

A Historical "Address" from Wilford Woodruff to Heber C. Kimball and George A. Smith on the Opening of the City of London to Missionary Work, September 1840

Introduced and Edited by Scott H. Faulring

On 12 September 1840, Wilford Woodruff, one of eight Latter-day Saint Apostles then serving in the British Isles, began to write what he described as a historical "address" to two of his fellow quorum members, Heber C. Kimball and George A. Smith. At the time, Woodruff was in Leigh, Herefordshire, England, situated about 120 miles northwest of London. In his address, he outlined his, Kimball's, and Smith's recent experiences and activities in the world's great metropolis—London. Although the letter is addressed to both Kimball and Smith, Wilford noted in his missionary journal, "I wrote a lengthy historical letter to Elder Kimball including my travels with him in London. It is the first letter I have ever written him."¹ Woodruff reported in detail to his fellow Apostles on the various historical and cultural landmarks they visited while they struggled to open the city of London to the preaching of the restored gospel. He also reflected on their frustrations in getting anyone to listen to their warning voice. At the time of their first mission to London, Woodruff was thirty-three years old, Kimball was thirty-nine, and Smith was twenty-three.

Legendary are the missionary accomplishments of the Twelve Apostles in Great Britain during the 1840–41 season.² In less than a year, thousands of British converts were made through the hard work and unwavering faith of these dedicated American Apostle-missionaries that included Elders Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Orson Pratt, Parley P. Pratt, Willard Richards, Wilford Woodruff, John Taylor, and George A. Smith.³ Among them, Wilford Woodruff stands out as one of the most successful in number

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of converts. In the spring of 1840, led by the Spirit, Elder Woodruff went to the Herefordshire region where in about six months more than a thousand people heard the message of the restored gospel and were converted and baptized.

Around the time of the second general conference in England, held on 6 July 1840 in Manchester, the Apostles decided that three of their quorum should visit the city of London and begin missionary work there. From at least one record, it appears that Heber C. Kimball, George A. Smith, and Wilford Woodruff appointed themselves to this assignment—but probably not without the consent of their fellow quorum members. Elder Woodruff, writing from Manchester on 7 October 1840, recalled that “From this conference [Manchester, 6 July 1840] we designed to go forth and open other new places, and while numbers of our brethren went into new places in different parts of Europe, Elders Kimball, G. A. Smith and myself concluded to visit London.”⁴

Almost a month later, on 2 August 1840, Elders Smith and Woodruff waited at Dymock-Ledbury for the arrival of Elder Kimball from Manchester. Wilford recorded in his journal, “We are looking for Elder Kimball evry day and as soon as he arrives we shall take our leave of the Saints here and go to the city of LONDON and warn the inhabitants thereof and Preach the gospel unto them.” Elder Woodruff also appended this prayerful thought: “I Pray the Lord to send the Angel of his presence before us & prepare the way that much good may be done in the name of the Lord.”⁵

Heber C. Kimball departed Manchester on the fourth, “proposing to join Elders Woodruff and Smith at Herefordshire, and proceed immediately to London.”⁶ Eight days later, Elders Woodruff and Smith walked from Ledbury to Dymock where they found Elder Kimball at the home of the presiding elder, Thomas Kington. The day before, on 11 August 1840, at Froome’s Hill, John Benbow, an English convert and affluent farmer, realizing the great expense the Apostles would incur in London, contributed fifteen pounds sterling toward their mission. Elder Woodruff noted in his journal, “Elder Benbow . . . gave me [£]15 for our London mission.”⁷ The three Apostles spent the next five days in the Herefordshire area teaching the people, baptizing a few, and preparing for their labors in London. On Monday, 17 August, they said goodbye to the Saints at Leigh; and, accompanied by Elder Daniel Browett, the American Apostles rode to Cheltenham, a city of forty thousand.

On the morning of 18 August 1840, one year and ten days after his departure from Montrose, Iowa, to begin his British mission, Elder Woodruff set off with his two companions on what would be their most difficult field

of missionary labor—the great city of London. Departing Cheltenham by coach, they traveled forty miles through the flatlands of Gloucestershire to the Farrington Road Station. There, at one o'clock in the afternoon, they boarded rail cars that took them to the Paddington Station Depot, on the western outskirts of London, where they arrived at four o'clock. From the depot, they boarded a horse-drawn bus, called an "Omnibus," for the four-mile trip to the city center. Departing the coach, they walked south across London Bridge into the borough of London.

Elder Theodore Turley, present during the 6 July general conference at Manchester, recommended that when they arrived in London, they should contact his wife's sister, Mary Ann Allgood. They did this. The Allgoods lived at 19 King Street in Southwark, within a mile of London Bridge. Mrs. Allgood treated the Apostles kindly, gave them something to eat and drink, and then directed them to a public house at the King's Arms Inn, King Street, in London borough.

Pondering the significance of their arrival, Elder Woodruff recorded his initial thoughts in his journal: "I am now in the great city of London the largest most noted & populous commercial City in the world containing a Population of about (1,500,000) one million five hundred thousand people. I am In Company with Elders H. C. Kimball & G. A. Smith. We are the first Elders of the church of Latter Day Saint[s] that have ever walked the Streets of London."⁸

Also, on their first day in the British capital, Wilford recorded a brief prayer in his journal. In his meditation, Elder Woodruff compared London to the "capital of great Babylon" and then asked himself, "What am I & my Brethren here for?" The answer given by the Spirit and directed to the inhabitants of London was "to warn thee of thine abominations & to exhort the[e] to repent of thy wickedness & prepare for the day of thy visitation thy mourning thy calamity and thy wo[e]."⁹

The next day, Elder Kimball wrote to his wife Vilate, informing her, "I am now in the city of London in company with Elders G. A. Smith and Woodruff. We are at a publick Hous near Sisters of Sisters Turlies [Turley's]. We went to her hous first. She gave us some thing to Eat and directed us to this place till she could guit [get] us some privit hous whare we could be more comfortable. She seames to be a kind body. . . . We have not had an opertunity as yet to say to any thing about our message but shall soon if the Lord permit[s]. We feel our weakness to be placed in this great city whare there is about two Million of inhabitence and such a throng of people as I never saw before and so much nois[e]. . . . We shall begin tomorrow to find som[e] place to begin to preach the gossell for the first time in this great city."¹⁰

On their second night in London, the elders had trouble sleeping. Evidently unaccustomed to the constant noise and commotion of the thriving city, Elder Woodruff complained of having a wearisome time resting. Wilford noted in his journal, "Their is so much passings of Drays & horses & singing & hollowing at all hours of the night in the streets that it is with difficulty that I could sleep at night."¹¹ Elder George A. Smith later observed that the King's Arms Inn was comfortable but was "in the midst of London racket" surrounded by the "cries of peddlers, the noise of thousands of wagons, coaches and gigs, with night songs of streetwalkers, served to keep countrymen awake, till overcome by the labors of the day, we finally sank into forgetfulness."¹²

On 20 August 1840, Elders Woodruff, Kimball, and Smith wrote from 19 King Street (the Allgoods) to the editors of the *Times and Seasons*. In their letter, they reviewed their recent missionary activities, including the trip to London, and concluded with the statement, "We are all well, in good spirits and are going to see the people in different parts; and see what we can do in this small world, for London looks like a world. Give us your prayers."¹³

The next day, after a walking tour of the London city center with his missionary companions, Elder Woodruff wrote a lengthy entry in his journal. He exclaimed: "This was the most interesting day of my life as far as viewing the splended works of man was concerned." He described their visit to the pillar monument "erected in commemoration of the DREADFUL FIRE OF LONDON in the year 1666" by Sir Christopher Wren. On this clear day, they climbed 345 black marble stairs, ascending 202 feet to the viewing platform. They were impressed with the panoramic view of London. From their perch atop the monument, the three missionaries viewed such striking landmarks as the Tower of London, St. Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, and the House of Parliament—all important sites they would visit while in London.¹⁴

Over the next two and a half weeks, the three Apostles tried to establish a missionary foothold in London. Either together or separately, Elders Kimball, Woodruff, and Smith visited several ministers, including the former Anglican minister Robert Aitkien, a nonconformist preacher, to ask for permission to address the ministers' congregations and deliver their warning message. The three Apostles later reported, "We first commenced by visiting the ministers and preachers of the various orders, and requested the privilege of delivering our message unto the people in their Churches and Chapels, but of course you will not be astonished, when we inform you that they denied us this privilege and rejected our testimony."¹⁵ Undaunted, they held

street meetings in such places as Tabernacle Square, where large crowds listened but few expressed any real interest. At one point, the Apostles rented a temperance hall to preach in, but only a few people showed up to hear them. During the three weeks they served together in London, only one person gave himself for baptism. That individual was a humble sixty-year-old watchmaker named Henry Conner, who was baptized by Elder Kimball on 31 August 1840 in a public bath. Londoners, it seemed, were too preoccupied with worldly concerns or their traditional religions to be impressed with the testimonies of these American Apostles. In contrast to the phenomenal missionary success they had found elsewhere in England, especially in places like Herefordshire, London was mostly unreceptive to the message of the Mormon elders.¹⁶ On 10 September 1840, Elder Woodruff departed London, leaving his two companions to carry on the work. He returned north to the Herefordshire region to attend several area conferences.

The "Historical Address" that follows reflects Elder Woodruff's impressions and was written just two days after leaving London. Surprisingly, the letter's tone is not negative but rather gives a reflective account of their determined missionary efforts. Much of the first part of the address describes in vivid details the impressive London landmarks they visited. The second part, written on 25 September 1840 from Froome's Hill, reports the statistics of the two Herefordshire area conferences and describes the hostile reaction of the local ministers to the success of the Latter-day Saint missionaries.

The address, written on a large sheet of paper that had been folded in half, forming four pages, ended up in the possession of George A. Smith's descendants. In 1980, the LDS Church Historical Department acquired the document. It has since been cataloged as Ms 9122. Photocopies of the address, provided by the Smith family, have been in the George A. Smith Collections at the Special Collections Libraries at both Brigham Young University and the University of Utah since the early to mid 1970s. These copies were supplied by a member of the George A. Smith family. Permission to publish this address has been granted by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, which permission is gratefully acknowledged.

The address is published verbatim, with original spelling, capitalization, and punctuation retained.¹⁷ Paragraphing, which is sometimes difficult to determine in the original, is followed as closely as possible. Strikeouts and underlining are retained, and insertions are indicated by use of angle brackets. Square brackets are used for page breaks, editorial insertions, and clarifications.

**Historical “Address” of Elder Wilford Woodruff
to Elders Heber C. Kimball and George A. Smith,
12, 25 September 1840**

Leigh Gloucestershire England Sept 12th 1840

Elders H. C. Kimball & G. A. Smith.
Beloved Brethren.

I am in the midst of the Saints in this region, enjoying good health & spirits & while meditating upon the scenes which have transpired with me during the last 23 Days which has Been spent with you on a mission in the City of London I feel disposed to pen a few of my thoughts on Paper for your perusal. Brethren this is the first mission we have ever enjoyed together in the vineyard. Can we for a moment say that our time hath been spent in vain during this period? Nay we cannot, the spirit within me forbids it. Have we not profited by this school of experiance? yea much evry way. While the Lord hath manifested by Revelation¹⁸ that it is his will that we should obtain a knowledge of kingdoms & countries, this mission hath placed us in a situation to avail ourselves of the desired information upon many things which we could not otherwise have obtained Time will clearly show, that the late mission which we have enjoyed together in the city of London (which is still continued by your labours) will ever be firmly engraved upon our minds and occupy an important place in the History of our travels among the nations of the EARTH.

When London feels the chast[e]ning hand of the ALMIGHTY & in her turn amid the revolutions of the gentile world finds her doom is sealed with her lofty spires, synagogues, mansions, & pallaces laid in one common ruin, then with what feelings shall we address our children & others that may surround us while our heads are blossoming with age as we point to the 21st Day of ~~October~~ <August> 1840 when we stood together upon the top of the most splended & highest modern Pillar in the univers & with the naked eye surveyed the most Populous & wealthy city upon the face of the Earth which shelters a million & a half of human Beings, which we can then exclaim hath been the theatre of much miserly & wo but now sleeps in Death. Having in my possession a history of certain places which we visited while together in the City of London I here feel disposed to give a detail of the same that you may have a correct account of it before you to refer to should you have occasion hereafter to point to those events.

On the 24th of ~~Oct~~ <Aug> 1840 we visited St Pauls Cathedral¹⁹ which is so noted in the world. We found this Cathedral to be 500 feet in Length

285 in bredth, 404 in highth, which was 40 years in Buildings & from <AD> 1675 to 1715 which cost ~~£736,000~~ about \$3,680,000 <£1,576,076 about \$5,880,380>²⁰ which contains 47 monuments of fine marble erected over the Tombs of certain Lords, Bishops, Generals, Earls, & other Titles who had distinguished themselves in the military service of Great Britian & otherwise. Lord Nelsons²¹ being the most Noted. Historians have taken much interest in the Origen & whole history of this cathedral Dedicated St Paul which was first Built by St Augustine in the year 610 & now considered the Largest Cathedral in the world excepting the Vatic<c>an²² at Rome Dedicated St Peter. & while the gentiles have built such splended Cathedrals & Churches in honour to the names of the Ancient Apostles they reject the vary gospel which those Apostles taught, & are as ripe for destruction as the Jews were after putting to Death their King & Deliverer.

On the 1st day of Sept we visited the Thames Tunnel²³ by Desending about 70 [80]²⁴ feet into the Bowels of the earth & walked through the Tunnel which was arched with Brick over head. This Tunnel opens a Thoroughfare from one shore to the other for all kinds of teams carriages, horsman & footman, which Tunnel runs under the River while the River Thames & British Shipping is over head. this was finished 1110 [1,120] feet & lighted with gas when we visited it & considered one of the greatest wonders of the last days, & shows that man hath sought out many Inventions.

On the 5th of Sept we visited Westminster Abbey²⁵ which visit was not unprofitable; had we travled the world over we could not have found another spot that would have presented a wider field of history, knowledge, & contemplation as touching the rise, progress & fall, of Kings, Princes, Dukes, Lords, & mighty men of gentile greatness, Pride, & Beast & whare the most refined & finishing stroke of the Artist strikes the Beholder with asstonishment. Westminster Abbey is composed of Eleven Chapels (ownly seperated by walls or petitions) Viz. 1. St. Benedict, 2d St Edmunds, 3d St Nicholas, 4th Henry the Seventh, 5th St Pauls, 6th St Edward the Confessor, 7th St Erasmus, 8th Abbot Islip, 9th St John, 10th St Andrew, & 11th St Michael. [p. 1] And these Chapels contain the Bodies Tombs & Monuments of 13 Kings viz Edward I,– III,– V,– VI, Charles II, Henry III,– V,– VII, James I, George II, Richard II, William III, And Sebert King of the east Saxons who first built this Church & Died July 616. Also 13 Queens viz Athelgoda Queen of Sebert who Died Sept 13th AD 615, & Phillippa, Matilda, Mary I,– II, & Queen Mary of Scotland, Elizabeth, Catherine, Queen Anne, Editha, Eleanor & Caroline. And 6 Princes, 11 Dukes, 7 Duchess 1 Marquis, 7 Lords, 3 Vicount's, 8 Countess, 3 Barrons, 16 Earls, 11 Admirals, 10 Generals, 5 Col[onels], 3 Majors, 10 Capt[ains], 4 Lieut[enants], 16 Bishops, 6 Divines, 15 Doctors, 52 Sirs, 153 Gentlemen, 48 Lady's, making 421

Distinguished Persons who have been deposited in vaults in this Abbey & monuments erected to their memory. Here we had the Privilege of viewing the full stature & perfect likeness of Queen Elizabeth, Mary, & Anne, Lord Nelson & William Pitt & others We saw the full Coronation Dress of Queen Anne. We also saw the Chair & summit in which Queen Victoria & All the Kings & Queens in England for the last 800 years did sit in the²⁶ time of their coronation when they were crowned, it is called the Coronation Chair. It is covered with gold tissue It contains a stone under the seat upon which all the Scottish Chiefs & Kings were crowned since they were A People. It is reported to be Jacobs Pillar.²⁷ By walking through this Abbey we see frequent marks of violence from Oliver Cromwell in defacing some of the Tombs Monuments & Brasswork with which some of the Abbey was Adorned. Here we behold the art of man with all its combined force & Power spun to the finest thread & expanded to the fullest extent in the Building & finishing of this Abbey as a general whole but more especially that Part called Henry the Seventh's Chapel. And a visit to this Abbey is not only worthy of the attention of travellers but to occupy a place in the Journal of Modern Historians.

The House of Parliament is within a few ~~rods~~ yards of Westminster Abbey, which we visited on the 8th of Sept., as we entered the house of Lords (now occupied by the Commons) we did not behold so much to interest the sight of the eye as the meditation of the mind however we had the privilege of resting ourselves by sitting in the Chair in which the speaker of the house of Lords had sat for many years. In this room all the speeches were made by Mr William Pitt while advocating the American Cause before the Revolution. In this Room all the laws were made that now governs about two hundred Millions of human beings. As the house of Commons was burned down about six years since, this room has since been occupied by the Commons & the Lords assemble at another room erected for that purpose. Some might suppose that a house of Parliament fitted up to contain Kings, Lords, & Commons would be something extra grand & expensive, But we found it quite the reverse. It is exceeding plain & undecorated. On entering the room one would sooner think he was in an American School house Rather than In a house of Lords or of Commons. While retiring from this scenery we had a view of the order of British Soldiery or foot guards while on parade in St James Park²⁸ accompanied by a full Band of music. Also of the Queens horse guard 100 in number well mounted upon black horses with their steel coat of Mail glistening in the sun. We also took a passing view of the monument erected in honour to [- -] [*several unreadable characters, possible shorthand*] the Duke of York²⁹ which was 135 feet in height. And of the Mansion of Queen Dowager ~~Widow~~ Queen of the Late King Williams IV,

which we had a view of as we Passed along. In fine St James Park is surrounded as it were with Dwellings, Mansions, Castles, Monuments, & Pallaces of the first class as to size, splendour, & note of any in London of which Buckingham Palace³⁰ is the Chief this is for the Royal family And is now occupied by her Majesty Queen Victoria & his Highness Prince Albert except while they are at Winser Castle. Buckingham Palace covers a number of acres of ground & is surrounded by a high wall of hewn stone except the front which is a high fence of cast Iron railing & evry door enterence & gate was strongly guarded by armed Soldiers. I walked nearly around this Palace & while there I had a view of his Royal Highness Prince Albert while he Rode from his Palace across St James Park mounted upon a gray horse accompanied ownly by his groom. I also spent a few moments in the National Gallery³¹ which is not unprofitable to a traveller desiring to form a knowledge of countries & the art of man. This gallery contains a vary great & extensive variety of the most Perfect Paintings that could be collected together by the Nation. These with many other things we have had the Privilege of forming a knowledge of for ourselves. But Brethren while you discover that I have written rather largely concerning these temporal & Perishable objects [p. 2] which are in the same state & doomed to share the same fate in the Revolutions of the last days & the fall of Babylon as Jerrusalem did when they rejected their King & put to Death the Mesiah, think not that I for a moment harbour the idea that the ownly Benefit we have derived in the enjoyment of our late mission together in the City of London has been a knowledge of these ~~these~~ things, far from this. for while I have spoken of these things for the purpose of preserving a historical sketch of the same, still the remaining part of the subject rests upon my mind with greater weight. This mission hath given us a more intimate acquaintance with each other, & that to in some degree in the midst of trials, which acquaintance has had a tendency to unite our hearts (if possible) more closer together in the love of God & the New & Everlasting Covenant. This Being the first mission to the City of London in these last days. It hath been our lot to unite our labours together in lifting up the standard of truth, of light, & the fulness of the Everlasting gospel unto the inhabitants thereof. And when on dilligent search we found the whole City given to Idolitry, Priestcraft, Tradition, Superstition, & all manner of abominations, wickedness, & uncleanness, & all doors closed against us we did not hesitate to stand in the midst of the streets & Jonah like cry repentance unto the inhabitants of that mighty City, the Metropolis of England, the Pride & glory of Britain, the Beast of the gentiles & the largest city in the world Containing One Million, five hundred thousand souls, who are ripened in iniquity & prepared for the wrath of God & like the Ox going to the slaughter know

not the day of their visitation. Yes Brethren I shall long remmember standing in the midst of that people & assisting you in bearing a message unto them a message which will prove a savior of life unto life or of Death unto Death unto them & not ownly unto them But unto all they unto whom the sound thereof shall come even unto the ends of the Earth & the Jud[g]ment of the great day shall manifest the truth of it unto all nations. And it will ever sweeten the memory of that eventful period of my life to know that our labours on that occasion were not in vain, but that we were enabled through the great mercy & goodness of God, toil labour, dilligent search, & Perseverance to find some of the Blood of Ephraim, a few honest souls that were willing to recieve & obey the gospel & that we were enabled to lay the foundation of a work in that City which will not be removed untill the City is warned so that they will be left without excuse & the Saints gathered out to stand in Holy places while Judgment works. Untill that time the seed which we have sown in that City & that which you are now sowing shall bring forth fruit & the fruit shall remain to the honour & glory of God & I say it in the name of Jesus Christ & the spirit beareth record & the record is true.³²

Therefore Brethren let our souls rejoice & our hearts be made glad that we are permitted to bear some humble part in the sacrifices, sufferings, & reproach of Christ & of warning this generation & of gathering together the honest in heart & the meek from among men that they may stand together & be prepared to enter into that rest which remaineth for the Peopl[e] of God.

And Dear Brethren my prayer to God is that we may ever be meek & humble that the power of the Priesthood & the spirit of our ministry & mission may rest upon us, that we may be carried through evry strait Place wharein we are called to walk, that we may keep the faith & overcome the world. I pray my Heavenly Father in the name of Jesus Christ that this may be our happy lot, & that we with all the Elders of Israel & Saints of God may be prepared to Joyfully meet our Lord & Master when he appeareth again the second time without sin unto salvation.

Thus sayth your Brother in the New & Everlasting Covenant
Willford Woodruff

Herefordshire, Froom's Hill, Sept 25th, 1840³³

Dear Brethren

Since I wrote the foregoing I have had the privilege of visiting the Churches in this region & of holding two Conferences among the Saints & I feel disposed to communicate a few words to you upon the subject. I attend-

ed A Conference on the 14th of Sept & herd 17 Churches³⁴ represented containing 253 Members & 38 Officers, [consisting of:] 6 Elders, 26 Priest, & 6 Teachers.

I also attended a Conference at Standly Hill Herefordshire on the 21st Sept 1840 & herd 23 Churches represented containing 754 Members & 75 Officers viz 13 Elders 52 Priest 9 Teachers & 1 Deacon Making in all in the Bran Green & Gadfield Elm & Froom Hill Conferences 1007 Persons Baptized & 113 Officers viz– 19 Elders 78 Priest[s] 15 Teachers & 1 Deacon These have all embraced the fullness of the Gospel within about six months³⁵ [p. 3]

Surely the Lord hath Done marvelous things in this part of the vineyard & the fals shepherds who have been feeding themselves & not the flock, & clothing themselves with the wool & not clothing the flock are now in great trouble & know not what to do for God is delivering the flock out of their hands. The Preachers of the variou[s] sects are in great perplexity & begin to rage & mourn sore like Doves in this part of the Land especially the Clergy of the Church of England, they are alarmed in earnest they are holding Conventions assemblies & meetings of the Ministers constantly, to contrive schemes & plans to overthrow & stop the work of God. In some instances they do not have more than 10 or 15 persons in their church on the Sabbath & they really begin to think sumthing strange is happening, for the wisdom of the wise is perishing & the understanding of the prudent is coming to nought, they are trying to flood this part of the land with falshood to keep the people from hearing[.] But not withstanding this truth is mighty & Prevailing, & many are flocking to the standard of truth in this part of the land. When other means fail the clergy will try to stir of [up] the spirit of mob & Persecution to try to put the Saints to Death they will flee to this as their last resort, & the signs of times indicate in this part of the land that such things are not far off. The minister of the church at Dymock is manifesting much of this spirit already by encourageing mobs in his parish against the Saints. On the 16th inst I attended a prayer meeting at the house of Elder Kingtons³⁶ in Dymock & as the Saints began to gather together, the beat of Pails, Kettles, Pans Pots & sticks was herd through the streets & the mob soon collected in front of the house and parraded rank & file. We closed the window shetters [shutters] & doors in the room whare we were, & I opened the meeting by singing & Prayer. But we had no sooner commenced than the mob armed themselves with eggs, bricks, Rocks, & evry thing els they could lay their hands upon & began to throw them upon the house like a shower of hail stones for nearly an hour. They dashed in the windows scattered brick, stones & glass through the rooms broak [broke] the tile on the roof & continued such depredations untill the close of the meeting & the

Brethren feeling disposed to try what virtue there was in English laws which were strict against such Proceedings I Proposed to accompany them into the midst of the mob to see who they were that there might be sufficient testimony against them. But they would not permit me to go with them lest I should be injured from the shower of stones but several of the Brethren went themselves into the midst of the mob & took the names of the leaders & returned to the house in the midst of a shower of stones, & Brickbats, though without injury. The mob soon broke up & after clearing the rooms of Stone, Brick & glass, we lay down & had a good nights rest. The Saints in this region are growing in grace, & the knowledge of the truth, observing the signs of the times, & desireing to gather with the Saints. They often make mention of you & give you their prayers, & enquire much about your well-fare.

Whare is the soul possessing the spirit of God or the light of truth that can meditate upon the scenes & events that await this generation with feelings of indifference, the day is at hand that will make the ears of Kings Lords & mighty men to tingle, & will be a vexation upon the nations to understand the report thareoff? O! that God would cut the work short in righteousness & hasten the day When Zion shall rest in PEACE from your fellow labourer in the Vineyard of the Lord

W. Woodruff

H. C. Kimball & G. A. Smith

[wrapper notations written sideways; in Wilford Woodruff's handwriting]

AN

ADDRESS

To Heber C. Kimball & George A. Smith

By Willford Woodruff

[wrapper notation written upside down; also in Woodruff's handwriting]

Wilford Woodruff

Epistle

<Sept 25 '40>³⁷

<extracted>³⁸

Notes

1. See Wilford Woodruff journal, 12 September 1840 (hereafter cited as “Woodruff Journal, date”), original in the Church Historical Department (hereafter cited as HDC), Salt Lake City; published in Scott G. Kenney, ed., *Wilford Woodruff Journals* 9 vols. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1983–85), 1:513 (hereafter cited as Kenney, *Woodruff Journal*). Unless otherwise noted, all primary sources quoted in this article retain original spelling and punctuation.

2. The most comprehensive history of the Twelve Apostles’ 1840–41 British mission is found in James B. Allen, Ronald K. Esplin, and David J. Whittaker, *Men with a Mission: The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in the British Isles, 1837–1841* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992). Other relevant studies include James B. Allen and Malcolm R. Thorp, “The Mission of the Twelve to England, 1840–41: Mormon Apostles and the Working Classes,” *Brigham Young University Studies* 15 (Summer 1975): 499–526; V. Ben Bloxham, James R. Moss, and Larry C. Porter, eds., *Truth Will Prevail: The Rise of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the British Isles, 1837–1987* (N.p.: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1987), see especially chapter four, Bloxham, “The Call of the Apostles to the British Isles,” 104–20 and chapter five, Bloxham, “The Apostolic Foundations, 1840–41,” 121–62; and Richard L. Jensen and Malcolm R. Thorp, eds., *Mormons in Early Victorian Britain* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah, 1989), see especially chapter five, Ronald K. Esplin, “The 1840–41 Mission to England and the Development of the Quorum of the Twelve,” 70–91.

3. The Twelve arrived in Great Britain in two groups. Elders John Taylor and Wilford Woodruff arrived in Liverpool on 11 January 1840, and the remaining five Apostles (Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Orson and Parley Pratt, and George A. Smith) arrived in early April of the same year. Willard Richards, ordained an Apostle in April 1840, was already in England, having remained from an earlier mission to serve as a counselor in the British Mission presidency.

4. Wilford Woodruff to the Editor, 7 October 1840, *Times and Seasons* 2 (1 March 1841): 330.

5. Woodruff journal, 2 August 1840; published in Kenney, *Woodruff Journal*, 1:489.

6. “News from the Elders,” *Times and Seasons* 2 (1 December 1840): 229.

7. Woodruff Journal, 11 August 1840; published in Kenney, *Woodruff Journal*, 1:490. Woodruff recorded the entire sentence, except for the number “15,” in shorthand.

8. Woodruff Journal, 18 August 1840; published in Kenney, *Woodruff Journal*, 1:494. Actually, a month earlier, another Latter-day Saint missionary was the first Mormon elder to visit London. In mid July 1840, seventeen-year-old William J. Barrett (also spelled Barratt) of Burslem, who had been ordained an elder on 11 July 1840 by George A. Smith and Alfred Cordon, went to London to board a ship that would take him to South Australia to preach the gospel. Elder Barrett set sail from London on 17 July 1840. See Woodruff Journal, 17 July 1840; published in Kenney, *Woodruff Journal*, 1:481–82, 485. It is not known whether Elder Barrett performed any missionary work while in London. In the *Times and Season* 2 (1 December 1840): 228–29, under the heading “News from the Elders,” an extract of a letter written by Elder Barrett to Elder Alfred Cordon was published. Having just arrived in London, he wrote:

Dear Brother in Christ:—I write to inform you of my arrival in the metropolis [London] this morning, after a tedious journey in the midst of much profaneness and swearing, such as I never heard in my life before. I feel, as the Apostle expresses it,

like a lamb among wolves, going into a land of strangers to preach the Gospel; therefore I desire your prayers in my behalf.

Elder Woodruff knew of Elder Barrett's 15 July letter. Twice in his journal, Wilford paraphrased its contents. First, in an undated entry following the 6 July 1840 Manchester General Conference, Elder Woodruff wrote a summary of Barrett's ordination on 11 July 1840, his departure from London to South Australia, and an abstract of the 15 July 1840 letter. On 17 July, Elder Woodruff recorded in his journal, "We received a letter from Elder William J. Barret of Burslem who is now at London. . . . He this day sets sail at London to carry the gospel to South Australia. . . . He was in good spirits & felt the power of God & the spirit of his mission. He took our address & J. Smith Jr. & sayes he will write, as soon as esestablishes his mission." See Woodruff Journal, 17 July 1840; published in Kenney, *Woodruff Journal*, 1:485.

9. Woodruff Journal, 18 August 1840; published in Kenney, *Woodruff Journal*, 1:494.

10. Heber C. Kimball to Vilate Kimball, 19 August 1840, HDC; division of sentences added for readability.

11. Woodruff Journal, 19 August 1840; published in Kenney, *Woodruff Journal*, 1:495.

12. George A. Smith Journal, 19 August 1840, HDC; published in George A. Smith, "My Journal," *Instructor*, November 1947, 525.

13. Quoted in "Later News from the Elders," *Times and Seasons* 2 (1 December 1840): 230.

14. Woodruff Journal, 21 August 1840; published in Kenney, *Woodruff Journal*, 1:495-497. Emphasis in original.

15. Wilford Woodruff, Heber C. Kimball, and George A. Smith letter of 12 October 1840 from Manchester, England, to Ebenezer Robinson and Don Carlos Smith; published in *Times and Seasons* 2 (15 December 1840): 250.

16. Although missionary work in London was slow and frustrating in the beginning, within a few months, the Latter-day Saint elders were able to establish a branch of the Church in the British capital.

17. Wilford Woodruff's style of punctuation and capitalization is often inconsistent and difficult to decipher. I have attempted to follow his intent as best I can.

18. Elder Woodruff is probably referring to the revelation in D&C 88:74, 79-80, in which the "first laborers in this last kingdom" are encouraged to acquire "a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms—that ye may be prepared in all things when I shall send you again to magnify the calling whereunto I have called you, and the mission with which I have commissioned you."

19. St. Paul's Cathedral in London is the cathedral of the Anglican bishop. The modern cathedral toured by Elder Woodruff and his companions, the fifth church built on that spot, is located within the central City of London, atop Ludgate Hill and north-east of Blackfriars. It was designed and built by the renowned British architect Sir Christopher Wren. Construction began in 1675 and was completed by 1710, taking some thirty-five years to complete. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Internet ed., s.v. "St. Paul's Cathedral" and "Wren, Sir Christopher."

20. The inserted numbers are written twice, once in Woodruff's handwriting and again in an unidentified hand.

21. Lord Horatio Nelson (1758–1805) was the British naval commander during the French Revolution and Napoleonic wars. Lord Nelson won important naval battles such as those of the Nile (1798) and Trafalgar (1805), where he was killed by enemy fire on

the *HMS Victory*. Lord Nelson is regarded by many historians as the most prominent of all British naval leaders. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Internet ed., s.v. "Nelson, Horatio."

22. Underlined multiple times.

23. The Thames Tunnel was the world's first subaqueous tunnel. Built under the direction of Marc Isambard Brunel, this tunnel was under construction from 1825–43. At the time they visited it, the tunnel was only partially complete. The elders entered it from the southern borough of Southwark. Contrary to Elder Woodruff's description, the Thames Tunnel, completed in March 1843, was used only for pedestrian traffic until the 1860s, when it was converted to railway and later subway use. The completed tunnel originally measured 1,200 feet (366 meters) in length with a cross section that measured 22.25 by 37.5 feet (7 by 11 meters). *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Internet ed., s.v. "Thames Tunnel." A detailed description of their visit is found in Woodruff Journal, 1 September 1840; published in Kenney, *Woodruff Journal*, 1:505.

24. Woodruff's journal, the source for the data in this letter, gives slightly different measurements. The journal reads 80 feet for descent and 1,120 feet for length. Interestingly, a 28 October 1840 letter from Elders Wilford Woodruff, George A. Smith, and Heber C. Kimball to Ebenezer Robinson and Don Carlos Smith, published in *Times and Seasons* 2 (1 January 1841): 261-64, cites the same measurements as the journal. This is explained by the three London missionaries at the beginning of their 28 October letter. They acknowledged, "We will on this occasion make a few extracts from Elder Woodruff's Journal, concerning certain places which we visited while in the city of London." See *Times and Seasons* 2 (1 January 1841): 261.

25. Westminster Abbey is the location of coronations and other ceremonies of national significance in Great Britain. It stands just west of the Houses of Parliament in the Greater London borough of Westminster. Since William the Conqueror, every British sovereign has been crowned in Westminster Abbey (except uncrowned Edward V and Edward VIII). Many kings and queens are buried near the shrine of Edward the Confessor or in Henry VII's chapel. The last sovereign to be buried in Westminster Abbey is George II (d. 1760); since then they have been buried at Windsor Castle. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Internet ed., s.v. "Westminster Abbey."

26. Word repeated twice in the original.

27. This paragraph, slightly revised, was quoted in a brief notice in *Times and Seasons* 2 (15 December 1840): 249.

28. St. James Park, comprising approximately 90 acres, is the oldest and most ornamental of the royal parks of central London. The eastern end of the park was formed into the Horse Guards Parade in the eighteenth century.

29. Part of the 8 September 1840 entry in Woodruff's journals reads, "We visited the monument erected in honor to *his grace* the Duke of York" (emphasis added).

30. Buckingham Palace, located in the Westminster borough, is the London residence of the British sovereign. Queen Victoria, beginning in 1837, became the first sovereign to reside at the palace. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Internet ed., s.v. "Buckingham Palace."

31. The National Gallery in London is one of the leading art galleries in Britain and among the most important in the world. It is located in Trafalgar Square and was opened in 1838. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Internet ed., s.v. "National Gallery."

32. This paragraph was used in the Wilford Woodruff, Heber C. Kimball, and George A. Smith letter of 12 October 1840 from Manchester, England, to Ebenezer Robinson and Don Carlos Smith; published in *Times and Seasons* 2 (15 December 1840): 250-51. See also Woodruff Journal, 11 October 1840 (published in Kenney, *Woodruff Journal*, 1:527), which notes: "We commenc[e]d a letter Historical & religious to E

Robinson & D C Smith."

33. In his journal for 25 September 1840, Elder Woodruff noted simply, "I wrote an address to Elder[s] H C Kimball & George A. Smith." See Woodruff Journal, 25 September 1840; published in Kenney, *Woodruff Journal*, 1:521.

34. Elder Woodruff's use of the term "Churches" in this context means "branches."

35. The statistics from these conferences were reported by Woodruff, Smith, and Kimball in their 12 October 1840 letter to the *Times and Seasons* editors, published in *Times and Seasons* 2 (15 December 1840): 251.

36. Elder Thomas Kingston, presiding elder of the Bran Green, Gadfield Elm, and Froome's Hill conferences of the LDS Church.

37. Insertion in Thomas Bullock's handwriting.

38. Insertion written in pencil.