundred acres, nine miles northwest of the city of Toronto, in a place, at that time, called Charleton's Settlement, but now known as Downsview, York Co., Ontario."⁴

The settlement was composed of the Charletons, John and Edward Boak, Robert Bull, the Bridgeland family, Joseph Fielding and his sisters Mary and Mercy, and the family of John Dawson. After completing his new home, Isaac and his family, with his parents, moved from Toronto to the farm at the Settlement. It was here that Isaac became a Methodist class leader, and was a chorister in his Wesleyan church.⁵ His three sisters and their families remained in Toronto, "viz., Elizabeth Petch, Sarah Kavanaugh and her daughter, Isabella Walton (the widow of Matthew Walton), and his niece Ann Wanless, daughter of Isaac's sister Mary who had died in England. Others of Isaac's family, his sister Ann Gardiner, and brothers John and William and their families, continued to reside near Millbrook, in Durham County, Ontario."⁶

The only surviving tale of Isaac's youth was related to Isabella by Isaac's boyhood friend, Theodore Turley. In 1865, Theodore Turley came to visit the family in Salt Lake City after the death of Isabella's mother Mary. Isabella relates that,

he told us many incidents in father's life, when they were boys together, of his bravery and fearlessness. He particularly delighted to tell of one instance when father climbed to the very top of a tall spire that rose above the belfry of a church, a feat that never had been attempted before, and how the people below expected to see him dashed to pieces any moment, but said that he descended as coolly and unconcerned as though it was an ordinary occurrence.⁷

It was not long after Isaac's move to the Charleton Settlement around 1834 that Parley P. Pratt received his call to serve a mission to Upper Canada. I quote from Parley's autobiography.

"Spring at length returned, and the Elders prepared to take leave of each other, and to go on their several missions. As to myself, I was deeply in debt for the expenses of life during the winter, and on account of purchasing a lot, and building thereon. I, therefore, knew not what to do, whether to go on a mission or stay at home, and endeavor by industry to sustain my family and pay my debts.

It was now April; I had retired to rest one evening at an early hour, and was pondering my future course, when there came a knock at the door. I arose and opened it, when Elder Heber C. Kimball and others entered my house, and being filled with the spirit of prophecy, they blessed me and my wife, and prophesied as follows:

"Brother Parley, . . . Take no thoughts for your debts, nor the necessities of life, for the Lord will supply you with abundant means for all things."

"Thou shalt go to Upper Canada, even to the city of Toronto, the capital, and there thou shalt find a people prepared for the fullness of the gospel, and they shall receive thee, and thou shalt organize the Church among them, and it shall spread thence into the regions round about, and many shall be brought to the knowledge of the truth and shall be filled with joy; and from the things growing out of this mission, shall the fullness of the gospel spread into England, and cause a great work to be done in that land. . . ."

I now began in earnest to prepare for the mission, and in a few days all was ready. I took an affectionate leave of my wife, mother and friends, and started for Canada. . . . After a long and tedious passage in a public coach (the roads being very bad and the lake not open), we⁸ arrived at the Falls of Niagara sometime in the month of April, 1836. . . .

Leaving the Falls we continued our journey for a day or two on foot, and as the Sabbath approached we halted in the neighborhood of Hamilton, and gave out two or three appointments for meetings. Brother Nickerson now left me to fill these appointments, and passed on to his home, in a distant part of the province.

I preached to the people, and was kindly entertained till Monday morning, when I took leave and entered Hamilton, a flourishing town at the head of Lake Ontario; but my place of destination was Toronto, around on the north side of the lake. If I went by land I would have a circuitous route, muddy and tedious to go on foot. The lake had just opened, and steamers had commenced plying between the two places; two dollars would convey me to Toronto in a few hours, and save some days of laborious walking; but I was an entire stranger in Hamilton, and also in the province; and money I had none. Under these circumstances I pondered what I should do. I had many times received answers to prayer in such matters; but now it seemed hard to

exercise faith, because I was among strangers and entirely unknown. The Spirit seemed to whisper to me to try the Lord, and see if anything was too hard for Him, that I might know and trust Him under all circumstances. I retired to a secret place in a forest and prayed to the Lord for money to enable me to cross the lake. I then entered Hamilton and commenced to chat with some of the people. I had not tarried many minutes before I was accosted by a stranger, who inquired my name and where I was going. He also asked me if I did not want some money. I said yes. He then gave me ten dollars and a letter of introduction to John Taylor, of Toronto, where I arrived the same evening.⁹

Mrs. Taylor received me kindly, and went for her husband, who was busy in his mechanic shop. To them I made known my errand to the city, but received little direct encouragement. I took tea with them, and then sought lodgings at a public house.

In the morning I commenced a regular visit to each of the clergy of the place, introducing myself and my errand. I was absolutely refused hospitality, and denied the opportunity of preaching in any of their houses or congregations. Rather an unpromising beginning, thought I, considering the prophecies on my head concerning Toronto. However, nothing daunted, I applied to the Sheriff for the use of the Court House, and then to the authorities for a public room in the market place; but with no better success. What could I do more? I had exhausted my influence and power without effect. I now repaired to a pine grove just out of the town, and, kneeling down, called on the Lord, bearing testimony of my unsuccessful exertions; my inability to open the way; at the same time asking Him in the name of Jesus to open an effectual door for His servant to fulfil his mission in that place.

I then arose and again entered the town, and going to the house of John Taylor, had placed my hand on my baggage to depart from a place where I could do no good, when a few inquiries on the part of Mr. Taylor, inspired by a degree of curiosity or of anxiety, caused a few moments' delay, during which a lady by the name of Walton¹⁰ entered the house, and, being an acquaintance of Mrs. Taylor's, was soon engaged in conversation with her in an adjoining room. I overheard the following:

"Mrs. Walton, I am glad to see you; there is a gentleman here from the United States who says the Lord sent him to this city to preach the gospel. He has applied in vain to the clergy and to the various authorities for opportunity to fulfil his mission, and is now about to leave the place. He may be a man of God; I am sorry to have him depart."

"Indeed!" said the lady; "Well, I now understand the feelings and spirit which brought me to your house at this time. I have been busy over the wash tub and too weary to take a walk; but I felt impressed to walk out. I then thought I would make a call on my sister, the other side of town; but passing your door, the Spirit bade me go in; but I said to myself, I will go in when I return; but the Spirit said: go in now. I accordingly came in, and I am thankful that I did so. Tell the stranger he is welcome to my house. I am a widow; but I have a spare room and bed, and food in plenty. He shall have a home at my house, and two large rooms to preach in just when he pleases. Tell him I will send my son John over to pilot him to my house, while I go and gather my relatives and friends to come in this very evening and hear him talk; for I feel by the Spirit that he is a man sent by the Lord with a message which will do us good."

The evening found me quietly seated at her house, in the midst of a number of listeners, who were seated around a large work table in her parlor, and deeply interested in conversation like the following:

"Mr. Pratt, we have for some years been anxiously looking for some providential event which would gather the sheep into one fold; build up the true church as in days of old, and prepare the humble followers of the Lamb, now scattered and divided, to receive their coming Lord when He shall descend to reign on the earth. As soon as Mrs. Taylor spoke of you I felt assured, as by a strange and unaccountable presentiment, that you were a messenger, with

important tidings on these subjects; and I was constrained to invite you here; and now we are all here anxiously waiting to hear your words."

"Well, Mrs. Walton, I will frankly relate to you and your friends the particulars of my message and the nature of my commission. A young man in the state of New York, whose name is Joseph Smith, was visited by an angel of God, and, after several visions and much instruction, was enabled to obtain an ancient record, written by men of old on the American continent, and containing the history, prophecies and gospel in plainness, as revealed to them by Jesus and his messengers. This same Joseph Smith and others, were also commissioned by the angels in these visions, and ordained to the apostleship; with authority to organize the Church, to administer the ordinances, and to ordain others, and thus cause the full, plain gospel in its purity to be preached in all the world.

"By these Apostles thus commissioned, I have been ordained as an Apostle, and sent forth by the word of prophecy to minister the baptism of repentance for remission of sins, in the name of Jesus Christ; and to administer the gift of the Holy Ghost, to heal the sick, to comfort the mourner, bind up the broken in heart, and proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

"I was also directed to this city by the Spirit of the Lord, with a promise that I should find a people here prepared to receive the gospel, and should organize them in the same. But when I came and was rejected by all parties, I was about to leave the city; but the Lord sent you, as a widow, to receive me, as I was about to depart; and thus was provided for like Elijah of old. And now I bless your house, and all your family and kindred in His name. Your sins shall be forgiven you; you shall understand and obey the gospel, and be filled with the Holy Ghost; for so great faith have I never seen in any of my country."

"Well, Mr. Pratt, this is precisely the message we were waiting for; we believe your words and are desirous to be baptized."¹¹

After this initial meeting, Parley continued to preach at widow Walton's home and to other groups around Toronto.

"From the city of Toronto, Mormonism spread to the county, where a Mr. Joseph Fielding reluctantly accepted Elder Pratt into his home.¹² His two sisters, Mary (later Mrs. Hyrum Smith) and Rachel "ran from their homes to one of the neighbors' houses, lest they should give welcome, or give countenance to Mormonism." However, the family did listen to Elder Pratt explain the teachings of the church and in a few days they were all baptized. Elder Pratt recorded, "We also baptized many others in that neighborhood, and organized a branch of the church, for the people there drank in truth as water, and loved it as they loved life."

Those baptized about this time were Isabella Walton, John Taylor and family, John Snider, John Goodson, Joseph Fielding, his wife and sisters Mary and Rachel, James Wardlaw and family, Isaac Russell and family, John Larson and family, and many others.¹³

Isaac's daughter's account, of the conversion of Isabella Walton and her father, adds some variations to these prior accounts. With regard to the first meeting with Parley Pratt, and the subsequent meeting which her father attended, Isabella states,

Mrs. Walton replied saying, "This is precisely the message we were waiting for. We believe your words and are desirous to be baptized," and she and her sister Sarah Kavanaugh, and niece Ann Wanless were baptized in Toronto Bay, they being the first fruits of the mission.¹⁴

From Mrs. Walton the news was carried to her brother and sister, Isaac Russell and Frances Dawson in the country, her brother-in-law conveying the appointment for Mr. Pratt to preach in their settlement, but the Methodist minister refusing to give out the appointment and the country meeting house being closed against him, it was arranged that he should preach¹⁵ at Mr. Dawson's house.¹⁶ After the appointed time, his neighbors being notified, gathered in, the house was crowded, Mr. Pratt arrived accompanied by John Taylor and that night held his first meeting at Mr. Dawson's house.¹⁷

At the close of the meeting, Isaac Russell arose and announced himself ready for baptism, saying that, "This is the Gospel I have been looking for and am ready to live or die by." After this meeting "The people wishing to hear more," the meeting house was opened for further meetings and soon after a branch of the Church was organized.¹⁸ "For the people there," says Mr. Pratt, "drank in truth as water and loved it as they loved life." Half a mile west of the meeting house and settlement was the little stream called Black Creek. Thither Mr. Pratt repaired, baptizing Isaac Russell and ordaining him an elder at the water's edge. At the same time and subsequent thereto, baptizing Mary Russell, his wife, and Frances¹⁹ and John Dawson, his sister and brother-in-law, their son William Dawson, and their daughters Margaret, Ruth, and Isabella, John Goodson, Joseph Fielding, his sister Mary and Mercy Fielding, John Taylor, John Snider, Margaret and James Wardlaw, Lucy Bridgeland, and many others.²⁰

My father²¹ at first objected to even giving Bro. Pratt a hearing, but remembered the injunction, "Prove all things and hold fast to that which is good." He attended the first meeting with the idea of refuting any false doctrine, but at the close of Bro. Pratt's sermon, he arose and announced himself ready for baptism, saying, "This is the Gospel I have been waiting for and that I can live and die by." My father and mother, his relatives and nearly all of the little settlement were baptized by Bro. Pratt, father being confirmed and ordained an elder at the water's edge, with authority to preach the gospel.

A mob collected and tried to prevent the baptisms. One vicious brute stood with a big rock in his hand ready to throw at Bro. Pratt. A young girl, father's niece, Eliza Kavenaugh, slipped up behind him, snatched it and threw it into the water.²²

It was noted later that Isaac was "one who seemed wholeheartedly converted."²³ Because of the success, Parley Pratt was soon joined by his brother Orson Pratt and Freeman Nickerson, 20 May 1836. Two days later, it being the Sabbath, Parley baptizing several from Charleton and Toronto the previous day, sought the opportunity now to confirm those who had been baptized. He relates,

After I closed my discourse, we went to the water [Black Creek] and I baptized nine persons, who, apparently, came with contrite spirits, believing with all their hearts; expressing a full determination to serve the Lord to the end.-The next day being Sunday, May 22nd, the numbers of those who had been baptized having increased to twenty five, and brethren O. Pratt and F. Nickerson being present and assisting, we laid our hands upon them and confirmed them in the name of the Lord Jesus, for the gift of the Holy Ghost. In the ordinances of the day, we were blessed with joy and peace and with the powers of the Holy Ghost. Thus grew the word of God and prevailed mightily.²⁴

Orson Pratt records that "during the Sabbath-day confirmation service at Charleton on 22 May 1836, Parley P. Pratt announced that he would return to Kirtland. He then left the affairs of the local

Church in the capable hands of John Taylor, Isaac Russell, and others.²⁵

Isabella records that Isaac's new enthusiasm for the true gospel motivated him to carry the message of the gospel to others round about.

Isaac Russell entered the field proclaiming the Gospel, first to his brothers John and William and sister Ann Gardiner at Millbrook in Durham, they rejecting it, then he preached in Toronto, Scarboro, Equisine, Churchville, and other places, baptizing some sixty members, among whom were Jacob Scott and family, Theodore Turley, William and Wilson Law, Edward Lawrence, father of Henry Lawrence, James Standing and others.²⁶

His enthusiasm for his new religion was also manifest in its defence. The local paper, the *Christian Guardian*, was circulating false reports about the Church and Joseph Smith, and Isaac came to the defence:

Toronto, March 11, 1837

To the Editor of the *Christian Guardian*

Sir:

In your paper of the 8th of February you gave place to an extract of a letter from a Methodist Minister, who, it is stated, resided in the vicinity of Kirtland, respecting the failure of the "Mormon Bank" (slanderosly so called). Whatever the motives of the writer of that letter may be, the statements concerning the Bank of Kirtland are not founded in truth. The bank has not refused to redeem its notes in specie up to the present time. I have had the most unshaken confidence in the institution from its commencement, from a conviction of the integrity of those who are engaged in its official department.

The Buffalo Star states "that the bank redeems all its notes in specie" and this is confirmed by the arrival of a gentleman this morning from Kirtland who has been an eye witness to the operations of the Bank from its formation.

In your paper of the 1st March, in giving the statement of the "Ohio City Argus," you ask "Where did he get it?" And you answer, "from those deluded beings who have given credence to his pretended inspirations." Upon what authority you make these statements I know not, but one thing I do know, that the insinuation is not true, which I am prepared to prove by all who have joined the Church from its commencement, up to the present time. Every individual in the Church holds his own property the same as in the Methodist Society, notwithstanding the many slanderous reports to the contrary. The stockholders in the Kirtland Bank or "Safety Fund" are responsible the same as all similar joint stock companies, which can be proved from the constitution of the association, and it can also be proved to the satisfaction of every candid man that Joseph Smith Jun., in a temporal point of view possesses no advantage over the rest of his brethren in the Church. But all those statements are circulated for the purpose of injuring his character and that of the Church to which he belongs.

In conclusion I beg to state that we do not shrink from investigation nor from slander but are prepared to meet both, and those who wish to overturn the system must resort to more powerful means than slander or investigation, to effect the end which they contemplate.

Yours, etc.,

Isaac Russell²⁷

In *Truth Will Prevail*, Bloxham, Moss and Porter refer to a 'ripple effect' that was created, not only by Elder Pratt, but by these new converts. Isaac began converting his neighbors and friends; and is the one who converted Theodore Turley. Turley in turn converted and baptized a number of native Scotsmen. These Scotsmen, like these native Englishmen, would become missionaries to their native lands. Many others had family in England as well with whom they were excited to share their new religion. Among these were Joseph Fielding and John Taylor.²⁸ They did converted their neighbors and friends who began to communicate with family and friends in those countries. Parley writes,

Tens of thousands are awakened in that land to these subjects, and are sending swift messengers to the nations around them, to teach these things insomuch that the excitement seems to have become general among kings and nobles, priests and people.

I have addressed a letter of eleven pages to that land, giving a sketch of the work of the Lord among us. Many believers here are late from England, so we may have access to many names in that country; these are already beginning to express desires for their friends in that country to hear these things.²⁹

Parley Pratt left, and returned, to Upper Canada a number of times that year. Elder Orson Hyde had previously arrived in Upper Canada to help with the work. Elder Pratt again returned in the spring of the next year, 1837. Parley writes,

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 English, 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.

At length, Joseph Fielding, Isaac Russell, John Goodson and John Snider, of the Canadian Elders, were selected for a mission to England. Elders H.C. Kimball and Orson Hyde, of the quorum of the Twelve, were selected to go at the head of the mission, and Elder Willard Richards was appointed to accompany them.³⁰

It was soon after this that Parley again returned to Kirtland. It was not long after that John Taylor, Isaac Russell and several others themselves arranged a trip to Kirtland. Prior to the trip, Isaac spoke to his friend Theodore Turley mentioning his trip to Kirtland. Turley in turn spoke of Isaac's trip to William Law, who generously insists that Isaac let his family come and stay while he was away. William writes,

Churchville, May 12, 1837.

Dear Friend and Brother:-

I this day had the pleasure of hearing from you by [way of] Mr. Turley, he says you intend to remain in Toronto for a few days.

I therefore write you, or rather request that you will allow Mrs. Russell and children to spend a few weeks at Churchville. We will be extremely happy of the addition to our family till

your return from Kirtland. I really wish you would have her and the children to stay with us till your return. They will be no trouble but a pleasure; therefore do not deny my request.

You know the mail comes here on Friday, therefore if you will write me what time Mrs. Russell would be at the mouth of the [canyon] I will send down a team for her, or I would send a wagon to Toronto for them, whichever you would prefer. Mrs. Law wishes Mrs. Russell to stop with her till you come back, and you know she will be safe here, so just write me and I will send down to the City for her and the children, which I think the best way, as 'Tis better than going on the boat. There has nothing of moment occurred here since I saw you. We are as well as usual. Thanks to the giver of every good and perfect gift.

Perhaps you will come and see us again before you go away. Please remember me to friends and believe me yours,

Most affectionately,
Wm. Law.³¹

Isaac and his other Canadian friends would soon find out that their trip to Kirtland would bear great joy, and grief.

The following spring, the new Mormon leader [John Taylor] in Upper Canada traveled to Church headquarters in Kirtland. With him were Isaac Russell and several other Toronto brethren. John's main purpose in making the trip was to meet and to receive counsel from the head of the Church, Joseph Smith. He was richly rewarded in this aim as he not only met and received counsel from the young prophet, who was just three years older than John, but he was entertained in the Smith home. Such an intimate association with the man who had conversed with Deity filled the new convert with a sense of awe that was not to abate throughout his life.³²

It is not to be questioned that these other Canadian brethren must also have had this same opportunity and experience of meeting Joseph Smith, and receiving counsel from him. At this moment the tides of evil were turning on the Prophet.

[The] sudden change from light to darkness in Kirtland coincided with the economic panic that swept over the country in 1837, causing hundreds of bank failures, including failure of the bank in Kirtland, which had been organized by Joseph Smith and his associates. Unaware that what Kirtland faced was part of a national phenomenon, and anxious for a local scapegoat, many pointed the finger at the community's most prominent citizen, Joseph Smith, who was the chief officer of the defunct bank. So when Elder Taylor and his friends arrived from Toronto, they found the Prophet in a state of siege, being attacked on all sides. Apart from the trauma of seeing the head of his newly found church pilloried in this way, the Canadian convert[s were] appalled to find that his mentor, Parley P. Pratt, had succumbed to the popular uproar and had begun to criticize and condemn Joseph Smith. When Elder Pratt endeavored to infect his student with the same venom, he was sobered by this perceptive answer: "If the work was true six months ago, it is true today." And when the impact of that statement had registered with his friend, John added the necessary corollary: "If Joseph Smith was then a prophet, he is now a prophet."³³

Another account states,

In March of the following year, Elder Taylor visited Kirtland, and there met the Prophet Joseph Smith At that time there was a bitter spirit of apostasy rife in Kirtland. A number in the quorum of the Twelve were disaffected towards the Prophet, and the Church seemed on the point of disintegration. Among others, Parley P. Pratt was floundering in darkness, and coming to

Elder Taylor told him of some things wherein he considered the Prophet Joseph in error. To his remarks Elder Taylor 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 you said you knew these things by revelation, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. You gave to me a strict charge to 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 that you then rejoiced in. If the work was true six months ago, it is true today; if Joseph Smith was then a prophet, he is now a prophet."³⁴

Isaac, John Taylor and the others soon returned to Canada. They were delayed in their journey at Queenstown. As it was Sunday they decided to hold a Sabbath service. John Taylor suggested a "spot under a high cliff, just below Niagara Falls." While here they engaged in prayer, and Elder Taylor spoke in tongues for the first time. They were comforted by an outpouring of the Lord's Spirit. The next day they continued their journey, arriving in Toronto.³⁵

Isabella relates that on this trip to Kirtland, Isaac and John Goodson had jointly bought a farm near Kirtland, and this they did in preparation for their mission to England. Upon returning to Canada, Isaac sold the farm at the Charleton Settlement, and "pawned his flute for a bushel of meal to leave" with Mary and the children.³⁶ Soon after his departure, Mary, and her three young children, George, Mary and Samuel, sailed from Toronto, by way of Lake Erie to Fairport (or Cleveland), Ohio. Joseph and Isabella M. Horne traveled with Mary on the same vessel. Isabella also states that Aunt Fanny and Uncle John Dawson, Aunt Sarah Kavenaugh, her daughter Eliza, his nephew William Dawson and family, and others, also accompanied Mary to Kirtland. From Fairport they made their way to their new home in Kirtland where they spent the winter of 1837 and spring of 1838. On the 26th of December 1837, Ann Jane was born, she being the fourth child of Mary and Isaac. During their stay at Kirtland without Isaac, the clouds of darkness and apostasy continued to cover Joseph and the Church.³⁷

One might wonder what impact Parley's mission would have on a community, such as this one. Brigham Y. Card referring to this says,

During the summers of 1836 and 1837, Parley P. Pratt and Orson Hyde converted scores of people in Charleton, Markam, Scarborough, Boston Mills, Churchville and Toronto. It is difficult to determine precisely the Mormon impact on the people of these communities, but Fred Landson, a prominent southern Ontario historian, writes that, outside Toronto in the Yonge Street

circuit, the Canadian Methodists, under Egerton Tyerson, "lost heavily to the Mormons, the[ir] membership declining from 951 to 578 in 1836."³⁸

Isabella, and her brother Samuel, also record some interesting bits of information about the Toronto area:

One year hence, the effect of Parley 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 among them, even at this late date like an old wound which can never be healed. Forty-six years after the events narrated, [my brother Samuel] visited the old settlement, and was shown the house in which he was born, which was still standing, the house and barn built by his father were also standing; an orchard of a hundred apple trees, which his father had set out, was still in good repair. The house of his near neighbor Joseph Fielding, was gone, as was the log cabin meeting house and Mr. Dawson's house where Mr. Pratt first preached in the settlement.

Calling upon one of the old settlers, Mr. Peter Wardlaw, whose wife at the date of the mission alluded to, was a Miss Elizabeth Clark, the following conversation ensued. The subject of Mr. Pratt's mission came up, Mrs. Wardlaw asked "where is Mr. Pratt now?" Her husband answering said, "He was shot." This seemed to give satisfaction. Brigham Young being dead, she then asked, "Who is your leader now?" She was answered, "One of our old citizens, John Taylor." "Oh," she said, "I know him, how many wives has he got?" Answer, "cannot say exactly, three or four, I suppose." "Oh," she said again, "why don't they shoot him?" Then, not knowing the writer's view's as to whether he was a good Presbyterian like herself or not, she said, looking at him, "You don't believe as we do." Answer, "No, not exactly, we would not like to shoot a man for marrying, we would rather shoot him for not marrying." "Oh," said she, "I didn't mean that, but they took away all our neighbors." Samuel replied, Well, the scripture says the Gospel shall gather two of a family and one of a city." "Oh, they not only took two of a family, but all the family, and not all the family, but all the families." Samuel found the same feeling whenever the subject was mentioned.³⁹

The mission to England was soon under way. On 4 June 1837, Heber C. Kimball, Orson Hyde, and Joseph Fielding were set apart for the first mission to England, at the conference of elders in Sidney Rigdon's home. On 12 June, Willard Richards was also set apart to accompany the mission to England.⁴⁰ On the 13th day of June 1837, these Elders began their travels from Kirtland. They arrived at Fairport, on Lake Erie. A number of Saints accompanied the Elders to Fairport, where one, Mary Fielding, Joseph Fielding's sister, gave Elder Kimball five dollars which he used to pay his and Orson Hyde's fair on the steam ship they would take to Buffalo. It was at Buffalo that these Elders were to meet Elders Isaac Russell, John Goodson, and John Snider who were traveling from Canada.⁴¹

It is interesting to note at this point, that, prior to leaving Toronto, Jacob Scott, one of Isaac's converts, gave Isaac a Book of Mormon as a token of his appreciation. The Book of Mormon was given

to Isaac 29 May 1837, just a few days before his departure to England. This book was one of the relics of that first mission, and was later kept by his son Samuel, and then Isaac's grandson Samuel.⁴²

The Canadian Elders in the mean time had met up with Wilford Woodruff at Leeds. From Leeds, Elder Woodruff accompanied the three Canadian Elders to Schenectady, New York, where they would travel on to join the Elders from Kirtland. Wilford Woodruff noted that Isaac "seemed to be troubled constantly by evil spirits."⁴³ It was not until 22 June that all were gathered together at New York City to await a ship that would carry them to England.

The ship the "United State" was ready to sail, but all the Elders did not have sufficient means to pay for their passage to England. In the mean time, the Elders sought out Elijah Fordham, the only member of the Church in New York City. He did not have a home of his own, so they stayed with his sister-in-law until they could hire a small room from Elijah's father.⁴⁴

On the 28th of June, the Elders proceeded to distribute copies of one of Orson Hyde's tracts, "*Timely Warnings*," and spoke with many people about the Gospel. The preaching they did here would later open the door to Orson and Parley Pratt's introduction of the Gospel in New York City (Parley had returned to the Church by this time). They also spent considerable time in prayer and fasting to receive guidance and protection from Heavenly Father, and that he would bless them with "a prosperous voyage across the mighty ocean; [and] make us a blessing to each other." Soon they had all raised the needed eighteen dollars to pay passage, on the packet ship - Garrik, to England. They boarded on 29 June, and at ten o'clock, 1 July, the ship was towed down river to Sandy Hook where it set sail for England.⁴⁵

Heber writes,

On the 18th, the captain sent a man up to the masthead to look for land. He had not been up long before he cried out, "land," which was the Irish shore. It caused joy and gratitude to arise in my bosom to my Heavenly Father for the favorable passage so far, and the prospect of soon reaching our destination. We sailed up the Irish Channel, having Ireland on our left and Wales on our right. The scenery was very beautiful and imposing.

At daybreak on July 20th (1837), we arrived in the river Mersey, opposite Liverpool, being eighteen days and eighteen hours from our departure from the anchorage at New York. . . . Immediately after we anchored, a small boat came along-side, when several of the passengers, with Brothers Hyde, Richards, Goodson and myself got in and went to shore. When we were

within six or seven feet of the pier, I leaped on shore, followed by Elders Hyde and Richards, and for the first time in my life I stood on British ground, among strangers My feelings at that time were peculiar, particularly when I realized the importance and extent of my mission.⁴⁶

They obtained a room from a widow on Union Street in Liverpool for two days, while waiting for their trunks to be cleared through the Custom House.⁴⁷ These first few days were spent in council and prayer for direction. Heber was told by the Spirit to "go to Preston," which he did. They took a coach arriving in Preston on Saturday, 22 July. Preston was an interesting scene. Heber recounts that Queen Victoria had ascended the throne three days before they had landed. Now general elections were being held for members of Parliament. He writes,

I never witnessed anything like it in my life. Bands of music playing. Flags flying in all directions. Thousands of men, women, and children parading the streets, decked with ribbons characteristic of the politics of the several candidates.⁴⁸

Willard Richards journal continues,

A few minutes after the seven elders had arrived in Preston . . . , above the doorway of the inn where they were standing, near the market place, a banner was unfurled over their heads. In honor of the girl queen, Victoria, it read: Truth Will Prevail.

The missionaries had clasped each other's hands, crying, "Yes, truth will prevail!"⁴⁹

John Goodson soon found a widow that provided them with a place to stay. This home was at the corner of St. Wilfred and Fox streets, in Preston. Joseph Fielding went in search of his brother, James Fielding, a reverend in that community. He soon found him, and an invitation was made, and several of the Elders visited at his home, and talked long into the night. The next day, Sunday, they attended Reverend Fielding's services at the Vauxhall Chapel. After the services, Rev. Fielding arose and announced that "an Elder of the Latter-day Saints would preach in his chapel at 3 o'clock" that afternoon. Elder Kimball preached at



Boarding house at St Wilfred and Fox St, Preston

that meeting; and another was set for that evening, at which John Goodson preached, and Joseph Fielding bore testimony. Many, at the crowded meeting, were touched by the message that they heard. Another meeting was set for Wednesday night. The following day, Sunday, 30th of July, Elder Kimball was to baptize several who had heard and believed.⁵⁰

It was on this night, that Satan manifest his power and opposition to these Elders. The work of the Lord had begun in England, and Elder Kimball notes that they "might be said to have `stolen a march' on the Adversary, in securing, already, three hearings at Vauxhall Chapel."⁵¹ Satan could now only try to hinder and frustrate the work of the Lord.

Elder Kimball writes,

By this time the adversary of souls began to rage, and he felt determined to destroy us before we had fully established the kingdom of God in that land, and the next morning I witnessed a scene of satanic power and influence which I shall never forget.

Sunday, July 30th (1837), about daybreak, Elder Isaac Russell (who had been appointed to preach on the obelisk in Preston Square, that day), who slept with Elder Richards in Wilfred Street, came up to the third story, where Elder Hyde and myself were sleeping, and called out, `Brother Kimball, I want you should get up and pray for me that I may be delivered from the evil spirits that are tormenting me to such a degree that I feel I cannot live long, unless I obtain relief.

I had been sleeping on the back of the bed. I immediately arose, slipped off at the foot of the bed, and passed around to where he was. Elder Hyde threw his feet out, and sat up in the bed, and we laid hands on him, I being mouth, and prayed that the Lord would have mercy on him, and rebuked the devil.

While thus engaged, I was struck with great force by some invisible power, and fell senseless on the floor. The first thing I recollected was being supported by Elders Hyde and Richards, who were praying for me; Elder Richards having followed Russell up to my room. Elder Hyde and Richards then assisted me to get on the bed, but my agony was so great I could not endure it, and I arose, bowed my knees and prayed. I then arose and sat up on the bed, when a vision was opened to our minds, and we could distinctly see the evil spirits, who foamed and gnashed their teeth at us. We gazed upon them about an hour and a half (by Willard's watch). We were not looking towards the window, but towards the wall. Space appeared before us, and we saw the devils coming in legions, with their leaders, who came within a few feet of us. They came towards us like armies rushing to battle. They appeared to be men of full stature, possessing every form and feature of men in the flesh, who were angry and desperate; and I shall never forget the



Obelisk, Preston Square

vindictive malignity depicted on their countenances as they looked me in the eye; and any attempt to paint the scene which then presented itself, or portray their malice and enmity, would be vain. I perspired exceedingly, my clothes becoming as wet as if I had been taken out of the river. I felt excessive pain, and was in the greatest distress for some time. I cannot even look back on the scene without feelings of horror; yet by it I learned the power of the adversary, his enmity against the servants of God, and got some understanding of the invisible world. We distinctly heard those spirits talk and express their wrath and hellish designs against us. However, the Lord delivered us from them, and blessed us exceedingly that day.⁵²

Elder Hyde had a separate bout with the evil spirits after Elder Kimball had fallen to the floor. He says,

Their awful rush upon me with knives, threats, imprecations hellish grins, amply convinced me that they were no friends of mine. I stood between you [Elder Kimball] and the devils and fought them and contended with them face to face, until they began to diminish in number and to retreat from the room. The last imp that left turned around to me as he was going out and said, as if to apologize, and appease my determined opposition to them, 'I never said anything against you!' I replied to him thus: 'It matters not to me whether you have or have not; you are a liar from the beginning! In the name of Jesus Christ depart!' He immediately left, and the room was clear. That closed the scene of devils for the time.⁵³

Joseph Fielding also recorded this incident in his journal. In addition, he provides some other interesting facts. I quote,

Monday night previous to our separation, we spent in prayer and set apart Bro. Goodson and Richards to go to Bedford, the Lord was present with us. In the morning they took their journey, and on the same day Bro. Russell and Snider left to go 150 miles North. Elder Kimball, Elder Hyde, and myself were now left in Preston; I must now relate something that took place a few days before this, Dear Bro. Russell has been for a long time grievously afflicted by the Devil or by evil spirits, perhaps 2 or 3 years, he and myself were next neighbors when in business, so that I am well acquainted with his state, he was so afflicted at that time that he was not fit to be left alone, he said that 4 or more devils were in him, and imagined that by hanging down his head he should void them, he would sit on a chair and put his hands under his feet, with his head as low as he could get it, this we believed to be a stratagem of the devil, if possible to deprive him of his senses, we therefore determined not to let him act thus. He then endeavored to get away from us, I was twice called to leave my work and seek him in the woods, and he was much grieved at my requiring him to go home, he would kneel down on the wet ground, in the attitude of prayer. It seemed to me that the devil designed to destroy him if possible, but we did not still believe that he was possessed with devils, he was spiritual and quite rational, we know of no precedent for such a case. His family were in great trouble, his wife was near being confined, and he himself attending to no business and in such a state that his mother at one time proposed putting on him a strait Nasiteocot [?] as it was called, this we were unwilling to do, several of his religious friends came from a distance and we spent much time in prayer with him, but to no purpose. He would often say that by such a time, perhaps a few hours he should die, and would send for us to see him die. When it failed he would say the Lord had just granted him a little longer time, but would soon fix another time, but he always found some reason for his words failing. We did all we could to rouse him out of his dejected state of mind; my sister once aroused him considerably by speaking of his being unemployed and his family's troubles and he went to work, but was still much afflicted. He was [] even the first in our neighborhood to be baptized into the

Church of Latter-day Saints, soon he was ordained an Elder. During the winter he preached and raised up a small Church and in the spring he was set apart with others to go to England. Being still afflicted in his body, as he said, the evil spirits would sometimes p[ersecute] him, sometimes as if they would [] him and in the night they would, while in this sleep [bring] to his mind various figures sometimes to tempt him sometimes to alarm him, and sometimes as a combatant. He got but little sleep, and became bound down easily. On Sunday morning, by day light, having been much troubled through the night, he rose and went up to Elder Kimball and Hyde, to get them to pray with him. Bro. H. got up, and they both laid their hands on his [head] and began to rebuke the spirits, Bro. Kimball at last not fully believing Bro. R.'s testimony respecting his case, and while he was praying his speech began to falter, and he was thrown down on the floor and was in great agony, so that the sweat ran down his face. All in an instant, he said it appeared as if every part of his body was distorted, to the utmost, it would have deprived him, he thought, of life in a few minutes, but H. & R. lifted him onto the bed laid their hands on him and rebuked them but he did not fully recover from its effects for a day or two. Bro. H. also received a scene, quite an one [], they could hear a sound from them, i.e. - the evil spirits, like the grating of teeth, quite plainly, all this appeared to be to prevent Bro. R[ussell] from preaching according to appointment that day in the market place. This design however was frustrated, Bro. Russell preached and Bro. Goodson bare testimony after him, I myself also spoke to fine people in [a] private house, and Bro. Kimball baptized 9 in the morning. But on Sunday night Brother Russell was again greatly troubled, in the same manner, and got Bro. Richardson who slept with him, to go up to Bro. H. & K. and request them to come down to his relief, here I am not certain whither it was before or after, but about this time, as Bro. Hyde declared, as he and Bro. [K.] were lying in bed himself being awake he saw as it were a host of those foul spirits not on the floor but as it were in the midst of the room, in various shapes and forms, some . . . misshaped, and ugly, some like cats with half a head and others half one of creature and half another; the most miserable and disgusting appearance some could possibly imagine. They however kept their distance, but turned their heads towards Bro. Hyde one looking at him said distinctly, but with a murmuring tone, slowly speaking, I never spoke against you. He said there seemed to be a legion of them, he was alarmed, but very much disgusted, he could scarcely bear to speak of them, the confusion and distort of these creatures. . . . Individuals have been inspired, and it was not known whether it was a good or an evil spirit, but since the Lord has again bestowed on men the Gift of the Holy Ghost, they may clearly discern between the two spirits. Upon the whole we got considerable instruction, from these [visions] of the Devil, the spirit of the Devil produces confusion, disorder, and misery, the Spirit of God produces calmness, order and happiness, if we never before knew that there were evil spirits, we did now, we also . . . feel for dear Bro. Russell.⁵⁴

Years later, narrating the experience of that awful morning to the Prophet Joseph, Heber asked him what it all meant, and whether there was anything wrong with him that he should have such a manifestation.

"No, Brother Heber," he replied, "at that time you were nigh unto the Lord; there was only a veil between you and Him. When I heard of it, it gave me great joy, for I then knew that the work of God had taken root in that land. It was this that caused the devil to make a struggle to kill you."

Joseph then related some of his own experience, in many contests he had had with the evil one, and said: "The nearer a person approaches the Lord, a greater power will be manifested by the adversary to prevent the accomplishment of His purposes."⁵⁵

Even though the Adversary attempted to stop the Elders, the work of the Lord continued to go on. Isaac kept his appointment and preached that afternoon at the Obelisk in the market place in Preston.

Richard L. Evans writes,

That much interest had been aroused at the first baptismal service in the River Ribble on the morning of Sunday, July 30th, 1837, was made obvious by the great numbers who gathered to the Obelisk in the afternoon to hear words of truth and life as they fell from the lips of Elder Isaac Russell. About five thousand listened, with respect and interest, and many were touched in their hearts, and were led to seek further.⁵⁶

That night the Elders held a council until late into the morning, spending time in fasting and prayer. Elders Russell and Snider were appointed to go to Alston, in Cumberland, and Elders Richards and Goodson were to go to Bedford. Elders Kimball, Hyde and Fielding were to stay at Preston. They departed within a few days to their new fields of labor.



River Ribble, Preston

It must not have been very long before Isaac received this letter from Mary in Kirtland.

Mr. Isaac Russell,
c/o Rev. James Fielding, Oxford St. #15,
Preston, Lancashire, Old England.

Kirtland, July 17, 1837.

My dear Husband:-

It is with pleasure that I write to you at this time. I received your letter dated the 27th, which gave me both joy and sorrow. I was glad to hear that you arrived safe in New York, but I was sorry to hear that you suffered so much. I assure you it had been a time of severe trial for me to part with you. Was it not for the suffering we have been called to pass thru and the promises that I made to the Lord that if he would deliver you out of that state of suffering I would give you up. You stated in your letter that perhaps I might think it was a pleasure for you to preach the Gospel, but it is not the case. I am well aware of the trials and afflictions you have to meet with. I am confident if we are faithful the Lord will bless us and support us under all our trials and afflictions and He will permit us to meet again which is my sincere prayer to the Lord daily. After you left me we met with a disappointment we did not expect. In place of the money Mr. Charlton returned the notes. He would not take them without another endorser or mortgage on the land. I and Bro. Taylor went to Lorance and he refused giving any better security at present so we have the notes at present. I think there will be nothing done with them till you return. Bro. Taylor and Bro. Thompson tried to borrow the money but could not. Mr. Brownwell has sold his place and has to receive a payment this month and has promised to lend us three hundred dollars, if he is not

disappointed. If we do not get that we do not know what we shall do. W. Smith is in great want of his money. We have written to Bro. Taylor for what he owes, but I do not know whether we shall get it or not. Under the circumstances I think it will be the best for you to return soon as circumstances will permit.

Sister Isabella lent me more to bring me and the children over, but I am not able to return it again. As regards myself and the children we are well at present. We have great cause to be thankful that we are not suffering for want of food at present as many a one is.

The night we received the letter George asked if you were coming home again. I told him, "not yet" and he cried for sometime and said he wanted his father to come home again, and little Samuel sings "Daddie's gone to England to cut the badman's head off." Mary has been very sick but is getting better for which I feel to rejoice. As it regards myself I feel at a loss to state under the circumstances. The country I like, but it is no home in your absence, and as you are traveling without a home I feel as if I'm doing the same. I have got no money since you left and no prospect of getting any. Mr. Pratt has gone out to preach so there is no hope from that quarter, and under the circumstances I think it would be wisdom for you to return as soon as it is possible to settle your affairs, yet I do not wish you to go by my direction but to be directed by the Spirit of God which will lead aright. You requested Fanny to let you know the names of your friends. John Shaw, [is a] cabinet maker in Liverpool. He will give you the names of the rest. He is your cousin. Sister Whitesides and family have arrived here on their way to the west. They bring us news that our friends are all well in Toronto. They have had no word from Cavin as yet.

I have no more at present, but commit you into the hands of Israel's God for He is now my only friend. To Him I make all my complaint and request that he will preserve you in peace till we both shall meet to praise His name together. I also want you to visit my friends and tell them I would be very glad to see them again if the Lord permit.

Sister Fanny wishes to be remembered to you and Mr. Goodson, also your niece Ann Wanlass and desires that you would tell her father to write as soon as he can send it or if you should return in the fall you may bring it with you. If there is no opportunity before then, tell him she has not heard from them for going on 2 years which makes her think it very strange. If they should write before you come you may give them directions for Kirtland. I can hardly quit as it is such pleasure for me to talk to you and my last request is that you will write as soon as you receive this, so no more from your faithful, affectionate, wife,

Mary Russell⁵⁷

Little is recorded about Isaac in his mission labors, except for a few letters sent between Isaac, his wife, and the mission leadership (Elders Kimball and Hyde). Most of the recorded history surrounds Elders Kimball, Hyde and Richards. There are, however, a few letters that provide insight into other news from the mission. Such an example is this letter written to Isaac from John Goodson,

Letter addressed,
Mr. Isaac Russell,
c/o Mr. Jackson Wanlass,
Cumberland.

Bedford, Bedfordshire, Aug. 14, 1837.

Dear Brother:-

I received yours and lose no time in answering. It does not appear to me that you have met with anything that might not have been expected, or anything that should be allowed to trouble you for a moment. To awaken a deep interest by one discourse, is as much as we can expect in this age of universal darkness. I do not doubt, but that when this reaches you, deep conviction will have taken the place of deep interest in the hearts of many.

Seek wisdom brother, for that is what you are most deficient in. That is what I want and what we all want. We arrived in Bedford on Wednesday the 9th, called on McMathews and conversed for about three hours. He expressed himself quite satisfied with our testimony. He had a meeting of his people and at the close McMathews exhorted the people to believe. We met with his church every evening the remainder of the week, during which he kept growing in the faith. It was so ordered of the Lord that his wife was from home and did not return till Saturday, at which time he was almost ready for baptism. He is still waiting for her and I don't think it will be many hours before they are baptized. At first she was quite high, but we united in calling upon the Lord that His hand might be upon her, and it fell upon her both in body and mind so that she is now pretty humble and almost ready.

Eight days after our arrival, I had the satisfaction of baptizing five. Two more have since come in and there are some scores who will follow Mr. M. I yesterday baptized perhaps the finest man I ever saw out of the Church, who has been taught of God and not of man for the last three years. We met with our little band yesterday and broke bread. I addressed them and we had a session which repaid us for coming to this country. I preached every evening last week in a room hired by Mr. McMathews. One evening while I was reading from the covenants of the Lord, a Methodist priest offered to show the people some errors. When I was through I gave him liberty. I answered his objections and he was glad to make his escape. I have likewise met with a learned clergyman who is much conversant with Egyptian records. The Lord gave me much wisdom and boldness, that his learning was of no service to him at all.

We have received one letter from Preston with the joyful tidings that twenty six had been confirmed after partaking of bread and wine, and two others had been baptized who were not present. Mr. Fielding,⁵⁸ to prevent his people from embracing the Gospel, had recourse to the following maneuver. He agreed with Mr. Giles, a baptist preacher (one of those against whom we washed our feet) to come and examine them and baptize them if they wished it. Our brethren told the people that they must not be baptized by a man who had rejected the servants of the Lord. This produced the desired effect. The appointed time for examination came and Mr. Giles began to question Mrs. Leech. She replied that the Lord had told her not to go into the waters of strife, but that there was a river which should make glad her heart (because they were going to baptize in the font in the chapel). She also told him that he must repent for rejecting the servants of God. Bro. Hyde preached in the market place yesterday week to a large audience. At the close a priest of same order began to speak in the way of opposition. The people objected to hear him, but Bro. Hyde begged them to be silent, so he proceeded. When he was through Bro. Hyde arose and spoke a few minutes by the power of the Holy Ghost, exposed him in three or four instances and made him appear quite ridiculous, being completely confounded before all the people.

The child died which you spoke of in Union St. Seek wisdom in all your proceedings and be extremely cautious of what you say and what you promise in the name of the Lord. I have not yet heard from America. The Lord is sending us bread, pies, cakes, and money and hitherto we have passed our time agreeably. So soon as I hear from Margaret you shall hear from me.

I forgot to observe that not one person examined by Mr. Giles was deterred from embracing the fullness of the Gospel. Mr. McMathews yesterday received a letter from his friends in Preston. They say they are in great trouble. May the Lord in Mercy trouble them more and more until they are humble unto obedience.

Elder Richards joins me in love to yourself and Bro. Snider. We earnestly desire your prayers. Our Brothers and Sisters desire to be remembered to you and by you.

I remain yours in the everlasting covenant.

J. Goodson.

P.S. Write when you begin to baptize.⁵⁹

Elder Kimball records that Bro. Russell continued to labor in and around Alston. In September, says Bro. Kimball, letters were received from Bros. Richards and Russell, giving an account of their proceedings since leaving Preston. Bro. Goodson had returned from Bedfordshire where he and Bro. Richards had labored, he gave us an account of their mission and success. About the same time Bro. Snider returned from the north where he had been laboring in connection with Bro. Russell. He stated that they had met with considerable opposition while preaching the Gospel, but that some had obeyed the truth and that others were investigating.⁶⁰

On the 7th of September Orson Hyde, under Elder Kimball's instructions responded to Isaac's letter, and Elder Snider's return to Preston. Elder Snider apparently "became discouraged, could not preach and became like a drone. The day will come when he will repent of it, for not being more diligent in the cause of Christ," Elder Kimball says.⁶¹ Elder Hyde writes,

Mr. Isaac Russell,
c/o Jackson Wanlass,
Alston, Cumberland.

Preston, Sept. 7th, 1837.

Dear Brother Russell:-

Brother Snider returned from you to this place on yesterday afternoon, and tells us that he has not preached once since he left here. That means this? Did he refuse to preach? Or did you go forward and do all the preaching regardless of him? It was your duty to put him forward and compel him to improve upon his gift; and if you were much stronger than he, with so much the more faith you ought to uphold him, and not suffer him to have lain down in the furrow and died.

Bro. Russell! we do not consider that you have gone contrary to our instructions. We labored diligently with you before you left here to impress upon your mind the necessity of preaching the simple Gospel to the people and to baptize them and then teach them all other things necessary. If a teacher teach his pupils, he brings them into the house first and then teaches them. So you ought to preach repentance and bring them into the Church by baptism in the first place; and then instruct them into those truths which are calculated to strengthen and edify. When you or any other man goes forth to preach the Gospel, you ought to abide in one place and continue preaching there until the people receive or reject. If they reject it, go wash your feet against them and go along to another place, and them do likewise, but if they believe your testimony, baptize them and gather a little branch, then call a conference and have them set in order. Then go to another place and not give the devil power, after you have sown the seed, to come and take it away, before it take root.

The Smith would be quite unwise if he would have a half dozen irons all heated at one time and laid upon different anvils in different places and take his hammer and strike one, then go and strike another, for while he was going from one to the other his irons would be getting cold all the time. If Bro. Snider tells correctly, "Thou art the Man." Now Bro. Russell this is not according to the teachings of God's Spirit. If you think so, you are certainly as much mistaken as you were when you said the child would get well.

Let me now tell you what to do, teach repentance and baptism to the people and commence baptizing them, for the Devil would be glad to make you put off baptisms as long as

possible, and if possible no baptism at all. Just before Bro. Snider came, Bro. Kimball and myself were just saying that something was wrong with Bro. Snider and Russell, the morning before Bro. Snider came in, and were going to write you a letter to make inquiries about your condition. When Bro. Snider came it confirmed our convictions.

There have [been] about eighty in this region [that have] obeyed the new covenant; and we have taught them no great things, the vision and gathering they know nothing of, except what the Spirit of the Lord has taught them. I do not lay any blame to you because the doctrine of the gathering has been taught, because that seems to have been a circumstance beyond your control, but you have dwelt too largely upon the prophecies and not enough upon the simple Gospel. The people of this country want simple things. The majority of them are illiterate and know but little about the Bible and the more simple things you can teach them the better. I do not mention the circumstances of the child because I have any feelings upon the subject, but simply to show you that you are liable to mistake the operation of the Holy Spirit, and also to convince you that you may be wrong in the course you have pursued in relation to preaching, etc. Bro. Snider tells me you have written a letter to me concerning the child etc., but I have not received it. I can say, Bro. Russell that I have nothing against you at all, although I write so plainly. I want you to be wise and so order your labors that you may reap the benefit of them. If you will go according to our teachings you will prosper, if you do not, your way will be hedged up and you will find yourself in trouble.

Don't think that Bro. Snider has been prejudicing our minds against you, no this has not led us to write as we have. We will be accountable for all we write ourselves.

Bro. Kimball has gone into the country to visit a little Church which he has raised up there. But gave me instructions what to write to you before he left. He went this forenoon. The work rolls on here. I have just returned from the water from baptizing four persons. Last night ten persons came forward for baptism to be administered on Sunday morning next. I will pray for you and will you pray for us and write to us soon.

No. 21 Poll St. Preston.

Yours, as ever,

Orson Hyde.⁶²

In the first days of October Bros. Snider and Goodson took leave of the brethren and started for Liverpool on their return to America to attend to their families there. As regarding Isaac needing to preach the simple gospel, it must have been the feelings of the mission presidency that confronting the priests of the various sects was not an appropriate way to reach the people. It is evident that Elder Hyde discerned Isaac's and John Snyder's style of preaching, and therefore wrote this counsel to Isaac in the aforementioned letter. As concerning Orson Hyde's feelings on the matter, he writes this, in a letter to his wife Marinda,

We [Hyde and Kimball] have not said a hard word against the priests since we came here, neither have we spoken against any sect, yet they say all manner of evil against us. The people have discovered this difference between us, and they are most agreeably surprised, and it gives us unbounded influence. We tell them that God has not sent us to judge and condemn another man's servant: But he has sent us to preach the kingdom of God. The short experience that I have had

here, causes me to regret that all the elders have not observed the same course. I am quite satisfied that the great and frequent anathemas pronounced by many of our elders upon people who do not believe their testimony, are not by the Spirit of God; neither do I think it wisdom to be clubbing the sects always, but let them alone, and preach Jesus Christ.⁶³

Later in October Isaac sends this letter to his wife,

Addressed to Mary Russell,
Kirtland, Geauga Co.,
Ohio, U.S. America.

Alston, Oct. 23rd, 1837.

My dear wife:

It is with the greatest pleasure I improve the opportunity that now offers to communicate with you by penning you a few lines to acquaint you with my welfare and to give you likewise a small account of the progress and prosperity of the work of God here. It is now the solemn hour of midnight and having heard of a person setting off for Liverpool in the morning by whom I can send a letter for embarkation, I joyfully sacrifice a night's sleep for the pleasure I enjoy in conversing with you by letter. I received yours bearing date July 17th and nothing on earth could have given me more pleasure. The resignation you have manifested to the Divine Providence has given me the assurance that you are under the influence of a meek and quiet spirit which in the sight of God is of great price. With regard to the embarrassment my affairs may have sustained by the wickedness of Jackson and Charlton, I trust that God will make this also work for our good while he will certainly reward this inhuman breach of trust upon their heads. In his own due time, you may rest assured, my dearest Mary that I shall return to you and my dear little ones. As soon as God shall open my way, though I do have no doubt you will find a friend in Bro. Goodson, who will have arrived at home before this letter reaches you, as he left here on the 5th of this month.

A day or two ago I received a letter from our brethren in Preston and they inform me that they are baptizing into the 3rd hundred, so mightily is the word of God prevailing in that region.

With regard to myself I am well but greatly persecuted. I have never suffered so much in the way of persecution before as I have done here but you need not let this trouble you for though I have suffered some personal violence, yet not an hair of my head will be suffered to fall to the ground and my labors have not been in vain. Our number is indeed small, amounting to about 23 baptized persons, but great numbers are believing and the little few who have obeyed are firm to a man and very intelligent and willing to stand by me in life or death. They have to endure a good deal of reproach for the truth's sake but they count it all joy to suffer for the name of Jesus.

A number of reported infidels are believing since they have heard the religion of Jesus Christ defended and cleared from the darkness cast around it by vile sectarianism. They are men blameless as it regards their moral character and men of great information and likely to be an ornament and strength to the cause of truth in England. They stood by me faithfully in a late contest I have had with the priests before the public. To see fair play and protect me from harm, for indeed the police here are wolves of the first quality and do not scruple to say publicly that they would be glad to take away my life if they had an opportunity. Since their wickedness has been exposed. You may let Ann know as soon as you have an opportunity that her father has written to her and if this letter reaches you first you may tell her likewise that her father and mother and brother William and Sister Isabella are amongst the number who have obeyed the new covenant and that they rejoice in the prospect of meeting her in the promised land. Jackson is a faithful man and is very kind to me, beyond all I could have expected. His wife does all she can to make me comfortable. I pray the Lord to reward them. If Ann and you all approve of it,

Elizabella thinks of coming over with me spring. You must write and let me know. She is very humble and will be content with any fare she meets with. I think she would be excellent company for you. As it respects your friends here I am sorry to inform you that they have almost all of them rejected the Gospel and, except your Aunt Mary and Isabella Wilkinson, they have joined together to do me all the injury they can. I have had the most shameful treatment from them, and from your uncle, John Millican, though I have not given him the least personal offence. He wrote me a letter charging me with running away and leaving you destitute and friendless in a strange land and I have reason to believe that they have written to you to inquire after your circumstances, and for anything I know, their object is to get you to leave me, and I can assure you that if you were amongst them you would not fare very well for your father's only remaining sister is in poverty beside them and they do not relieve her though they have an abundance of this world's goods.

My dear Mary all you can do is to pray for them for you can not hold any correspondence with them in the way of friendship, without betraying your trust to me and that I know you will not do. If you should write to any of them, say nothing about our circumstances, for the least hint or complaint from you is all they want in order that they may injure the work of God here. I will say nothing more respecting them, as I know it will be painful for you to hear how they have used me.

You must tell my dear Sister Fanny that Joseph Teasdale has done me all the harm he could. Remember me to Bro. John Dawson, and tell him I have not forgotten him though I did not name him in my last letter. I think of you daily and long to be with you.

Remember me to all my friends in Kirtland and any you may see from Toronto. To God who is able to keep and preserve both until we meet again, I commend you and our dear little ones. Pray without ceasing that we may all meet again on earth and that we may be one in our Farther's Kingdom.

Write when you receive this and fill your sheet of paper. It is with unspeakable pleasure that I return your concluding sentence by subscribing myself your faithful and affectionate husband,

Isaac Russell⁶⁴

On 27 October, Joseph Fielding records that Isaac had written lately and had reported that he had baptized 20.⁶⁵ In early November, Isaac returned to Preston from the North and spent a few days with Elders Kimball, Hyde and Fielding. On 14 November, Orson records in a letter, that "Bro. Russell preached with us on Sunday last both morning and evening. He has a little society [of] 24 where he is laboring. He returned yesterday after remaining with us 3 or 4 days. He thinks he is going to Newcastle where he has repeated calls about 40 miles for his society."⁶⁶

Isaac received a letter on 10 November from his friend in America, William Law. Isaac had previously written to William asking if he would join Isaac in the mission field. William writes,

You asked me if I would join in your labors and be your companion in the work. I would rather travel with you than any other one, when I do travel, but I think I shall be directed by the Presidency to what quarter of the world I shall go. I do not know how soon my way will be opened, but when it is I shall go forth with the strength of Jacob's God.⁶⁷

It is evident that in late October, Isaac had written to Elder Kimball concerning the missionary work in the North. Because on 11 December, Elders Kimball and Hyde sent this reply,

Preston, Dec. 11th, 1837.

Dear Bro. Russell:-

Sir,

We are not surprised at all that your way has been hedged up by the priests. We have told you repeatedly that if you would let the priests alone you would prosper. The plain fact is the priests hold the people under their control and it is our business to gather out the honest in heart from under this bondage, and in order to do this we must not irritate the priests so that they will exert such a mighty influence against us, if we do, the Lord will require the blood of souls at our hands. It is not our business to gratify a disposition to bear down upon the priests. But it is our business to save souls, and we do say, in the name of the Lord, let the priests alone and preach the simple Gospel of Christ.

Bro. Kimball has just returned from a 3 weeks and 3 days tour and he has baptized 41 persons and he says that he has not said one word about the priests. Many are being baptized in Preston almost daily. We say to you, Bro. Russell there are other places besides Newcastle and Alston where there are Saints and if they will not receive you in one place, go to another; and so keep doing till you find a field of labor, and then be careful and not close it up by bearing down on the priests and sects. Respecting going to America, our purposes are fixed in relation to it. If the Lord will, we shall go about the first of April next. It matters not to us if England and Canada cover the ocean with their strife of war, there is a way provided for us and we are not concerned. But if you wish to go home before that time to see to your money in Canada, if you can get means to bear your expenses, you can go as soon as you wish and the Lord will go with you. There will be nothing wrong in it. It is a much better time to go to America now than when Bro. G. and S. went. But if you stay and labor, let the priests alone. We do know by the word of the Lord that that course is wrong; and our daily experiences teaches us so likewise. Our way is not hedged up. We can go almost anywhere and preach and baptize and our way is not closed up, because we let the priests alone, and if you would do the same, your way would not be closed up. "Be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

Concerning putting the Church in order, you have the covenants and articles, proceed according to them and according to the best light you can get upon them by the Spirit of the Lord and you will do right.

We want you to feel some responsibility as well as ourselves and we want you to know something to the mind of the Lord by His Spirit.

We are yours in the bonds of the New Covenant.

Orson Hyde

Heber C. Kimball⁶⁸

In early February, Isaac again wrote to Elder Hyde and Kimball. He evidently was seeking counsel from them; he also made some sort of suggestion that indicated what he felt was harshness in Elder Hyde and Kimball's last letter, as evidenced by this response in a letter to Willard Richards,

Dear Brother Richards,

Preston, Feb. 14, 1838

. . . We have written many things to you, no doubt, that might appear plain and severe, and perhaps to much so, yet we have acted in the fear of God, and it is not because we do not love you that we have written plain. God knows but we have endeavored to discharge our duty in relation to the cause at large, and if we have gone to far, or been to severe in anything, forgive us

Bro. Richards for Christ's sake.

I have just [received] a letter from Bro. Russell to which he requested a reply, but said he hopes we would not scold him and I have concluded to comply with his wishes, the gentle hint he gave me, suggested the idea that we might have been too severe on him and on you.

This letter is written to you on the supposition that you wish to go home to America with us. But it may be that your eye has caught a glimpse of your "better part" and may wish to remain a while. If so, you are at liberty to stay, But if not you are as one of us to fare as we fare etc.

Pardon this liberty in which I have indulged, Bro. Richards, "A word to the Wise is sufficient - As ever O.H. B.K. is out on a short mission, but this is the result of united and joint deliberation."⁶⁹

In the mean time Isaac kept pressing forward in the Lord's work. Jacob Peart recounts this, in his diary, about Isaac's efforts,

In 1838 I was visited by a man (who said he was) who professed to be a preacher of the gospel, and wished to know if I could get for him our Methodist chapel to preach in. I enquired what sect he belonged to, he declined to say, only that he was a "preacher of the gospel," I promised to use my influence, I did so and succeeded for I had some influence (was so much respected) at this time and was a Class Leader and superintendent of the Sabbath School, we had a very fine school. We also held many prayer meetings for it was a time of general revival. This Elder's first sermon was much approbated as it was upon the subject of "the judgements of the Last Days," the second [and] third discourse was on faith and baptism respectively - baptism for the remission of sins and the laying on of hands with accompanying gifts and signs following; this closed the doors of the chapel, I however succeeded in getting a large Free School house; a few more discussions also closed its doors and we had to take the streets. Hundreds were now believing the revealed gospel and even followed us into the streets to hear it. But no sooner did the Rev. Mr. _____ see the course things were shaping then he put forth all his powers in the shape of slanderings and other wise abusing, this Elder, he gave us the name of Dippers, Russelites, he published a tract in which he used my name very liberally as Bro. Jacob. He lied about me very much. It was an ungentlemanly issue of lying slander, and abuse throughout its pages. I might here state that at this time the name of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or Mormons had never been heard in this place, although the church had been established in America seven years.

Fearfully examined the doctrine taught by this Elder and listened to his statements of its coming forth, and, in about two weeks I was baptized for the remission of sins. The Reverend gentleman's wife called at [our] house and shed forth a copious flow of tears and entreaties to try if possible to deter my wife from following in my steps but with out avail. It was now evident that if we joined this Church our good name and character was gone and there was a great falling off [f] in our congregations and eventually there was but a few who had courage to come forth and obey its doctrines among whom was Bro. John Sanders, Ralph Thompson and Peter Maugham - later Bp. of Cash Valley, I was soon ordained an Elder and left to preside, I was the first presiding Elder - native Elder in the North of England. The Elder who baptized us and organized the Branch now left for America. I soon became acquainted with Willard Richards who wrote me many letters, also came up on a visit to strengthen us up after the Elders left us, also Jos. Fielding.⁷⁰

This same Jacob Peart was called to lead this branch, as Isaac would soon leave for Preston, and then home to America. Before his departure, Jacob Peart and John Sanders, another convert of Isaac's, wrote him this letter,

Addressed to Mr. Isaac Russell,
No. 21, Poll St. Preston.

Alston, April 7th, 1838.

Dear Brother Isaac:

I received your kind letter dated 31 March and was exceedingly glad to hear of the prosperity of the work of God in Preston and that neighborhood.

I feel for you in being detained longer from your family, nevertheless I believe God will be with them to preserve and uphold them and to satisfy all their wants until your return; and these light afflictions (compared with the tribulations and destruction which are hastening upon the earth and from which you are endeavoring to rescue men) are working out for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

I cannot express my thankfulness and joy that I have heard and embraced the everlasting Gospel which has been restored in the last days and I am determined to count nothing dear to me so that I may reign with Jesus when He comes in His Kingdom.

The Church at Alston stands fast in the faith and I trust is making advances. The other churches also I trust continue faithful except Bro. D. at Brampton, who I fear is drawn back from the truth. When I visited Brampton after you left Alston I found him not at the meeting. I called upon him and was sorry to find that he had received all his former principle of election. I attempted to reason with him for a while, but found that reason was fled, so I took leave of him at that time. I fear that temporal interests hastened him to these steps having two brothers, Calvinists, who I understand partly support him. I shall call on him again tomorrow if all is well. Mr. Haugh and Mr. and Mrs. Falkins continue very friendly and those other young men who have not obeyed the Gospel have accompanied both Bro. Ralph and myself to Hall Bank Gate. I intend to visit Plenmeller this evening and from there to Brampton in the morning. Bro. Wm. Wanlass will accompany me. I had Bro. Maughan and Spotswood last night. They said I might tell you that you were not forgotten at Alston. There is opposition at Brampton. Last time I was down Bro. Sanders went with me and as Mr. Warlo had published to preach upon baptism Mr. Haugh urged that one of us should attend, so Bro. Saunders did and took his objections. And I shall probably have to speak upon that subject tomorrow as we shall be likely to have more opposition. I beg you to pray for me without ceasing, that I may receive a greater measure of the Holy Spirit with faith and love.

We are all well as to temporal health. Brother Bell's child continues improving. Being in haste to prepare for Brampton, I say no more at present.

I remain your brother in the New Covenant,

Jacob Peart.

Dear Brother:-

I am thankful to hear that you have gotten on so well at Preston. I hope we will get on here that our souls may rise higher and higher heavenwards, that we may get more and more of the mind that was in Jesus. We had my sister Atkin from Newcastle last week who came on purpose to convince us that we were wrong, but she has made nothing out. She could find no objection at the last but thinking she could be saved in the old way and would like to hear the Gospel preached at Newcastle. Mr. Wardlow made a very poor discourse when I heard him at Brampton. His text was the 2nd Chap. of Acts, 38th and 39th verses then to the 8th Chap. of Acts from the 13th verse to the 22nd verse. He wanted to make it appear that Simon was not better after being baptized. He still continued in sin and when the three thousand was converted they brought their children to make up the number and it was not likely they were emerged. Circumcision in the Old Testament is the same as Baptism in the New. Baptized when adults or

infants, sprinkled or emerged, all is alike though some think that the Kingdom may be taken by violence. No man had the power of giving of the Holy Ghost for many are in Heaven that never were baptized. 16th Chap. Acts, 33rd Verse, 4th Chap. Romans 8th and 9th Verse. Then pointed the danger of bodily harm in cold parts.

Remaining your brother in the New Covenant,
John Sanders.⁷¹

Isaac returned to Preston sometime near the end of March or beginning of April. A general conference of the Church was to be held on Sunday, 8 April 1838. Prior to this all the Elders gathered together to discuss the future of the British Mission. Here is the discussion as related by Willard Richards,

Late that afternoon, Willard made the fifth missionary to gather in the kitchen of Jane Dawson's house, on Pole Street. Sister Jane, Heber's and Orson's landlady, had been one of the nine baptized in the Ribble last July when Willard had watched the ceremony. She bustled around the kitchen, preparing oatcakes and bovril for supper. Willard longed to take Heber into the front room and put his tingling question about Jennetta Richards,⁷² but here was Isaac Russell, just arrived from Cumberland. He, too, had been left alone in his field of labor, his companion having fled to America. In Isaac, however, Willard detected a certain sympathy for the desertion. "I've been here eight months," he was complaining, "and made sixty converts. What's the use?"⁷³

"The use?" Willard repeated. "I was left alone to struggle and starve with fewer than that. But the Saints of my small branches have given me a suit of clothes, and the Lord has given them a testimony that a few hard knocks won't crack."

I can't ask Heber anything personal in front of Elder Russell, Willard thought, feeling relieved when Sister Jane invited the brethren to be seated for supper. To be sure, it was now impossible to speak of the lass in the moors; Sister Dawson would be the first to detect the least hint of romance.

That evening Heber demanded privacy for his council meeting. Closing the door to his room--the parlor--he asked Willard to lead in prayer. A few moments later Heber suggested that it would be wisdom for some of the elders to remain in England. And again his intent eyes turned from Willard to Isaac.

Isaac stared back. "I've got a wife in America. I won't leave her alone forever."

Joseph Fielding, expecting to marry an English girl, exclaimed, "But we can't leave all these people here without a shepherd!"

"Exactly," Heber replied. "It looks like out of the seven elders who came here, two should be willing to remain for a season. Brother Orson and I have to go home."

"You haven't given us the reason, Heber. What's your haste? What has put you on the run?" Willard asked.

Heber gave Isaac a long look and apparently decided to speak. He announced that in America the Church had been driven from one extremity to another. The Ohio Saints had removed to northwestern Missouri. Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and Brigham Young had been forced to flee from Kirtland in the night. There had been a price on their heads. All were wanted by both the apostates and the law.

In the name of the Kirtland Anti-Banking Safety Society, Brigham had borrowed thousands of dollars, Orson Hyde said, his blunt blue eyes concealing nothing.

"Our business Mission!" Willard gasped. "Had I stayed I'd have a price on my head! My name is on those notes." He whistled. "Maybe I should go home, Hebe. How strange that I should be here at all."

"I was with you in Kirtland when Brig said he'd release you from the business affairs."

There was no uncertainty in Heber's voice when he jogged Willard's memory. "Brigham promised to take over the money matters."

"Yes," Willard nodded, torn between two allegiances, his duty to England, his duty to the Church in America.

As if reading his friend's thoughts, Heber continued. "The Lord wants you to stay in this vineyard, Willard. You've got a great work to perform here. You've been through a hard school, but you'll go through a harder one before you graduate to a higher kingdom."⁷⁴

Elder Kimball and Hyde, continued to counsel Elder Richards and Fielding on their continued mission in England. Elder Fielding was appointed to head the mission in the absence of Elder's Kimball and Hyde, and Elders Kimball, Hyde and Russell were to return to America. On Sunday, April 8, 1839, a general conference was held at Preston. The conference lasted from 9 a.m. to 7 o'clock that evening. Heber C. Kimball records,

At this conference, we were favored with the company of Elder Willard Richards and also Elder Russell, who had returned from Cumberland. He met with considerable opposition from his own kindred, as well as from ministers of the different denominations who sought every opportunity to destroy his influence. Notwithstanding the great opposition, he was instrumental in bringing upwards of sixty souls into the kingdom of God, and left them rejoicing in the truth, under the watch-care of Elder Jacob Peart."⁷⁵

After the close of the conference alluded to and after an affectionate farewell to the people, Bros. Kimball, Hyde and Russell, set out for Liverpool on 9 April, leaving Bro. Joseph Fielding to preside over the mission and Willard Richards and Wm. Clayton as his counsellors. Elder Kimball notes that at 12 o'clock, "the time appointed for Elders Hyde, Russell and Myself to leave Preston, by coach, when we arrived at his office we were soon [] with the brethren who felt determined to see us depart; many of whose countenances clearly showed their sorrow at our departure."⁷⁶ They arrived at Liverpool, but were detained a few days due to a storm. It was not until the 20th of April that they boarded the ship Garrik which was bound for New York; the Garrik being the same ship that had brought them to England.

They landed at New York on Saturday, 12 May 1838, and on Sunday they met and accompanied Bros. Parley and Orson Pratt to the place where the Saints of that city assembled for worship, when, says Bro. Kimball,

"We found about eighty persons assembled, all of whom had recently joined the Church. After singing and prayer, I was requested to give an account of our mission to England, which I accordingly did. In the evening Elders Russell and Hyde preached; afterwards some came forward and offered themselves as candidates for baptism. . . .

On the 14th we bade adieu to the brethren, and continued our journey by steamboat, railroad and canal, and arrived at Kirtland May 22nd, having been absent eleven months and nine days."⁷⁷

I'm sure that it was with much happiness that the Elders arrived in Kirtland to meet their families and friends. They also would have felt sadness due to the persecutions and trials that the Saints were experiencing. Four months prior to their arrival, Joseph and Sidney were forced from Kirtland, 12 January 1838. Many Saints felt bitterness toward the prophet, which bitterness drove them to apostasy. It was not long after their arrival that the Saints were driven from Kirtland to Far West.⁷⁸

The dates and facts of this period are scarce, and therefore, giving an historical account of Isaac's life is difficult. Isabella writes,

I read in a little book called "The Latter Day Prophet," written by Geo. Q Cannon, that on the 6th of July, 1838, a company of five hundred and fifteen souls, set out for Missouri, under the leadership of the Seventy's quorums. I doubt if my father was among that number, for I remember my brother George speaking of going out of the way to find John Goodson, who was very comfortably situated in Carrol County, or Carrolton, Mo., who was owing father a considerable sum on the farm they had taken together near Kirtland of which father had been obliged to take the whole responsibility, but when they found him, he told father that he had nothing for him, but could let him have some cheese, which father did not take, saying that cheese without bread was poor food.

I remember that [my brother] George spoke of father having to stop over once or twice on the way, working at his trade to procure means to continue his journey; so I am inclined to think that father left Kirtland either before or after the main body of the saints.

In regard to the time of father's arrival in Far West, the date is also obscure. I have always understood from mother's and Aunt Sarah's version that most of the saints had left Far West before father arrived there. They told of going into the houses that had been left with all of the household goods in place just as if the owners had stepped out for a few moments. Father moved into one of those houses long enough to build a log cabin of his own, which we afterwards learned belonged to Aunt Zina Huntington Young. When mother moved into her own home, she took a little homemade chair with her, having none of her own. This was the one chair that was taken across the plains with us in 1861. When Aunt Zina came to visit us after our arrival in Salt Lake, she knew the chair and when mother told her its history, she insisted that mother keep it. It is now in the hall of relics in Salt Lake.

Comparing church history and events transpiring in the family, I conclude that father, and those of his relatives who accompanied him, must have arrived in Far West in the fall of 1838. At the time that the extermination order of Gov. Boggs arrived, father was not there, having been called by the Prophet Joseph to go down to DeWitt in Carrol County, to assist a company of saints who had located in that place, and who desired to join the saints. Father, with this company, arrived a few days after the surrender, an agreement having been made by which a part of the saints were to move out in January, 1839, and the rest to follow in April.

The trouble commenced at DeWitt on the second of October, 1838, so father must have arrived at Far West before that time.⁷⁹

From evidence produced many years later, it is still unclear whether Isaac traveled with the main body of the Saints to Far West. Church history states that Saints began moving to Far West early in 1838,

and it wasn't until 26 January 1839 that the decision was made to leave Far West; from Far West they went on the Quincy, Illinois. The journey from Kirtland to Far West was a couple hundred miles. This would suggest the need for Isaac to stop and work for procurement. This also might suggest why Isaac and his family would have had to stop in an abandoned home, while obtaining funds for the continuation of the journey. This does not clear up the fact of how they came across Zina Huntington Young's chair, which was probably obtained in Far West. There are a couple items that add to the information about when Isaac and family arrived. One, Orson Hyde made an application, 31 August 1838, in favor of Isaac Russell receiving a lot in Far West, which was not granted.⁸⁰ The period does remain, however, difficult to reconstruct. The second item, cited below, states that Joseph sent Isaac from Far West in October, to help a company of saints traveling from Kirtland to Far West.

The document states,

This is to Certify that the undersigned - with Isaac Russell, Jacob Scott - John Goodson, and others - witnessed the ceremonies on the Temple Lot in Far West MO - on the night of the 25th or morning of the 26th of April 1839 -

Signed William Dawson

I will also state that in the month of October 1838 - Isaac Russell was sent by Joseph Smith in person from Far West back to Mississippi river to meet and hurry up a company of emigrants before the mobs closed in upon them. He went, met the company and came on with it until it was reported that a mob was in ambush just ahead of them awaiting their arrival. The camp then refused to go any further, Russell plead with them and urged them to drive on that night, being confident that if they would they would get past all danger. But they would not move further. He then took two men and rode ahead to the place where the mob were reported to be in ambush, but found no signs of the mob. Returning he found the camp had turned aside some distance off the main road and encamped. The mob now gathered from all quarters and this delay put them between the camp and Far West. Russell remained with them two or three weeks, hoping an opportunity would yet offer to get through the mob. The news soon came of the surrender at Far West. It was now useless for the Camp to journey further in that direction. Russell then left them and alone returned to Far West. This statement was given to me by Russell himself soon after the occurrence.

Wm Dawson

TERRITORY OF UTAH }
 }ss.
County of Utah }

William Dawson being first duly sworn,
deposes and says, that he is the William Dawson named in the foregoing, and has read the same

and knows the contents thereof, and that the same is true to his own knowledge, except those matters therein stated on information and belief, and as to those matters, believes it to be true.

[signed] William Dawson
Subscribed and sworn to before me this twenty second day of December 1888
James Harwood
Notary Public.⁸¹

It is likely that Isaac and family arrived somewhere between August and October or 1838.

Isabella continues; "Brigham Young, who had assumed the leadership of the saints in that place, during the absence of the Prophet, was obliged to flee from the persecutions of the mob in the middle of February, 1839, and I judge that many of the saints went with him, but the last company did not leave until April 20, 1839."

In mid-April, Far West was well abandoned by the Saints, and in control of the mobs. However, on the 26th of April, the Apostles returned to Far West in fulfillment of a prophecy of Joseph Smith, given on the 8 July 1838. The prophecy is now our 118th section of the Doctrine and Covenants, and states that the Apostles should meet on the building spot of his house on the date named (26 April 1838), and there take leave of the Saints (DC 118:5). They assembled on the night of the 25th, held conference, ordained two Apostles and excommunicated 31 members of the Church. Isaac Russell, Mary Russell, John Goodson and wife, Jacob Scott, Sen., and wife, Isaac Scott, Jacob Scott, Jun., Ann Scott, Sister Walton, Robert Walton, Sister Kavenaugh, Ann Wanlass, William Dawson, Jun., and wife, William Dawson, Sen., and wife, George Nelson, Joseph Nelson and wife and mother, William Warnack and wife, Jonathan Maynard, George Miller, John Grigg and wife, Luman Gibbs, Simeon Gardner, and Freeborn Gardner were those cut off from the Church.⁸²

This segment of Isaac's life is probably one of the parts most cited, and the most misunderstood. Even though there are few records for this period, there is sufficient evidence to clear up some of the misunderstandings of his excommunication. First of all, there are several lines of thought concerning Isaac's apostasy which I will mention here. One charge against Isaac is that he tried to lead away a group of Saints. Church history records,

Isaac Russell, who had become connected with a small camp of Saints, of about thirty families, going west, turned from his course at Louisiana, and led them north ten miles on the Spanish claims, where they built huts or lived in tents through the winter in great suffering.

Russell himself turned prophet (apostate). He said Joseph had fallen and he was appointed to lead the people.

Chandler Rogers, who was moving west, was met by a mob at Huntsville, and compelled to turn back, and fell in with Russell's camp. Russell said he was "the chosen of the Lord;" and when they left the place, they would have to go on foot, and take nothing with them, and they must sell their teams. Some would not sell and he cursed them.⁸³

Where this story gets its credence, is from the fact that Isaac did go East and join a camp of Saints on their way to Far West; and that, supposedly, it was these saints that Isaac was leading astray.

However, of all the charges brought against Isaac, this one seems baseless. Isabella wondered as she heard of this in later years, why her mother never spoke of it, as if it were not an issue with her father's life. The document cited above, plus a good reading of Church history would substantiate the family's claim that this is just not true. In the first place, the previous document stated that Isaac returned to Far West after being with the company for a couple weeks. The quote from the *Joseph Smith History* cited above, states that Isaac lived through the winter with them. In this case this history is inconsistent. This is because, Isaac did return to Far West. He wrote a letter to Alston, England from Far West, in January, which would falsify the above statement. This letter is also cited in the *Joseph Smith History*, which makes one wonder why such a technical error would be made. Isaac could not be in two places at one time. As this history progresses, the stories and incidents contained in it will further substantiate this claim.

What is of more interest are two letters that Isaac sent to Alston, which provides more of a basis for his excommunication. The first mention of Isaac's letters comes from Joseph Fielding, who was left to preside in the British Mission. On 29 November he writes,

November 29th, Thursday - I have lately been to Alston in Cumberland, visiting the Branch of the Church built up by Bro. then I. Russell, and it was at a time when they needed help, partly owing to some misunderstanding, on misinformation, they had almost prepared for sending two of the Church off to Zion to purchase land, this was contrary to the orders on directions given by Elders Kimball and Hyde, and was the instruction given to them by Bro. Russell perhaps for want of uniting with his Brethren, I have given them all the instruction and assistance, I could have had great liberty in preaching to them, the Lord has showed me almost everything before hand which I have had to engage in, in dreams more so than I ever experienced before, ordained there Priests and one teacher, confirmed 10⁸⁴

Isaac apparently wrote the branch in Alston, telling them to send a couple individuals to buy land in Zion. The letter would probably have been sent sometime in October of 1838 (assuming this because the journal

entry was dated 29 November). The text of the letter is unknown. Isaac sent another letter to the Alston branch in January of 1839, again, from Far West. The text of this letter is known and is included in the *Joseph Smith History* of the Church. It is more interesting though in the context of the original letter sent from Willard Richards to Joseph Fielding and William Clayton in Manchester, 7 May 1839, which I will include here:

To President J. Fielding and his Counselor Wm Clayton

Brethren Beloved in and of the Lord:

It seemeth good to me that I communicate to you this morning what has passed since I left Preston, so that if you should have any instructions for me, you may be as ready to communicate, as I am to receive. & I do assure you that any instruction from you will be followed with cheerfulness as it will be received with gladness.

I arrived at this house in just 23 hours from the moment I left my lodgings in Preston, somewhat weary, having had not no [sic] sleep, & several miles walking. Came directly into Bro. Landon's Shop as a stranger, called to make some enquiry about the new sect called Mormonites, Smithites, angelites [?] etc. Bro. L. took me to be a Methodist priest, sent in by Stephensen etc. Very civilly answered all my questions, such as what they believed. He pointed me directly to a "Timely Warning" over the fire. I went to reading & kept talking. Asked who Hyde was or if any the Christian preachers had been there, [and] if any [were] in the country now, etc? They had seen Russell and Fielding & there was one Richards at Preston they had not seen. Have you heard from Russell since he left? Yes we have had 2 letters from him; one lately. I had then got what I wanted, for the Spirit had signified to me before I arrived there was some SECRET iniquity, & I now saw it was in the letter lately received.

Told them to tell no body I was there, washed my feet & jumped into bed, requesting Bro. L. to get the letters from Bro. Peart . . . if he had opportunity. Found Bro. Peart had called & was soon in again, and several Brethren. Discovered considerable darkness on their minds, like a shadow covering the whole of them. Yet they were all glad to see me. An evil spirit entered into Sister Landon, & 1 or 2 [others] and they were much troubled but, I took no notice. I had said nothing too all this work of the Devil to destroy my mission. Bro. Monson was going to Brampton & Bro. L. [to] Plain Millow I told them to send word, and stay at home, over the Sabbath. At the close of the eve took Brother Peart alone & asked him for his copy [of the] letter from Brother Russell . . . he hesitated much, fearing he should do wrong, as Bro. R. had given strict charge that no one should see, it, but a few faithful ones at Alston, etc. His mind was much clouded, but after a little explanation he saw it was my privilege & gave me the letter, which I put in my pocket. [I] appoint[ed] next morn, 10 o'clock, for the officers to be together in council. Soon as the Bro[thers] were gone I opened the letter and read as follows---

City Far West Jan 30th 1839

"To the Faithful

Brethren & Sisters of the Church of Latter Day Saints in Alston, Dear Brethren, in as much as wisdom is only spoken amongst those who are wise, I charge you to read this letter to none but those who enter into a covenant with you, to keep those things that are recorded in this letter from all the world, & from all the churches, except the churches to whom I myself have ministered, viz. the church in Alston, to the churches round about to whom I ministered, and to none but the faithful amongst you, & wo be to the man or woman that breaketh this covenant.---

Now the Indians who are the children of the Nephites & the Lamanites, who are spoken of in the Book of Mormon, have all been driven to the western boundaries of the States of

America by the Gentiles as I told you they have now to be visited with the Gospel, for the day of their Redemption is come, & the Gentiles have well nigh filled up the measure of their wickedness & will soon be cut off, for they have slain many of the people of the Lord & scattered the rest, & for the sins of God's people the Gentiles will now be suffered to scourge them from city to city, & from place to place & few of all the thousands of the Church of Latter Day Saints will stand to receive an inheritance in the land of promise which is now in the hands of our enemies. But a few will remain and be purified as gold seven times refined, & they will return to Zion with songs of everlasting joy to build up the old waste places that are now left desolate.

Now the thing that I have to reveal to you is sacred, & must be kept with care for I am not suffered to reveal it at all to the churches in this land because of their wickedness & unbelief, for they have almost cast me out from among them because I have testified of their sins to them, & warned them of the Judgements that have yet to come up on them. & this thing that I now tell to you will not come to the knowledge of the churches until they are purified.

Now the thing is as follows,--The Lord has directed me with a few others whose hearts the Lord has touched to go into the wilderness where we shall be fed & directed by the hand of the Lord until we are purified & prepared to minister to the Lamanites, & with us the Lord will send those three, who are spoken of in the Book of Mormon, who were with Jesus after his Resurrection and have tarried on the earth to minister to their Brethren in these last days. Thus God is sending us before to prepare a place for you, & for the remnant who will survive the judgments which are now coming on the Church of Latter Day Saints to purify them for we are sent to prepare a Zion (as Joseph was before sent into Egypt) a city of peace, a place of Refuge. Now hide yourselves with us and all the Saints in the due time of the Lord, before his indignation shall sweep away the nations. These things are marvelous in our eyes, for great is the work of the Lord that he is going to accomplish. All this land will be redeemed by the Lord of the Lamanites & room made for you when you hear again from me.

Abide where you are & be subject to the powers that be amongst you in the church. Keep diligently the things I taught you, & when you read this be comforted concerning me, for though you many not see me for some few years, yet, as many of you continue faithful, will see me again, & it will be in the day of your grace of God I commend you in Christ.

Amen, Isaac Russell

P.S. We have not yet gone into the Wilderness but we shall go when the Lord appoints the time--

If you should hear that I am apostatized believe it not for I am doing the work of the Lord."

This I read to the council & followed it with Bro. Kimball's extract, and they went well together, & the officers were all satisfied that I was right and that they & Bro. Russell were wrong, they are sorry they did not send us the letter at once. I read the same to the church in the eve & explained it, & the spirit Russell is of & they were convinced, although it was a most cutting thing, for they love him as themselves, yet they believe our testimony & consider this the greatest assurance they have ever had, that this is the work of God, for they see in this that their Heavenly Father is mindful of them & when they stray ignorantly or undesignedly he will take measures to bring them back again.

I have pursued the same course in Brampton and Plain Millow, as the Lord will, next Sabbath. & I am confident that not one of the saints will stand by I. Russell a day after they learn the truth.

Now (as Russell says) the thing is this, I recommend, Brethren, that without delay, you give a copy of this letter to Bro. Kimball, Illinois, together with Russell's writing to the churches to purchase land last fall, & our course in relation to it, & the steadfastness of the brethren here, with such other things as the Lord give you, which will show Bro. Kimball we have not been

unmindful of him or of them. & then if Bro. Kimball can forward a copy of the same to Russell, it is possible it may have some good effect (if any thing can) in reclaiming him. I.E. it will show him that he is detected in all his movements & forsaken by all his friends. Thus let us do him good if we can. . . .

I have made very plain words about Russell. The situation of the case demanded it & the brethren can now see that his spirit was not always perfect when here. They now remember he went to New Castle contrary to the wish of his Bros & said and did not profess, etc. etc. All these things arise against him here.--Sis. Landers said her kin came to Bro Fielding--I am getting [rested?]-am pretty comfortable. . . . Brethren pray for me. You are never forgotten. Send me any counsel you may have for me. I shall rejoice in it. I am your Bro. forever.

Willard Richards⁸⁵

This letter gives strong evidence of Isaac's apostasy, and grounds that he was trying to influence these English Saints. Joseph Fielding again gives some insight into Isaac's situation, he writes,

Bro. [Kimball] also writes in his letter to go unto the north where Bro. I. Russell labored, he feared Bro. Russell was leading them astray from the truth, for he was gone astray himself, saying, the Church was fallen even Bro. Joseph, and that the Church had no power to administer for the last 2 years and all that had been done, had been made void. He had led away about 30 chiefly of the Canada members, his own sister Isabella Walton the widow woman who first received the Gospel in Toronto. Tell the [Church], says Bro. Kimball, he is gone to the Devil, he is holy, but we are fallen - he is Prophet himself - Brother Richardson [Richards] and myself were preparing to go to Manchester when we got this letter, but at this we changed our course. He went to Alston 2 days after and I to M[anchester]. He soon found out that Bro. K. was right, I have before stated (p. 24) that Elder Russell had written to Alston, directing them to send 2 of their Brethren on to Zion to purchase land, as for them he had a council with the Canada members - he had written another . . . , in which he explains great secrecy, none must know of it except a few of the choice ones of them, none of us, and [pronounced a curse] upon any one who should divulge the tenet. The letter is too long to transcribe here but we have it in possession - it exactly agrees with Bro. Kimball's statement, professes that he Elder R. has received revelation from God. . . . Bro. Russell [he means Richards], took a copy of an extract from Bro. K.'s letter, obtained Russell's and read them to the officers and then to the Church, their hearts were set on Russell but they were soon convinced of the truth of the matter.⁸⁶

It is clear from these citations, that Isaac did apostatize, and for sake of completeness, I will include further evidence to support this fact. John Taylor describes some events on the journey from Kirtland to Far West that is also of interest here. It was sometime in June 1838 that this event transpired. The record states,

During his two months at Indianapolis, other Mormon groups passed through, the most memorable being the one led by his old friend, Isaac Russell. Taylor and Leonora visited the camp, having supper with a number of Toronto Saints. Russell had married Mary Walton, . . . Isabella [the widow] was there at the camp, as was her son John, John Goodson and other old friends.

Isaac Russell was just a year older than Taylor and like him had been born in the English lakes country; he shared Taylor's fondness for literature, had been a Methodist class leader at Toronto, and a member of the study group to which Taylor belonged. When he heard Parley Pratt's first sermon in his mother-in-law's home, he had arisen to declare, "This is the gospel that I wish to live and die by."

Russell was among the handful of missionaries who revitalized the church with the first foreign mission, to England, where he had a remarkable record of conversions. His stories of the English mission provided a spiritual feast for Taylor and Leonora during supper.

Later, when Russell preached to the camp..., Russell claimed he was the chosen of the Lord to lead the people to this land, which "will be redeemed by the hands of the Lamanites," the Mormons joining Indians to vanquish their enemies.

When Taylor spoke, he ... rebuked Russell for arrogating leadership. But the faces of the group were like stone. On leaving, Taylor felt a lead weight in his belly, and Leonora was crying quietly. These friends and associates had been particularly dear, sharing in the great discovery of the gospel; now they were following a new prophet.⁸⁷

This camp of saints, Isaac's friends and family, are probably the ones that should have been referred to in the Church's history. Another piece of evidence was a statement given by Isaac's son George Walton Russell, 13 October 1874, only part of the document will be cited here.

Statement made to Geo. A. Smith by Geo. W. Russell, son of Isaac Russell.

After the saints were driven out of Far West, my father and eighteen followers remained, under the impression that the city would soon be redeemed and that it was wrong to leave; but they were soon driven out [of] the county and settled in Ray [Co.].⁸⁸

This next and final piece of evidence comes from another of Isaac's old friends, Theodore Turley, another Canadian convert, and member of the community where Isaac had lived. He states,

Early on the morning of the 26th of April--the day mentioned in the revelation--a conference was held, 31 persons were cut off from the Church, and the Apostles and Saints proceeded to the building spot of the Lord's house. Elder Cutler, the master workman of the house, then recommenced laying the foundation, agreeable to revelation, by rolling up a large stone near the southeast corner. Seven of the Twelve Apostles were present. . .

"As the Saints were passing away from the meeting, Theodore Turley said to Elder Page and Woodruff, 'Stop a bit, while I bid Isaac Russell goodbye,' and knocking at the door called Brother Russell, whose wife answered, 'Come in; it is Brother Turley.'

"Russell replied, 'It is not; he left here two weeks ago.' He appeared quite alarmed; but on finding it was Turley, asked him to sit down, but he replied, 'I cannot; I shall lose my company.'

"'Who is your company?' inquired Russell.

"'The Twelve.'

"'The Twelve?'

"Don't you know that this is the 26th, and the day the Twelve were to take leave of their friends on the foundation of the Lord's House, to go to the islands of the sea? The revelation is now fulfilled, and I am going with them."

"Russell was speechless and Turley bid him farewell.

"Thus was that revelation fulfilled, concerning which the enemies said: If all the other revelations of Joseph Smith were fulfilled, that one should not be, as it had place and date to it."⁸⁹

Isaac apparently did believe that Joseph Smith was a fallen prophet, and therefore that this prophecy would not be fulfilled. George Albert Smith said that "the reason Isaac apostatized was that the commandment required the Twelve Apostles to take their leave of the Saints on the foundation of the

Temple on the 26th day of April, 1839, and it could not be fulfilled because those men were all driven away."⁹⁰ This would mark the surprise that Isaac showed to the news of its fulfillment. As a side note at this point, Isaac's son Samuel recorded that Turley asked for Isaac's Elder's License noting, "he meekly gave it up asking only, `What is that for?'"⁹¹

The final charge brought against Isaac is that he participated with the mobs that persecuted the church in and around Far West. Again Theodore Turley's journal will be used, this time in Isaac's defense. What is also interesting in this segment of his journal is that he gives Joseph's reaction to Isaac's excommunication. He writes,

Concerning this Isaac Russell it may be interesting to note here that he was one of the first Elders to contact Theodore Turley in Canada. He was also one of those thirty-one persons who were excommunicated from the Church the morning of the 26th, without any hearing. "Turley subsequently, in Utah, related to Russell's sons, Samuel and George, that he was present at the conference near Quincy, Ill., where Joseph was informed of the proceedings at Far West, and that the Prophet there arose with tears in his eyes, and, referring to Isaac Russell, said that he felt to bless him and that he should be blessed. It is a fact worth recording that Brother Russell never took sides with the enemy either in word or deed."⁹²

So, the evidence bears out the fact that Isaac did apostatize from the Church. However, some of the charges made against him are false. There a misconception that needs clearing up at this point. For those readers of Isabella Russell Johnson's history of Isaac Russell, she repeatedly talks about the injustice done to Isaac by Sidney Rigdon - ie. unjustly cutting Isaac, family and friends off from the Church without a hearing or defense. The problem here is that Sidney Rigdon was not present at the Temple Block, when the excommunication took place. In her history, she notes that later in life, after the family had moved to Salt Lake City, she talked with Heber C. Kimball about this incident, and wondered why Heber remained silent through all of this. She also states that Heber mentions that the one who took this action against Isaac was still in authority at that time. It is evident that Sidney was not the one who took the action. Sidney Rigdon had apostatized during the Nauvoo period (about 1844/45) and never made the trip to Salt Lake City and therefore could not be "the one still in authority." From the diversity of sources of information on Isaac's feelings in this period, it seems that there were two in authority that were justified in taking such an action. More specifically, both Heber C. Kimball and John Taylor would both have been justified in taking action, due to the knowledge they had of Isaac beliefs that Joseph was a

fallen prophet. One would only need to look at John Taylor's journal, or Heber's letter to England stating that he felt Isaac was leading the Alston Saints astray. The point here is not to place blame on who took the action against Isaac, but to clear up the fact that the action was justified, and that it could have been initiated by either Heber C. Kimball or John Taylor.

What is most important here, and is the purpose of this history, is to show that not only I (the writer), but others including Isaac's family believed he recognized his wrong doing. The problem is that he may never have had sufficient time to return to the Church. The remainder of this history will draw together incidents and facts that will hopefully bear this out, showing the trials and persecution that the Russell family endured in the name of the gospel.

What will remain unknown is to what extent the apostasy of Parley P. Pratt and Orson Hyde had an affect, if any, on Isaac. I point out these two because of the significant part they played in Isaac's life. Orson Hyde left the Church because of being offended over a trivial matter. This was in October of 1838. He did return to full fellowship in June of 1839, after recognizing his wrongdoing.⁹³ Parley P. Pratt, also had fallen away, as was mentioned above. He likewise returned to full fellowship in the Church. Here again, we will resume Isaac's story.

Isabella writes that by now all the Saints had left Far West, and the mob demanded that Isaac leave also. He declined to do so saying that he was not ready to leave. Those of his friends and family remained in Far West with him (these were also the ones cut off). While they were there, they remained the victims of persecution and hatred. The mob, Isabella says, was particularly bitter toward Isaac and directed much of their outrages at him because of his refusal to leave. She says, all through this period of persecution, the Spirit of the gospel and of God remained with Isaac and his family, "due to his humility, and his unceasing prayers for strength to endure the unexpected blow that had fallen upon him." Continuing she states,

The outrages perpetuated by the mob were so cruel and wicked that they drew the attention of a lawyer by the name of Foster, who spoke publicly in defense of father, branding the actions of the mob against Mr. Russell, an unoffending citizen, as brutal and inhuman, which caused them to retaliate by taking a valuable horse from his stable and mutilating it in a most cruel manner.

I remember brother Sam rushing into the house and calling sister Sarah and myself to the garden fence to see that identical horse passing by; a fine looking animal, but without ears or tail. We were then living in Ray County, and I must have been six or seven years old.⁹⁴

I found some notes in the Samuel Russell Collection at Brigham Young University that describe an event in Far West soon after the departure of the saints from that place. It reads,

From the time the Church left Far West in 1839 to 1840 there was a cessation of hostilities. Then there was a celebration of the 4th of July 1839. At that place and time Samuel Bogart seeing certain persons present called the names of Isaac Russell, Wm Dawson, John Dawson, Jacob Scott, Wm Warnock, John Clemenson, and others (Mormons still at Far West) saying if you are not gone from here in the next ten days, I will be after you (which meant extermination), closing in this form: stretching out his hand, "the word has gone forth from my mouth and shall not return unto me void." In the space of 3 hours after these words were uttered, he had a dispute with a young man (of his own party) by the name of Hines (his father's name - Wesley or Wilson Hines). Bogart called Hines a [profanity]. Hines struck him, Bogart then pulled a pistol and shot Hines. Wm Dawson helped to carry him into Holeman's Store when he soon died. Bogart immediately mounted his horse and fled over the prairie, followed by several other horseman. They pursued him to the Missouri River, he plunged in to the River horse and all, swam the River and escaped into Texas. Bogart and his Crowd was there. They drilled holes in the cornerstones of the Temple, put powder in them and then touched them off bursting the rock, etc.

_____end page_____

Barker (a tailor) auctioneer at the time of the sale of Russell on the block . . . [next pages missing]⁹⁵

I will now quote an extensive passage from Isabella's history, for she does better justice to this period than I can. She writes,

While Sam was on his way to Canada in 1882, for the purpose of obtaining family records, he visited Far West, while there he stayed at the home of a Mr. Sheldon Jones, a non-Mormon, but who was well acquainted with the history of the place, and accompanied Sam to all the places of note, and in whose house I presume the letter from which I copy the following extracts, was written:

"Then we returned again to the place where the children were ordered to be shot, here where the mob so many times paid their nightly visits; here where they shot Alf Walton's dog, King, on the porch; here where they cut off the tail of Cousin Eliza's cow and stuck it in the crack of the door; where they tore the roof off the house, and smashed the windows in with rocks; rocking the house when they should do nothing else; where they aroused the family so often from their beds; and it was from here that they marched our father down to the long hollow to the north and east of us, to whip him to death because he refused to leave the place, and finally they sent him from here to Richmond jail; confining him in a dark dungeon along with prisoner White under sentence of death for murder. And from here he was dragged up to the Temple square and sold on the block; all on account of his religion. Next we went up the hill where the old stable used to stand. Where the mob shaved the tails and manes of Uncle John's horses Doll and Charley, where they also shot a fine heifer of ours, and where father dug a hole in front of the stable and rolled her in and covered her up, and yonder to the east of us a mile or more, the field where they cut off the tail and ears and flesh so cruelly of lawyer Foster's horse, because he dared to defend a Mormon. Next we passed over to the hollow where they ran Uncle John's wagon and cut it up. Mr. Sheldon Jones says his wife was a daughter of Walter A. Doak; they are "Josephites." As soon as she heard my name, she asked if I was any kin to the man who was sold on the Temple square by the mob; I told her that he was my father. I then asked her how she came to know the name. She said she witnessed it, and on being told by the Walmsy girls that his name was Russell, and from the terror accompanying the scene she could never forget it.

Their house stood near the Walmsy house, and she could see our place, and saw the scene

from the bringing of father out of his own home up to the square, and the sale; the mob surrounding him, and yelling like so many wolves. She said her father could tell more as he too witnessed the scene."

You must remember that this and much more of such abuse from the mob, occurred after he was severed from the Church. I could never determine in my mind why, or when he was sent to Richmond Jail, but from a note in brother George's writing it seems that some of the mob had been summoned before Judge Austin A. King to answer to charges preferred by someone, not known, for committing outrages upon peaceable citizens. Father with others were called on as witnesses, but refused to testify, knowing that it was all a farce, and that it would only result in further persecution, for which alleged "contempt of court" he was sent to Richmond and put in jail. I have often heard mother speak of the one fearful night he spent there, only escaping suffocation in the vile hole by stripping off his clothes and fanning himself all night long with his hat.

The old log jail was still standing on the public square in Richmond when we left Missouri, and I never looked upon it, even in my childish days, without thinking of father, and that fearful night, and in later years its homely walls seemed something sacred because it had sheltered my father, the Prophet Joseph, and others of God's servants. To me it stood as a monument to integrity and faith, and a reproach to their persecution. I have no way now of knowing whether the outrage mentioned by Sam, of the sale at the Temple square, occurred before or after his incarceration in Richmond Jail. Mr. Raglan who had paid the price demanded by the mob, simply to get father out of their hands, offered him his freedom, but father refused to accept it, telling him that he would prefer to pay him faithfully in work for the money expended, as he had nothing else to offer.

Father went to the home of Mr. Raglan, in Gallatin, I think, and in a short time had proved himself so capable and trustworthy that he was again offered his freedom, but still refused to accept until the specified time had expired (six months). Mr. Raglan then insisted on sending for mother and the younger children, who joined him, and remained during the rest of the time.

The incident that Sam mentions when the mob took father out into the woods telling mother and the children that they need not expect to see him again, for they would shoot him as soon as they got him out of sight, I have heard related by William Dawson, a nephew of father's who had more than once offered his own life freely if they would only leave father alone; and who was with him on this occasion. They took a big burley negro along; a blacksmith, who took a gun, and a bottle of whiskey along to nerve him up to the deed. Stopping at the hollow that Sam mentions, they concluded that it would be more fun to whip him to death, and ordered him to remove his coat, which he did. The negro as a preliminary took a big drink of whiskey, then stepped up and offered it to father, who declined. He then offered it to Cousin William, who took a good swig with thanks; this so tickled the negro that he changed his mind suddenly, ordered father to put on his coat, and turning his gun on the mob swore that he would shoot the first man who dared to lay hands on father, he marched them back home, and sat on the porch all night long with his gun across his knees, guarding them from the rest of the mob. Mother said that father never offered any resistances, and that his quiet and abiding faith in God inspired her with a like faith in him, and that his strength to endure seemed to be imparted to her. How many times have I heard these stories told and re-told around the fireside of a little log cabin to which mother and Aunt Sarah removed sometime after father's death, and of how they dreaded the coming of night, for then the mob invariably commenced their work of torment. I have heard mother say that they never dared to go to sleep in their beds, but would lay quilts down under the windows, and huddle the children close to the walls to escape the rocks. Father boarded up the windows after the glass had been smashed out, but even the boards were splintered and broken in a short time. They were stripped of their household goods, the blankets were taken from their beds, and cooking utensils

carried away.

The crowning test of faith, and of father's sublime trust in God, was an incident that stands apart from all of the other trials of those dark days and was always spoken of and listened to with awe. Early one morning a drunken mob surrounded the house and ordered father to bring his children out, and the leading ruffian saying with many oaths and blasphemy, that they had come to murder the whole bunch, and would begin with the children first. Without a word of remonstrance father entered the house and bringing out a blanket brought the children one by one and seated them upon it, taking the babe, little Sarah from her mother's arms last; then facing the mob he raised his right hand to the heavens and said in a voice quiet and calm, "There they are, shoot if God will let you." As though awe stricken the mob slunk away one by one, and the anxious mother whose faith in her husband was almost sublime, for she had given her babe into his arms without a murmur, gathered her little ones around her with a heart full of thankfulness for their deliverance.⁹⁶

Other incidents are recorded by Isabella in the history of her mother, Mary. She says,

I have hear mother tell how, before little Sarah was born, the family would follow father to his work in the woods, day after day, feeling that his presence might be a protection; we were too anxious and frightened to stay in the house. I cannot do justice to their suffering and endurance at that time, it would fill a volume.

[Isaac was also] sentenced to a term in the Richmond Jail, for alleged "contempt of court," by Judge Austin A. King, confined with a murderer, and only escaped suffocation while in the dungeon by stripping and fanning himself with his hat all night long.⁹⁷

Isabella's history of Isaac continues,

The rage and venom of the mob was directed especially against father partly because of his quiet refusal to leave the place at their dictation and partly because of the utter silence that he maintained regarding the abuse heaped upon himself and family. I think father must have moved down to Ray County soon after he left Mr. Raglan's, in company with Uncle John Dawson and his son William, and his sister Isabella Walton's family.

They leased the place called Woodward's Farm, three miles east of Richmond. Two houses with apple orchards and stables were already on the premises. They were to hold the place five years for clearing the land. It was located in a dense forest, and very little clearing had been done.

With his usual self-sacrifice, his relatives were located in the houses while father cut timber and built two cabins, one of two rooms, and one large enough for Aunt Sarah Kavanaugh and her daughter Eliza, who with cousin Ann was always regarded as part of the family. I was

born in one of these unfinished rooms on the 28th of September 1843.

I do not think Aunt Isabella Walton ever moved to this farm, but rented a place a mile west of Richmond. Riley Bunch who was married to Isabella Dawson, also remained in that locality. It was in this house of Aunt Bella Walton's that my father passed through a strange and almost incredible experience, that I will relate in part, just as I have heard it from my mother, to whom alone he confided the things that he passed through, as he lay apparently lifeless for three days and nights, the watchers never expecting to see him revive, or regain consciousness. It was made plain to him at that time, that he would soon be called from this life, that his work here would soon be ended.

He told mother that the Savior and Satan stood by his bedside all that time, that Satan was contending for his soul, but the Savior claimed and delivered him from his power; said that he was shown many things that it was not lawful for him to divulge even to her. He told her that knowing he would soon be called to leave them, he had sought to obtain some promise from the Lord in regard to his family, feeling loathe to leave them unprovided for and among strangers, but the only promise he obtained was that they should never want for bread, a promise that has been truly fulfilled.

I will never forget the evening after we had been through the endowment house in 1862, or mother's expression when she said to us, "I never could understand some things that your father told me after he came out of that coma, until now; but it has all been made plain to me today." She told us some of them, but I refrain from putting them on paper, as something to be commented upon, or subject to criticism. I have often wondered and studied over the fact that when Satan gathered his legions and sought to destroy the elders to prevent the establishment of God's Kingdom upon the earth that their first attack was upon father; that the manifestation of their rage and hatred should be hurled at him instead of Bro. Kimball, who stood at the head of that mission. And there has always been something unaccountable and unsatisfactory in the thought that Satan had power to curtail his life's work and to cover his name with a shadow and a reproach that rests upon it to this day, undeserved and unwarranted. . . . He seemed to wage a constant warfare against some unseen power. Before my birth he remarked that he did not know whether the babe would enter the world or he would leave it first. And to cousin Ann Wanlass, who was dying, or expecting to die, he said, "Do not worry, Ann, I will go a little before you."

He only lived one year from that time, working in the Crooked River bottoms, after an overflow of the Missouri River, he contracted swamp fever and came home to die. When I say that he was almost worshipped to the last by his family and all of his relatives to whom he had been as a tower of strength, and an unerring guide through life, I do not overdraw the picture; but again comes to my mind the picture and the mystery that I cannot fathom, that evil, and a hatred from the unseen world pursued him, even to the grave.

William Dawson, whom I have before mentioned, never left him, was with him to the last, and I have heard from his lips and from the lips of my mother of the terrible power that opposed him when he tried to shave and prepare father for the grave; that whenever he approached the corpse for that purpose he was blinded, a darkness coming between him and my father's face, until he had to give up the attempt.

He died on the 25th of September 1844 and was buried on the 29th, the day after I had attained my first year on the journey of life. He was buried on the Woodward Farm, in a dense forest a few hundred yards to the south of the humble home that he had prepared for his loved ones.

A few years later a country road was surveyed through the farm, and father's grave was left directly in the center of the road, and because the public respected the spot, travel passed to the right and left, leaving as it were a little green island untouched and unharmed, just as soon as brother Sam was old enough and able to do the work, he built a rail fence around the grave, and it

was replaced later by pickets.

After we left, we had Robert Sharp, a cousin, keep the place in repair, and when Sam last visited the place in 1882, he was well pleased to see that it had been well cared for. I visited the grave many times as I grew up, and after becoming familiar with the sad story of his life and suffering, would ride miles out of my way while going to Richmond or to some neighbors, only to be alone a little while beside father. Only once did I visit the log cabin where I was born. My brother Sam took us there and showed us all the old landmarks, an old apple tree that stood at the corner of the house, and a big tree on the way to the spring, that father used to climb and resting in the huge limbs, would read his favorite books: the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and "Young's Night Thoughts." And when we went to the old stable, where rough drawings of horses, deer and houses, done by Alf Walton with red keelstone, were still fresh and to my young eyes and were very grand. It may be only a fancy, but from a dream I had years ago, I believe that when my spirit is freed from mortality, its first flight will be to my father's grave.⁹⁸

Samuel Russell, a grandson of Isaac's, noted another of Isaac's past times: "Isaac Russell would woods and play on the flute. [And] when I was a boy we had a very fine jointed flute in a fine box which, I suppose had belonged to Isaac Russell."⁹⁹

At this point I would like to include three letters that Isaac received from his friends in the Church at Nauvoo, these friends remaining concerned about Isaac and his family. The first is the most interesting because of the statement about Joseph Smith, it says,

Nauvoo, Illinois,
Nov. 29th, 1840.

Brother Russell,

Dear Sir:-

As some of my former letters have not been answered I thought perhaps you did not get them, and as I can now send you a few lines from Bro. Goodson, I thought I would improve the opportunity.

It is needless for me to express my regret that you remain so long from the body of the Church, you who have been so very zealous for the cause of Christ, you who have been willing to sacrifice all things for the building up of the Kingdom in the last days. Read the Book of Mormon and you will find that Joseph has not fallen, he has not done his work yet, and if he sins is there no room for repentance, can not God forgive him, and can not we forgive him very often in a day. I have carefully watched his movements since I have been here and I assure you I have found them honest and honorable in all our transactions which have been very considerable. I believe he is an honest upright man and as to his follies, let whoever is guiltless throw the first stone at him. I shan't do it.

He continues to bring forth the deep mysteries of the Kingdom, and we feast upon them till our souls are made fat, and our hearts rejoice exceedingly. I wish you lived here. You would soon change your views of matters and become reconciled. Pardon me when I say that I fear some evil spirit has prejudiced your mind, and then takes the advantage of you. You now stand opposed to the only organized Church on the earth, a Church which God now acknowledges by revelations and the gifts of His Holy Spirit.

I know that God has not cut off his people, though there are some wicked amongst them. You know the Kingdom is as a net which gathereth of every kind, and the tares are allowed for a

time.

There never was a time when the Church prospered as much as at present throughout the world, the good and the honorable of the earth are obeying the Gospel and rejoicing in its gifts and blessings. Why do you keep away from the work of the Lord. You can do nothing where you are, you cannot advance the work of the Lord there. Come forth then and submit to the order that God has established and let your voice be heard amongst the nations. You were once a mighty man, why then be rebellious because of offenses, or for any other cause. As to you being cut off from the Church, Joseph disapproved with much warmth and wishes you and the rest to appeal to the general assembly of the Church. You would be received here with open arms, were you to come back.

I wish you would write me immediately as I want to hear from you. Mr. Goodson was here. I have not learned his business, he starts back today. My love to your family and all our friends. We are well, thanks to our Heavenly Father.

Yours,

Wm. Law.¹⁰⁰

The others read as follows,

Addressed to Mr. Isaac Russell,
Missouri.

City of Nauvoo, Hancock Co.
Feb. 21st, 1841.

Friend Russell:-

Having an opportunity to write to you I do it quick for I want to see you very much, for I can't bother you there. For I think we are right here. The Lord is doing great things for this place. We can say what we please here, independent from the Missouri mob, thank the living God.

We are all pretty well at present and I hope you are all in good health. We have all had a shocking time with the ague fever. We got pretty poor but we are getting up again with the help of the Lord. We have plenty of business here considering all things. I remember you well and want to see you come down with Bro. Scott and be one in our midst.

This from your young friend,

Enos McNall

Dear Brother and Sister in the Lord:

I want to see you more than I can express on paper. I often think of your good teachings in Canada, and have often wished to see you and yours. I have my own troubles, but there is nothing that mars my peace like having so good a brother and friend live so far from the place of gathering and what has the look of deviating from duty. You often reminded me of yielding to the obedience of the Gospel and I have often meant to perform it, but I have faith that if I done right that I should have my companion to go with me and it has been so, and I thank the Lord for it and I mean to try the same God for more faith of the same for Brother Russell to leave Missouri and its hellish mobbers and come and live with the Saints of the Most High. We are all doing very well considering the many difficulties that we have had to pass through. We have the best of teachings here in this place. Hundreds are flocking to the standard of truth. Others are fetching their company's and I want Elder Russell to come with his company of friends and join heart and hand with us again. My family joins in sending their respects to Elder Russell and Edmond says that when you come here to do your duty as you used to do, that he will be baptized by you. Dear Brother how it stands you and all the rest of us [need] to be up and doing while we have such a great work before us. The youths are looking for the elders to go ahead and shun bad paths and if

you do not conclude to come here with us be so good as to write to me the particulars that I may know the why's and wherefores of your not being gathered here with the rest. For my part I feel as if I could fetch you on my back if it was necessary.

I remain, your sincere friend and well wisher,
Phebe McNall.¹⁰¹

Nauvoo, Illinois,
Jan. 26th, 1843.

Dear Cousin:

I take up my pen to write you two or three lines where I intend to give you some information respecting my situation and standing, etc. I am now in the City of Nauvoo. I have got a lot and built a house and a shop, have set up my turning lathe and am working at my trade. I left England in March 1841 by the advice of one of the twelve and landed here in May. I have had many trying scenes to pass thru. I have buried my wife and three children since I came, but I forbear saying any more on this subject. I am now enjoying a tolerable share of health. I have had many opportunities of seeing Bro. Joseph and hearing him preach, and also of conversing with him, and I have found him all that you used to tell me he was for wisdom and knowledge. He far exceeds any other man as well as uprightness in all his conduct. Many of his prophecies have and are coming true. I am perfectly satisfied that he is a man of God, called and anointed to carry on the great work of the last days. And now my noble friend and cousin, I feel to say to you in the name of the Lord you have left the work, you have turned aside from that you taught me, which has caused me much grief, yea it has wounded me in the tenderest part, but I have said enough. I forbear. The greater part of the Alston Church is now at Nauvoo. Wm. Wanlass I expect will be here this spring. The work is rolling on both in America and the earth. Hundreds and thousands are returning and coming to Zion with songs of everlasting joy, while the world is standing amazed or persecuting with all their might. Then let the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing. I have no doubts respecting the work. I see and feel it is of God and the only Gospel that will save men. I hope you will write when you receive this. I should feel glad to see you here. We are building up the temple and the Nauvoo house in obedience to the command of the Lord and thus are preparing for the kings and the nobles to come to visit us as well as for an endowment in the house of the Lord. Great are the promises of God unto his people in the finishing of these houses, if in due time.

I long to see you and if you do not come to reside in this place I hope you will at least come and pay me a visit, if it is only for a week or two. Give my kindest love to all my friends in Missouri, and tell them I shall be glad to see them here. Bro. Sanders and wife and Sister Phoebe Thompson and others give their love to you. There is much distress abroad in the earth, especially in England. The Saints here have suffered greatly but are beginning to be a little more comfortable. As I do not know even where you are I shall address this to Cousin Dawson that you may be more sure to receive it.

I remain, dear cousin, yours most truly,
Jacob Peart.

The letter continues,

To Mr. John Dawson:

Dear Sir: I shall address these few lines to you as the most sure way of finding cousin Isaac. I hope you will excuse me. I feel much for your welfare as my friend. I am well aware that you have got a noble family as well as many noble friends around you, who, I have no doubt are dear to you, even almost as life itself. I hope you will come to this place and see here for yourself.

Do not give way to anything but truth itself. Try all things and hold fast to that which is good. Oh how I long to see Cousin Isaac Russell. Try to send him here, that I may have the opportunity of conversing with him once more on the great and important subject of salvation, even by the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

I remain, dear Cousin,

Jacob Peart.

The foregoing letter was addressed to Mr. John Dawson near Richmond, Missouri.¹⁰²

These letters, especially the one written by William Law, would indicate Joseph's willingness to accept Isaac back. Isabella mentions that this letter, as well as others contained in this history, were treasured by Isaac, and that he kept them in the carpet bag that he had taken with him to England. These letters were obviously important enough to Isaac that he kept them. However, with the lease on the Woodward farm, and with the deaths of both Isaac and Joseph, any attempt of returning to the Church would be spoiled.

Isabella writes that after the family traveled to Salt Lake City to join with the Saints, they continued to receive trials, this time from the hands of Church members who continually brought up the subject of Isaac's apostasy. She notes that it sometimes went as far as being the subject of a sermon. Many times the speakers knew that Isaac's family were in the audience. Isabella states that

after the scene had been repeated several times, our mother seemed to understand, and she said to us, "It is done as a test and trial to our faith. They may doubt our sincerity." In fact, one good brother to whom father had lent \$300 when he needed help, said to mother in a sarcastic way, when she had called upon him, as an old friend and neighbor, "I suppose you was frightened out by the prospect of the Civil War."

Mother was inexpressibly hurt by the insinuation, for her heart was full of love for the gospel and the old friends who had embraced it when father did in Canada, so she said, "We can only listen and endure patiently, and not allow it to affect us too deeply, and the time may come when we can tell the truth, and correct some of the mistakes about your father; but it is useless to attempt it now. It is needless to say that the \$300 was not mentioned by him at that time, nor ever after."¹⁰³

Isabella relates another experience that is worthy of note.

No one knew what his [Isaac's] plans for the future were, except my mother, but in an incident that occurred a short time before we left Missouri, I was made to understand in a very few words, where his and my mother's heart had always been, although I cannot understand why she had never given utterance to her knowledge of what would have happened had he lived.

A very dear friend, Mrs. Richard Allen, hearing of our intention to leave Missouri, sent word that she would come and spend a certain day with us. When putting the front room in order, which mother requested me to do, I found a Book of Mormon among other books on the center table. It may be just as well to explain right here, that we younger children had never heard Mormonism explained; had never heard gospel sermon, and only knew that in some way it was a

reproach, and a barrier with some, to an unquestioned social standing. Although Mrs. Allen had always been a true friend and neighbor, somehow I felt reluctant to have her find a Book of Mormon on our table, so I took it to another room and put it in the bookcase. Mother came into the room soon after I had returned to my work and on looking over the table, she turned to me and said, "Where is the Book of Mormon?" Feeling a little guilty, I replied that I had put it up in the bookcase. Without a word she left the room and returned in a few minutes with the book in her hand. She placed it upon the table again, and turning to me said, "Isabella, do you know that if your father had lived you would have been in Salt Lake City years ago?" I never meddled with the Book of Mormon any more, for I had received a whole revelation in a few tense words.¹⁰⁴

Isabella also notes this about her father,

He never rebelled as some natures would have done, never showed resentment to the man who had dealt him this blow, never talked of its injustices. Only his God and my mother knew his great true heart was bruised and broken, from the humiliation and suffering that he endured in silence.¹⁰⁵

Isabella also relates some experiences of meeting Isaac's old companions from the mission field, one from Heber C. Kimball, the other from Orson Hyde.

The incident that I am about to relate occurred sometime during the winter of 1862, when the ward to which we belonged was holding a party and picnic in the Social Hall in Salt Lake City. It was a custom in those days for certain nights to be set apart for the different wards to hold such pastimes in that building. The night being appointed by the Presidency, who were always present. My sister Jennie and I were seated together on the stage, when President Heber C. Kimball left his seat and came over to where we were. He took a seat upon the sofa between us, saying as he shook hands, "So you are Isaac Russell's daughters?" My sister replied, "Yes, we are Isaac Russell's daughters," in a tone that plainly implied, "and we are not ashamed of it." His next remark was, "Isaac Russell was a good man, a man that I loved, and if there is no one else to see that he is righted, when the times comes, I will see that he is righted myself." "Of course, there is only one way; he will have to come back by baptism, for the man who cut him off was still in authority, and it will be necessary for someone to attend to that ordinance for him, but I say again that I will see Isaac Russell righted if there is no one else to do it." He further said, "If it had happened in this day, it would never have been noticed, but it was a time to try men's souls, and no one knew who to trust." "Why," he said, "Orson Hyde went further on the road to apostasy than ever your father did, but he had time to regain balance, and is now one of the solid pillars of the Church," and he repeated again there is only one way, your father will have to come back to the Church, by baptism, for the man who cut him off was still in authority and it will be necessary for someone to attend to that ordinance for him, and if no one else stands for him, I will myself.

Much more was said, but I have given this much in his own words as near as I can remember. Words could never tell how precious this interview was to us, and I think I am safe in saying that our father's name was never mentioned from the pulpit again. I think the test had been satisfactory, and that mother and her children had been accepted as worthy the fellowship of the faithful. . . .

Several years after the incident just mentioned my sister Sarah happened to be given a seat next to Orson Hyde at a big dinner given in honor of his wife in Springtown, and when he heard her name, he said, "Are you a relative of Isaac Russell?" When she told him that she was

his daughter, he shook her hand and said, "Your father, he was one of the most powerful speakers we ever had in the Church, he could move the heaven and earth."¹⁰⁶

She had this to say about some of Isaac's converts that had emigrated and come to Salt Lake City,

The same testimony as to his unusual ability as a speaker had come to us before from several of his converts, who came to Utah after we had joined the saints in that place; not only as to his command of language, that was convincing and powerful, but to the love and confidence which he inspired in all who met him. I have been caressed and wept over by grey-haired men and women who had received the Gospel under his teaching and been baptized by him in England, when I was a grown woman, because I was Isaac Russell's child; and have been assured that no man could ever take his place in the hearts of the Alston branch of the Church, established by him on that first mission.

[And] to my father belongs the credit of baptizing the first Jew into our Church, a Mr. Neibaur,¹ father-in-law of Bishop C.W. Nibley, at this time the Presiding Bishop of the Church.

So I still ponder and wonder over the mystery of his unjustly clouded life, and why the venom and hatred of Satan was allowed to curtail a career so evidently marked out for usefulness, for he drew the hearts of men to him as a magnet draws the needle.

In a letter dated January 5, 1899, from John E. Goodson to my brother Samuel, he said, "I have always thought and still think that your father was a better man than those who sat in judgement against him. I have rarely ever known a man more free from guile, or deceit, or more courageous in defense of principles which he believed to be truths."¹⁰⁷

Let this record stand. This history does not, nor can it, answer all the questions about Isaac's life; besides, it is now 140 years since Isaac's death. There is little to obtain by way of direct evidence. The future may yet reveal more evidence of Isaac's life and character. However, I feel a few concluding remarks are in order.

For many family members, Isaac's life has been surrounded in mystery and misunderstanding. I believe that the facts that I have presented undo some of the mystery. Even though I have presented a clear picture of Isaac's apostasy, there still remains a question of how far did he go? This question is overshadowed by Heber C. Kimball's statement, that Orson Hyde went further on the road to apostasy

¹This is the story as related by a grand-daughter of Alexander Neibaur.

"Grandpa Neibaur was born in Ehrenbreitstein, which was at one time considered part of Germany, and as borders changed, part of Alsace, Lorraine, France. Actually, it was an old fortress. . . . He was born there on January 8, 1808, into a Jewish family, and as a young boy studied to become a Rabbi. Eventually, however, he decided against that and in favor of dentistry. When he finished dentistry school, he sailed across the English Channel to England and set up practice in Preston, England, a town in Lancashire County. It was there that he met Ellen Breakell and married her in 1834."

"In 1838, Grandpa Neibaur had a dream one night, in which two young men stood before him, holding a book, and asked him to read the book, for therein he would find the truth. Shortly thereafter, as he lay in bed early one morning, he could hear his wife engaged in conversation with the neighbor lady as they both washed their front steps. The neighbor asked his wife if she had heard about the Golden Bible and the new religion which some missionaries had brought from America. He instantly recalled his unusual dream and ran to the window to ask the lady where he might find these missionaries with the book. She suggested they might be in the town square, so he immediately dressed and went there in search of them. He found them and asked for a copy of their book, which he was given to take home and read. He closed his office for the day and read all day and all night until he completed it. He knew without any doubt that this Book of Mormon was from God, and asked for baptism into the Church. He was told that he needed to know more about the Church before he was baptized and so he had to wait a week. Grandpa and Grandma Neibaur were baptized on April 9, 1838 by Isaac Russell."

than Isaac ever did. Had the times been different, maybe the results would have been as well. Joseph Smith clearly stated that a "man who rises up to condemn others, finding fault with the Church, saying that they are out of the way, while he himself is righteous, then know assuredly that that man is in the high road to apostasy; and if he does not repent, will apostatize, as God lives."¹⁰⁸

It is clear though, that if Isaac at one time believed Joseph Smith was a fallen prophet, he still believed that the Book of Mormon and the Gospel to be true. There is sufficient evidence of this from Isaac's letter to Jacob Peart, and also from the fact that the Book of Mormon remained in the Russell home. When the revelation was given to Parley Pratt to go to Toronto, that he would find a people ready to receive his message, the Lord did know the hearts of the people of this community. Isabella (Russell) Walton, seemed to be a woman very close to the Spirit of God. I feel that this spirituality, this need of searching for the truth, was a characteristic and condition that was handed down from previous generations of Russells. Isabella's grandfather seemed to be this type of individual as well. In England, he was strongly devoted to the non-conformist movement. He was a seeker of truth, recognizing the contradictions of the churches in that land. He sought the truth, and this trait motivated the later generations of Russells. So when Parley Pratt came to Toronto, he found a family and a community that was ready to be taught the true Gospel. As his history tells, they accepted it and "drank in truth as water, and loved it as they loved life."

The question still remains unanswered, Why was Isaac's life so clouded by controversy and tribulation? Also, why did Isaac have all the persecution from the unseen world? These question may remain unanswered. However, can we take from Joseph a bit of vision and understanding? As he commented to Heber C. Kimball, when Heber had the bout with evil spirits, Joseph said that "at that time you were nigh unto the Lord; there was only a veil between you and Him. When I heard of it, it gave me great joy, for I then knew that the work of God had taken root in that land. It was this that caused the devil to make a struggle to kill you." Not only were these evil spirits manifested against Heber, but against Isaac. Was Isaac nigh unto the Lord? Did the devil seek to kill Isaac, and for what reason? These

answers I will leave up to the reader.

In conclusion, given sufficient time would Isaac have returned to the Church? There is no hard evidence one way or the other. However, one could conjecture that he would have. It is the belief of the author that Issac realized his error when Theodore Turley visited him after the Twelve met at the Temple Lot in Far West. This event was a foundational point in Issac's belief that Joseph was a fallen prophet and that this event would not transpire. Issac and family endured numerous persecutions by the mobs, in Missouri, for being a Mormon. Issac did not accuse those who had excommunicated him. Some of his most treasured letters kept in the carpet bag were those asking him to return to the Saints. These events, in addition to others mentioned in this history, could support the conjecture that Issac would have returned had he lived longer.

Appendix

During travels to England in the late 90s, I was asking directions from a resident of Preston. After explaining that I was looking for historical sites related to my grandfather, the individual said – “you must be looking for the Elder’s Tree.” At the time, I had no knowledge of the Elder’s Tree but was interested



Avenham Park Elders Memorial, Preston, England

First Latter-day Saints in Great Britain



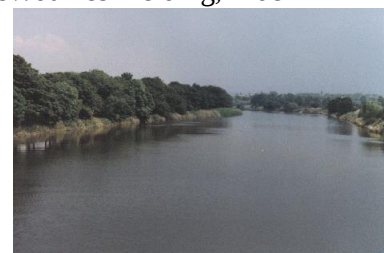
Near this spot on 30 July 1837, the first British converts to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were baptized by immersion in the River Ribble. Elder Heber C. Kimball, one of the Twelve Apostles of the Church, baptized six men and three women: George D. Watt, first, and then Charles Miller, Thomas Walmesley, Ann Elizabeth Walmesley, Miles Hodgson,



Henry Billsbury, Mary Ann Brown, Ann Dawson and George Wate.



The Prophet Joseph Smith had sent Apostles Heber C. Kimball and Orson Hyde, with Willard Richards, Joseph Fielding, John Goodson, Isaac Russell, and John Snider from America to the British Isles. They arrived in Liverpool on 19 July 1837. They traveled first to Preston where the Rev. James Fielding, Elder Fielding’s brother, permitted them to preach in the Independent chapel on Vauxhall Road. The first converts came from his congregation. Further use of the chapel being denied, they preached in the Market Square near the Obelisk, then met for nearly three years in the "Cockpit" or Temperance Hall near Stoneygate.



The Preston branch of the Church was established with 28 members on 6 August 1837 at the home of Ann Dawson at 21 Pole Street. Regularly-scheduled meetings are still held in Preston, the oldest continuous Latter-day Saint congregation in the world. In the following two decades, more than 75,000

people joined the Church in Britain. Many of them emigrated to the United States to join the main body of the Church in Illinois and later, in Utah. Those who stayed constituted the nucleus of the Church as it expanded throughout the British Isles.

End Notes

1 I have taken great liberties in editing the text of Isabella Russell Johnson's history of her father Isaac. In places I have used quotes from her text, in others I have paraphrased or re-written her text. But in all cases I have cited the fact that it was hers. In doing this I do not quote her page numbers. Isabella's history contained a vast amount of information that has been used a foundation to my own. In many cases, her history jumped from event to event, and sometimes back again. I therefore have changed the sequence of her text to give it more chronological order. Her history is a fine piece of work, but for my purposes I was required to make these changes. For anyone with further interest in reading her history of Isaac Russell, a copy can be found at the Brigham Young University, Harold B. Lee Library, Archives and Manuscripts, in the *Samuel Russell Sr. and Jr. Collection, MSS 1511*. In addition, the *Isaac Russell Collection, Vault MSS 497*, is also held by the Brigham Young University; and most of the historical fact on Isaac, was obtained through research at BYU and at the Historical Department of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I have also taken the liberty in making corrections to the letters cited herein.

2 Isaac's Christening record, British Film 094971, states that his place of birth is Windy Hall.

3 Belva M. Gardiner. 1983. The John Russell Family of Westmorland, England, and Descendants. US/Canada 929.271 G168g, at the Genealogical Library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.

4 Isaac Russell, by Isabella Russell Johnson, October 1919. Will be cited as Johnson.

5 V. Ben Bloxham, James R. Moss, and Larry C. Porter. 1987. *Truth Will Prevail*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book. p. 25.

6 Bloxham, p. 25.

7 Johnson.

8 Parley's travel partner was Brother Nickerson

9 Parley arrived in Toronto on 19 April, as reported in The Messenger and Advocate 2:319-320.

10 Isabella (Russell) Walton, widow of Matthew Walton, is the sister of Isaac Russell.

11 Pratt, Parley P, ed. 1985. *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company. p. 108-17.

12 Bloxham, cites Millennial Star (MS 2:51) stating that they ate a meal at the Fielding home, after which they went to the home of John Dawson. It was here that Parley Pratt preached, and where Isaac Russell was converted, proclaiming, "This is the Gospel I have been looking for and am ready to live and die by."

13 A History of the Mormon Church in Canada. 1968. Lethbridge: Herald Co. LTD. p. 10-11.

14 *Deseret News*, Church News, 31 July 1937, p. 1.

15 Pratt promised to preach "only from the Bible and not from any `new' revelations. *Church News*.

16 Millennial Star, 2:51.

17 Joseph Fielding related, "He [Elder Pratt] soon began to open the scriptures to us in a way that we never saw before, reminding us that we had bound him to keep the word; of this he made a good use, and we could not object to it (MS 2:51).

18 Church News records that, "For the next meeting, an arrangement was made to use the Methodist chapel. However, certain members of the congregation violently objected. Alex McKenzie, John and Edward Boak, William Jackson, John Bull, Thomas Golding and others tried to put Elder Pratt out of the building when he began to preach, whilst Isaac Russell and William Dawson attempted to intervene on Parley's behalf. At that point, Elder Pratt said that rather than cause contention he would voluntarily withdraw and, taking his defenders with him, he moved to the opposite side of the street and convened the meeting in a maple grove on land occupied by Joseph Fielding. (Also quoted in Bloxham, p. 26).

19 Francis (Russell) Dawson is also a sister of Isaac and Isabella.

20 This is also cited in the Church News; Johnson.

21 It is recorded that Isaac was a Methodist class leader and chorister in the little Wesleyan church in his community. Bloxham, p. 25.

22 Johnson.

23 Bloxham, p. 28.

24 Messenger and Advocate, 2:320.

25 Orson Pratt's Journals, 24 May-4 June 1836; Bloxham, p. 29.

26 Johnson..

27 Brigham Young University, Archives and Manuscripts, MSS 1511.

28 Bloxham, p. 28, 32-33.

29 *Messenger and Advocate*, 2:318.

30 *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*, p. 143.

31 Brigham Young University, Archives and Manuscripts, Vault MSS 497.

32 Francis M. Gibbons. 1985. *John Taylor: Mormon Philosopher, Prophet of God*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, p. 13.

33 Gibbons, p. 13.

34 B. H. Roberts. *The Life of John Taylor*. 1963. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, p. 39-40.

35 Roberts, p. 41-42.

36 *Mary Walton Russell*, by Isabella Russell Johnson, p. 3. MSS 1511.

37 Johnson.

38 Brigham Y. Card, ed., et al. 1990. *The Mormon Presence in Canada*. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press. p. 25.

39 Johnson; BYU, Archives and Manuscripts, Mss 1511, contains Samuel Russell's letters during his travels back to his old home, and visits with relatives and friends in 1882.

40 Larry C. Porter. 1986. Parley P. Pratt's Canada Mission Opened Door for Proselyting in British Isles. *Deseret News, Church News*. 14 December, p. 7, 10.

41 Orson F. Whitney. 1979. *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, 9th ed., p. 109-10.

42 *Deseret News*, 31 July, 1937. This copy of the Church News contains a picture of Isaac's Book of Mormon.

43 Matthias F. Cowley. 1964. *Wilford Woodruff*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft. p. 72.

44 Whitney, p. 111.

45 Whitney, p. 112.

46 Whitney, p. 119.

47 James B. Allen, Ronald K. Esplin, and David J. Whittaker. 1992. *Men with a Mission, 1837-1841: The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in the British Isles*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, p. 28.

48 Whitney, p. 121.

49 Claire Noall. 1957. *Intimate Disciple*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press. p. 172.

50 Whitney, p. 125; Bloxham, p. 73.

51 Whitney, p. 126.

52 Whitney, p. 129-30.

53 Howard H. Barron. 1977. *Orson Hyde: Missionary, Apostle, Colonizer*. Bountiful: Horizon Publisher. p. 96-7.

54 Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church Archives (HDC), Ms 1567, *Joseph Fielding Journal*. Quote begins on page 19.

55 Whitney, p. 131-32.

56 HDC, *British Mission History*, LR 1140, date July 30, 1837; Richard L. Evans. 1937. *A Century of Mormonism in Great Britain*. Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press. p. 34; This event was re-enacted as part of the 150th anniversary of the Church in the British Isles. It is reported in the Church News, 27 June 1987, p. 7.

57 BYU, Vault MSS 497.

58 James Fielding the Methodist preacher, not to be confused with Joseph Fielding.

59 BYU, Vault MSS 497.

60 Whitney, p. 143, 154.

61 Heber C. Kimball, Manuscript Journal, p. 34., cited in Bloxham, p. 83.

62 BYU, Vault MSS 497.

63 Letter of Orson Hyde to Marinda Hyde, Preston, England 14 September 1837, cited in James B. Allen, Ronald K. Esplin, and David J. Whittaker. 1992. *Men With a Mission, 1837-1841: The Twelve Apostles in the British Isles*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, p. 349.

64 BYU, Vault MSS 497.

65 Fielding, p. 39.

66 HDC, Orson Hyde letter, dated 14 November 1837.

67 Letter from William Law to Isaac Russell, Churchville, 10 November 1837. Vault MSS 497.

68 BYU, Vault MSS 497.

69 BYU, Vault MSS 497.

70 HDC, *Jacob Peart Diary*, Ms 122-2.

71 BYU, Vault MSS 497.

72 Willard had evidently become interested in marrying Jennetta, as he was still single. This relationship was also referred to in the letter of Orson Hyde to Willard Richards 14 February 1838.

73 It is not clear what Isaac is referring to here. But it seems clear that Willard has not written all that was said. It is possible also that Isaac is referring to the state of the Church in the states (ie. -persecution).

74 Noall, p. 184-85.

75 Whitney, p. 192.

76 M. B. Reynolds dictated copy of Heber C. Kimball's Journal. University of Utah, Archives, Acc 334, Bk. 94c, April 9.

77 Whitney, p. 202.

78 Johnson.

79 Johnson.

80 Donald Q. Cannon, Lyndon W. Cook. 1983. *Far West Record: Minutes of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830-1844*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book. p. 203.

81 BYU, Vault MSS 497

82 *Joseph Smith History*, vol 3, p. 336.

83 JSH, vol 3, p. 226

84 Fielding, p. 23-4.

85 HDC, Ms d 5946.

86 Fielding, p. 23-4.

87..Samuel W. Taylor. 1976. *The Kingdom or Nothing: The Life of John Taylor, Militant Mormon*. New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc. p. 37.

88..HDC, Ms 5934, Oct. 13, 1874.

89..HDC, Theodore Turley Journal, Ms 7661.

90..Kate B. Carter. 1962. *Our Pioneer Heritage*. Salt Lake City: Daughters of the Utah Pioneers. vol. 5, p. 335.

91..Sketch of the life of Samuel Russell, by his son Samuel Russell, p. 2. MSS 1511.

92..HDC, Ms 7661.

93..Joseph Fielding Smith. 1972. *Essentials in Church History*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book. p. 188-89.

94..Johnson.

95..BYU, MSS 1511.

96..Johnson.

97..Mary Walton Russell, by Isabella Russell Johnson, p. 5. MSS 1511.

98..Johnson.

99..Sketch of the Life of Samuel Russell, by Samuel Russell, p. 7. MSS 1511.

100..BYU, Vault MSS 497.

101..BYU, Vault MSS 497.

102..BYU, Vault MSS 497. John Dawson was the husband of Isaac Russell's sister Fanny (Frances Russell).

103..Johnson.

104..Johnson.

105..Johnson.

106..Johnson.

107..Johnson.

108..The Prophet's Address to the Twelve, 2 July 1939, cited in James B. Allen, Ronald K. Esplin, and David J. Whittaker. 1992. *Men with a Mission, 1837-1841: The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in the British Isles*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, p. 353.