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Preface

After Dr. Hyrum L. Andrus passed away in the fall of 2015 A box of documents he had stored in his basement was discovered. These reports were collected by Dr. Andrus many years ago. The box contained an early draft of a book this editor has taken the privilege of naming *They Joined The Church: Personal Accounts of People Who Were Converted and Joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*.

Included in this work are stories of conversion to the gospel of Jesus Christ taken from the original journals. There are experiences of everyday life which are representative of the time and circumstances of the frontier life in America as shared by so many of the early converts to the church.

Occasionally a journal gives a glimpse into the life in the American frontier, Canada, England, or Ireland in the early 19th century, and a little better understanding is gained of just what was involved when the convert believed the Prophet Joseph Smith and the story of the restoration of the Gospel.

Some of the journals give detailed accounts of the converts previous religious affiliation and experiences. Many of the accounts are included because they are representative of the experiences of many of the early converts. These people came from England, Canada and many of the East and Northeastern United States. Most were farmers, but other skills included: teacher, millwright, carpenter, blacksmith, mason, lumberman, merchant, wheelwright and cobbler. Many were or the Methodist, Baptist or Presbyterians religions persuasions. Many did not belong to any organized religion and had minimal church going experience. However, almost all of them were inquisitive and looking for religious enlightenment.

More complete information on some of these people can be found in a listing of "Journals, Diaries, Biographies, Autobiographies and Letters of Some Early Mormons and Others Who Knew Joseph Smith, Jr. and/or His Contemporaries" at the web address: <http://www.boap.org/LDS/Early-Saints/>.

It is not possible to give thanks to all those who may have helped Dr. Andrus in collecting these reports, that information has been lost in time.

Larry Peterson, Editor (2017)

WILLIAM ADAMS

In the year 1840, two elders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, viz Theodore Curtis of America, and William Black of Manchester, England, proclaimed that the gospel of Jesus Christ had been restored to earth by a holy angel from heaven to Joseph Smith, a prophet of God in these last days.

I believed their testimony. My heart leaped with joy and thanks to my Heavenly Father for again revealing Himself, and restoring the Holy Priesthood again to man on the earth. My age at that time was a little over eighteen years, and I was living home with my parents. Having received a common education, I read and studied the scriptures and defended the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the best of my ability.

I attended the meetings of the saints at every opportunity, and the more I attended the meetings the stronger my faith became. I cannot express the joy I had, when, at the testimony meetings that were held on Sabbath evenings, the gifts of the Spirit were enjoyed: the speaking in tongues, the interpretation of tongues, prophesying, etc. Hearing and seeing, I could hold off no longer. I was baptized by Robert Hutchenson, who held the office of a priest, on Saturday evening, March 26, 1842, and confirmed by William Johnston, presiding elder of the branch, on the Sunday following which was Easter Sunday. My age was twenty years, two months and eighteen days. I felt thankful to my Father in heaven for such blessings unto me. Peace and joy filled my bosom, but my friends and acquaintances turned against me because I had obeyed the gospel, and had become a Mormon.

In the following summer, I was ordained to the office of teacher, and I was the instrument in raising a branch of the Church in Crawfords Burn, county of Orin, which numbered about twenty members. I spent my time very pleasantly in attending to my duties in teaching and bearing my testimony. It was a great pleasure and joy trying to convince people that the gospel was true.

In October of 1842, I took Mary Ann Leach to be my wife. She was a member.

Persecution was getting very strong against the saints at this time, and my strongest desire was to gather with the Saints to Nauvoo, Illinois.

On December 31, 1843, I left home with my wife, and three months old son, with a light heart, bidding my father and mother, brothers and sisters, and friends farewell.

Autobiography of William Adams, 1822-1894, pp. 1-5.

