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Pentecost Continued

A Contemporaneous Account of the Kirtland Temple Dedication

Steven C. Harper

The significance of what transpired at the dedication of the Kirtland Temple on March 27, 1836, is well established among Latter-day Saints. The historical record affirming an outpouring of divine manifestations is rich. Even so, precious few contemporaneous reports by observers are available. Recently, however, the richness of the historical record increased with the discovery of an eyewitness account of the miraculous Kirtland Pentecost penned by Benjamin Brown.

In November 2002, Mary Lee Burton, a descendant of Benjamin and Sarah Mumford Brown (fig. 1), learned that her mother, recently deceased, had possessed the document reproduced here. It had passed from Benjamin and Sarah Mumford Brown to their son Homer. He had entrusted it to his daughter Josephine Brown Quist, grandmother of Mary Lee Burton. Grateful readers may attribute access to this precious record of Pentecostal experience to Burton. “As I looked at the beautiful penmanship on the yellowing and fragile paper, I knew I was holding a priceless treasure,” Burton wrote, “and that [this document] needed to be in a safe place.”¹ Another Brown descendant, Sharalyn Duffin, a staff member at the Historical Department Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, arranged to transfer this document to the Archives.

1. Mary Lee Burton to author, January 12, 2003.

Description of the Document

Much about the document(s) presented here remains uncertain, including whether it should be treated as two documents or one. On a sheet of weathered, now-torn paper measuring nearly 12 x 8 inches, Benjamin began to compose a letter to his wife, Sarah. Though undated, an internal reference to “the sol[e]mn assembly which will be called next Sunday,” meaning March 27, 1836, narrows its composition to the week beginning March 20. As it continues, the writing on this sheet begins to sound less like a letter and more like a chronicle of events of that marvelous week of dedication. A second sheet of paper in much better condition and almost an inch and a half shorter seems to continue this account. Generally, it reads more like a journal than a letter, and no formal epistolary closing is evident, but some internal evidence suggests that Benjamin is still addressing Sarah and intending to send the letter by way of a neighbor.

Although the handwriting appears consistent throughout, a third-person reference to B. Brown toward the end of the document suggests the possibility that Benjamin did not write all of it himself. Whether Benjamin Brown intended that the two sheets form a coherent single document cannot be determined. That they both stem from an effort to record his witness of a Pentecostal experience is certain. Millennial, thoroughly biblical, and informed by the Book of Mormon, Benjamin Brown’s document serves well as a window into early Mormonism. On the back of one page are details of accounts and addresses, information needed to function in earthly time and space. Some contemporaries of Benjamin Brown considered the mixture of the mundane and the miraculous characteristic of Mormonism—a feature some loathed and others, like Benjamin Brown, cherished.² His documents, therefore, can be understood best, not only by assessing their physical characteristics, but by appreciating the world of their creator.

2. See Terryl L. Givens on this point in *The Viper on the Hearth: Mormons, Myths, and the Construction of Heresy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 88–93. For an example of the mixture of the miraculous with the mundane, see also Doctrine and Covenants 57, in which the Savior gives directions to the temple site in the New Jerusalem almost as if he were advising a lost pedestrian. In his journal entry for November 6, 1835, Joseph Smith noted a telling visit:

I was this morning introduced to a man from the east, after hearing my name he ~~replied~~ remarked that I was nothing but a man: indicating by this expression that he had supposed that a person, <to> whom the Lord should see fit to reveal his will, must be something more than a man, he seems to have forgotten the saying that fell from the lips of St. James, that

Benjamin Brown's World

One spring morning in 1835, a “large assembly” gathered in a barn in Westfield, Chautauqua County, New York, to hear three Mormon preachers. Thomas Marsh edified the congregation for nearly two hours on the covenants of God. David Patten followed for an hour, using Hebrews 11 as his text. Elder Marsh administered the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. William McLellin baptized five souls, including a forty-year-old farmer named Benjamin Brown. Some mischievous boys “acted very wickedly” until “finally one little fellow fell into the water.”³ The whole scene might have appeared quite usual, if comical, to observers.⁴ Here were ordinary people engaged in apparently familiar pastimes. Preaching, worshipping, even baptizing and mischief were common occurrences in Chautauqua County. But to Benjamin Brown this was no ordinary day. Here were *Apostles* explaining restored truth and administering restored ordinances of salvation.⁵ These otherwise everyday events connected Benjamin Brown to the first Christians and annihilated intervening years. The Apostles collapsed time, associating their auditors with Abel, Enoch, the Israelite patriarchs,

Elias was a man of like passions like unto us, yet he had such power with God that He in answer to his prayer, shut the heavens that they gave no rain for the space of three years and six months, and again in answer to his prayer the heavens gave forth rain and the earth brought forth fruit; and indeed such is the darkness & ignorance of this generation that they look upon it as incredible that a man should have any intercourse with his Maker. (Dean C. Jessee, ed., *The Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2 vols. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989–92], 2:66)

3. Jan Shipps and John W. Welch, eds., *The Journals of William E. McLellin* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press; Provo, Utah: BYU Studies, 1994), 175, 423. Brown was baptized May 10, 1835, though his later autobiographical account gives the date as May 15, 1835. Benjamin Brown, *Testimonies for the Truth* (Liverpool, England: S. W. Richards, 1853), 10.

4. See “I Certainly Should Have Gone into the Water,” in *Among the Mormons*, ed. William Mulder and A. Russell Mortensen (Salt Lake City: Western Epics, 1994), 63–65. Alexis de Tocqueville, accompanied by Gustave de Beaumont, keenly observed the American religious scene in 1831. See *Democracy in America*, ed. and trans. Harvey C. Mansfield and Delba Winthrop (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

5. See Ronald K. Esplin, “The Emergence of Brigham Young and the Twelve to Mormon Leadership, 1830–1841” (Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1981), especially chapter 4, “Brigham Young and the Apostles: The Quorum Experience, 1835–1836,” 150–223, for a thorough treatment of the 1835 apostolic mission.

Moses, and the writer of Hebrews. Faith in Christ was their common bond, and in him they might be perfected together.⁶

Benjamin Brown had waited years for this day. His entire life pointed to it. The son of a Quaker father, Benjamin matured spiritually from his birth in 1794 until about his sixteenth year. “My ideas of religion,” he wrote reflectively in his 1853 autobiography, “were just those which are naturally instilled into the mind by the statements of Scripture, where no priestcraft exists to pervert them, diminish their force, or cloud their meaning.” His sincere prayers were answered. “The idea that revelation from God was unattainable in this age,” he wrote, “never entered my head, until I gathered the notion from the creeds of churches with which I became acquainted in after years.” But like so many of Benjamin’s contemporaries, uncertainties were foisted upon him in the form of evangelical competition for his faith. He responded first with an adolescent mixture of doubt, contrariness, and susceptibility to trendy ideas:

I soon began to lose my pure, simple ideas of God, and imbibe[d] those more generally received, and, shortly after, by listening to the contending opinions of these parties, I found the hitherto simple Bible a perfect mystery.

I had previously been seriously and religiously inclined, but the jar-rings and uncertainty of my new ideas shook that simple faith which I had reposed in the Scriptures, and in God, until I began to mix with light or vain company.

Influenced by skepticism of scripture, Brown tended toward, but did not join, Universalism. He vacillated during his early adulthood between periods of “folly” and “deep anxiety . . . to find the truth.”⁷

Farming and his marriage to Sarah Mumford⁸ at age twenty-five gave Benjamin more to think about than salvation, but he remained preoccupied with spiritual matters. A vision of his deceased brother foreshadowed the Restoration. Benjamin envisioned his brother praying “with regard to

6. See Hebrews 11, especially verses 24–28, 40. On this point, see Richard T. Hughes and C. Leonard Allen, *Illusions of Innocence: Protestant Primitivism in America, 1630–1875* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 133–52.

7. Brown, *Testimonies for the Truth*, 3–4.

8. Sarah Mumford was born April 20, 1795, in Granby, Hartford County, Connecticut, to Henry and Sarah Mumford. She married Benjamin Brown September 12, 1819. Susan Easton Black, comp., “Membership of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830–1848,” 50 vols. (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1989), 6:309–10, 7:33, 31:975.

the restoration of the Gospel gifts, the great work of gathering the Saints of all nations in the last days, and the fulness of the Latter-day glory.”⁹ Thereafter, Benjamin’s spiritual senses sharpened. His Bible was clearer. He had prophetic dreams at irregular intervals. Years passed, he wrote, “and I was still unconnected with any religious party.”¹⁰

Determined to follow the Lord’s leading, he tested the popular revival meetings but remained unfulfilled. He felt moved to reprove a minister, which prompted him to embark on an informal ministry of preaching, punctuated by powerful spiritual experiences:

A knowledge was given me that the ancient gifts of the Gospel—speaking in tongues, the power to heal the sick, the spirit of prophecy, &c., were just about to be restored to the believers in Christ. The revelation was a perfect knowledge of the fact, so sure and certain, that I felt as though the truth had been stereotyped upon me. I knew it from the crown of my head to the sole of my foot—in the whole of my system, being filled with the Holy Ghost!¹¹

Benjamin Brown’s Introduction to the Church

Benjamin shared his knowledge with a local minister but was rebuffed. “A few days after,” he wrote, “curiosity led me to visit the Latter-day Saints, amongst whom I witnessed a fulfillment of the prediction, for I beheld a manifestation of the gifts of prophesy and tongues.” Benjamin resisted an invitation to join the Church but “procured a Book of Mormon, and took it home to read, determined to investigate until [he] was fully satisfied.” He rejected the Book of Mormon “ere [he] had read ten pages” and “felt a similar dislike seize [him] towards the Bible.”¹² A foreboding sense followed, strong enough to persuade Benjamin to read the Bible again. He felt impressed to “behave as fairly” to the Book of Mormon and “soon repro-cured it.”¹³ Benjamin willed himself to read most of the book:

I came to that part where Jesus, on visiting the continent of America, after his resurrection, grants the request of three of the twelve whom he had chosen, to permit them to live until his second coming on the earth (like unto John spoken of in the Bible). Here my mind half yielded to the belief which arose within me, that perhaps it might be true, whereupon I

9. Brown, *Testimonies for the Truth*, 4.

10. Brown, *Testimonies for the Truth*, 5.

11. Brown, *Testimonies for the Truth*, 7.

12. Brown, *Testimonies for the Truth*, 7.

13. Brown, *Testimonies for the Truth*, 8.

took the book and laid it before the Lord, and pleaded with Him in prayer for a testimony whether it was true or false.¹⁴

The answer came in the form of two of the three Nephite disciples. They subsequently rebuked Benjamin for snubbing the gift of tongues (their tongue, he now recognized) he heard in his first meeting with Mormon missionaries. “Such a rebuke,” he wrote, “with such power, I never had in my life before or since, and never wish to have again.”¹⁵ This was evidence sufficient for Benjamin: “Thus I do *know* the truth of the Bible, as well as of the Book of Mormon, and I am a witness for both!” Still he deferred baptism, hoping Sarah would “comply with the same ordinance.”¹⁶ She did not until a confirming spiritual experience resolved her prejudice against unsophisticated Saints, but Benjamin could resist no longer. He overcame a last-minute attempt to dissuade him and submitted to baptism at the hands of Apostle William McLellin on May 10, 1835.¹⁷

Spiritual gifts and signs continued to follow Benjamin Brown, resulting in Sarah’s conversion and his miraculous healing at “the hands of the Elders”¹⁸ and culminating in the Pentecostal season centered in the Kirtland Temple. “There,” Benjamin wrote, “the Spirit of the Lord, as on the day of Pentecost, was profusely poured out. . . . We had a most glorious and never-to-be forgotten time.”¹⁹ For Benjamin Brown as for Joseph Smith, the renewal of biblical revelation solidified faith in the Bible. As the larger culture increasingly doubted the possibility of biblical miracles in modernity and, finally, even in antiquity, the Saints believed in the gifts of the Spirit and Pentecostal outpourings because they experienced them.

The Religious and Historical Context

One somewhat useful tendency of historians is to situate Benjamin Brown’s account of the “many Miracilous Experiences” and “many Visions told” as one example of a visionary subculture in the early American republic.²⁰ Brown’s faith can be understood in part as a believing

14. Brown, *Testimonies for the Truth*, 8.

15. Brown, *Testimonies for the Truth*, 8.

16. Brown, *Testimonies for the Truth*, 9.

17. Shipps and Welch, eds., *The Journals of William E. McLellin*, 175.

18. Brown, *Testimonies for the Truth*, 10.

19. Brown, *Testimonies for the Truth*, 10–11.

20. Richard L. Bushman, “The Visionary World of Joseph Smith,” *BYU Studies* 37, no. 1 (1997–98): 183–204, outlines this culture and lists several primary documents that might comprise a genre into which Benjamin Brown’s documents

response to skepticism, confirmed by intense personal experience with God. But Benjamin Brown and his fellow Saints also considered themselves exceptional. They believed they had more in common with the cast of Hebrews 11—with Israelite patriarchs and New Testament Apostles—than with contemporary visionaries. To them the Kirtland Temple made them heirs of the ancient covenants and the Apostolic Church, not a subculture defined by American time and space. Benjamin Brown and his fellow Saints regarded their experiences as a continuation of the Pentecostal experience recorded in the Acts of the Apostles.

If anything, what occurred in the Kirtland Temple was, as Benjamin writes in this letter, “even greater than at the day of Pente[cost].” From this perspective, even criticism seemed to testify of the connection. John Corrill wrote of a meeting in the Kirtland Temple, “The sacrament was then administered, in which they partook of the bread and wine freely, and a report went abroad that some of them got drunk: as to that every man must answer for himself. A similar report, the reader will recollect, went out concerning the disciples, at Jerusalem, on the day of pentecost.”²¹

For his part, though he carefully recorded miracles and visions, Benjamin Brown did not overtly try to situate them historically. He assumed, instead, an affinity of understanding with the few who shared his experiences. In 1853 he wrote, “Such a chain of testimonies, and an interweaving of evidences, accompanied with that perception and comprehension which the Holy Ghost alone can give, none can realize, but those who have received that Spirit and revelations unto themselves. Such persons know just how it is.”²² On March 27, 1836, Benjamin Brown gathered in solemn

could be seen to fit. Similarly, see Larry C. Porter, “Solomon Chamberlin’s Missing Pamphlet: Dreams, Visions, and Angelic Ministrants,” *BYU Studies* 37, no. 2 (1997–98): 113–40. A fine study that, unfortunately, neglects Mormon visionaries entirely is Ann Taves, *Fits, Trances, and Visions: Experiencing Religion and Explaining Experience from Wesley to James* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999). Taves is best at explicating how spiritual experience is rationalized. Similarly, see Leigh Eric Schmidt, *Hearing Things: Religion, Illusion, and the American Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000).

21. John Corrill, *Brief History of The Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints* (St. Louis: By the author, 1839), 23. In Acts 2:13, mockers explained the spiritual manifestations simply: “These men are full of new wine.” See William McLellan to M. H. Forscutt, October 1870, Community of Christ Archives, Independence, Missouri; and William Harris, *Mormonism Portrayed* (Warsaw, Ill.: Sharp and Gamble, 1841), 136, for perpetuated rumors of drunkenness in the Kirtland Temple.

22. Brown, *Testimonies for the Truth*, 5.

assembly with “such persons” in the Kirtland Temple.²³ Revelation promised them that if they sacrificed to build the temple as commanded, they would be endowed with divine power to transcend the temporal and mortal.²⁴ They anticipated communion with heaven.²⁵

In the documents that follow, Benjamin Brown tried to capture the effulgence of that endowment. He largely succeeded. Though the letter has frustrating damage and other limitations, Brown confirms the general and specific testimonies of other participants of the Kirtland Pentecost. At times he captures more of that experience in his letter than Joseph Smith recorded in his characteristically understated journal entries. Where Joseph’s entry for the evening of March 29, 1836, says, for instance, “The Holy Spirit rested down upon us and we continued in the Lord’s house all night prophesying and giving glory to God” (see n. 39), Brown both confirms and enhances Joseph’s record by noting the ministering of angels, prophesying in tongues, and visions of the Savior and eternity as part of the “many Miraculous Experiences told [and] Many Visions told.”

In the transcription of the document that follows, the line endings of the letter where the letter was torn are preserved. Other line endings are preserved where possible. Editorial marks added include carets < > to indicate insertions made by the author of the document. Strikeouts are shown by ~~strikeouts~~. Brackets [] indicate editorial comments.

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23. Brown, *Testimonies for the Truth*, 10–11. An account of the events of March 27, 1836, is in Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2:191–203.

24. Doctrine and Covenants 38:32; 88:67–76; 95:2–8.

25. Joseph Smith to William Phelps, Kirtland, Ohio, January 11, 1833, in Dean C. Jessee, ed. and comp., *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, rev. ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, Utah: BYU Press, 2002), 292–93.

Benjamin Brown Document

[see fig. 2] Dear wife I last night heard from you [page torn]
 which I thank the Lord, Brother Bovee²⁶ said [page torn]
 Gospel <to father> for which my heart rejoiced for [page torn]
 and great is thy reward. Rejoice in the Lord [page torn]
 Rejoice, let your moderation be known [page torn]
 Now be careful for nothing but in eve [page torn]
 [illegible] and with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to
 [page torn]
 [illegible] God, And the peace of God which passeth all understanding
 [shall] [page torn]
 fill your heart through Christ Jesus.²⁷
 Now to let you know a few of the thousand great things of God that is pass-
 ing in this place, there has been no mobs as you have heard. But the work
 of the Lord is increascing daily. There has been from one to ten Baptized
 every day this week, some of the Elders have
 been out for a few days some have baptized 16 some five &c²⁸ [page torn]
 Elders still continue to come in and wash and anoint for the
 solmn assembly which will be called next sunday for tithin[g] [page torn]
 & sacrifice with fasting & Prayr in the house of the Lord²⁹ fr [page torn]

26. Mathias M. Bovee (1796–1846) lived in Chautauqua County, New York, as the Browns did, and may have carried this letter to Sarah Mumford Brown on Benjamin’s behalf. Black, “Membership,” 6:309–10.

27. A reference to Philippians 4:7.

28. Joseph Smith’s journal for the week of March 20–27 confirms many of the details Brown records here. Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2:190–91.

29. Stephen Post explained in his journal entry for March 27, 1836:

This day was appointed to be a day when the house of the Lord built by the Church of the Latter day Saints was to be dedicated unto the Lord of the whole earth: there was also to be a contribution; each individual as they came into the house of the Lord donated as they could in order to defray the expense of the building as the committee [see D&C 94] had incurred much expense above what had before been contributed. the doors were opened at 8 and to be closed at 9 A.M. however they were closed before 9 on account of the house being full. (Stephen Post, Journal, Church Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City)

Joseph Smith’s journal reports that probably five or six hundred Saints congregated outside the temple beginning “at about 7 oclock one hour earlier than the

Dear wife I last night heard from you
 which I thank the Lord, Brother Bove said
 I felt for which my heart rejoiced, and
 great is thy reward, Rejoice in the Lord
 And the peace of God which passeth all
 understanding shall keep your heart through Christ Jesus.
 As to let you know a few of the thousand great things of God that
 is passing in this place, there has been no mobs as you have
 seen, but the work of the Lord is increasing daily there has been from
 one to ten Baptized every day this week some of the Elders have
 been out for a few days some have Baptized 16 some five or
 Elders will continue to come in, and wash and anoint for the
 solemn assembly which will be held next Sunday for tithing
 sacrifice with fasting & Prayers in the house of the Lord for
 a week in the morning with in the afternoon
 known how long the meeting will hold probably
 we have meetings at least every evening at
 and hold till 9 or 10 many marvelous things
 have been given greater than at the day of Pentecost
 we are increasing in faith and expecting greater
 endowment it is expected that there will be three hundred of us
 in prayer with one accord as at Jerusalem
 Many visions are given and also Revelations by night & by
 day some have already come to pass, and many have not
 yet but will soon. I was present when father Smith Bled a
 man who lived in Niagara County who was in a strait whether
 to go home on business or stay at the solemn assembly the old
 patriarch said you want to go home, but the Lord will give
 you a sign between this and tomorrow and the man asked the
 Lord for a sign about 2 hours after ten as he came out of the
 house to go to meeting there appeared a light over the house
 of the Lord and extended from west to East But that part
 of the heavens over his house or home was dark & he said it was
 some have seen the heavens open & seen the savior others have
 seen angels on the four corners of the house of the Lord with
 drawn swords also stood thick on the ridge Elisha with his
 chariot of fire, Peter John James & the highway east up
 the ten tribes returning in chariots as far as the eye could
 extend some saw the redemption of Zion and other things to many

FIG. 2. The original paper on which the letter was written measured nearly 12 x 8 inches. Handed down in Brown's family, the letter was discovered in November 2002 by Benjamin's descendant Mary Lee Burton. It now resides at Church Archives. Courtesy Church Archives.

8 oclock in the morning until 4 in the afternoon [*page torn*]
 known how long the meeting will hold probaly [*page torn*]
 we have meetings almost every evening and [*page torn*]
 and hold till 9. Many marvelous things [*page torn*]
 transpired even greater than at the day of Penti[cost] [*page torn*]
 are increasing in faith and expecting greater [*page torn*]
 endowment it is expected that there is three hundred of [*page torn*]
 in Prayer with one accord as at Jerusalem³⁰
 Many visions are given and also Revelations by night & by day some have
 already come to pass, and many have no[t] yet but will soon.³¹ I was present
 when father Smith Blest a man who lived in Niagara County who was in a
 streight whether to go home, on Business or stay at the solem assembly the
 old patriarch³² said you want to go home, But the Lord will give you a Sign
 between this and to morning and the man asked the Lord for a sign about 2
 hours after as he came out of the
 house to go to meeting there appeared a light over the Hou[se] [*page torn*]
 of the Lord and extended from west to East But that part [*page torn*]
 the heavens over his house or home was dark & he said it eno[ugh] [*page torn*]³³

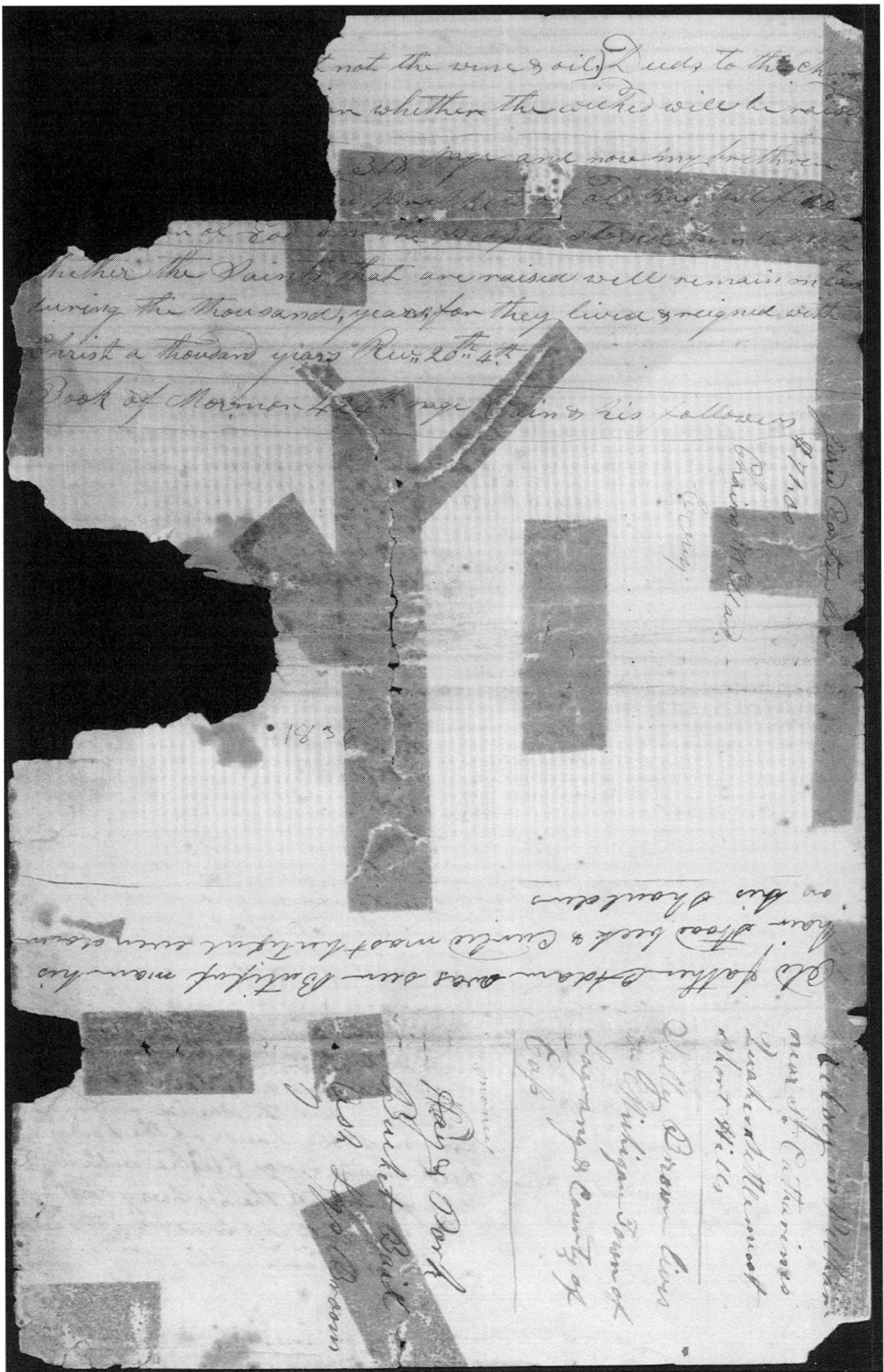
doors were to be opened.” Moreover, the Church presidency “entered with the door ke[e]pers and aranged them at the inner and outer doors also placed our stewards to receiv[e] donations from those who should feel disposed to contribute something to defray the expenses of building the House of the Lord.” Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2:191–92. Both Joseph Smith and Stephen Post reported that hundreds were unfortunately turned away and that many of those turned away then gathered in the adjacent schoolroom in the printing office building for a meeting.

30. See Acts 2.

31. Besides the specific manifestations Brown goes on to document, other writers left contemporary accounts that confirm his general testimony of many visions and revelations. See, for example, Leonard J. Arrington, ed., “Oliver Cowdery’s Kirtland, Ohio, ‘Sketch Book,’” *BYU Studies* 12, no. 4 (1972): 410–26; and Martha Sonntag Bradley and Mary Brown Firmage Woodward, “Spiritual Riches: The Huntington Sisters in Kirtland, 1836–38,” in *Four Zinas: A Story of Mothers and Daughters on the Mormon Frontier* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2000), 51–76.

32. Joseph Smith Sr. (1771–1840) served the Church as Patriarch beginning in 1833 and in that capacity offered inspired blessings and personal prophecies including the one documented here by Benjamin Brown.

33. A Joseph Smith Sr. blessing given to James W. Angel (probably Angell, born in North Providence, Rhode Island, on October 15, 1776, father of Brigham’s wife Mary Ann Angell Young and Church architect Truman O. Angell), perhaps given early in 1836, includes a phrase that corresponds somewhat to the language of Brown’s letter. It reads, “Thou shalt see many glorious scenes, the heavens shall



Courtesy Church Archives

FIG. 3. Reverse of one page of the letter from Benjamin Brown to his wife, Sarah, March 27, 1836. The letter was folded, and notes have been written on this side of the page: "Sally Brown lives in Michigan Town of Lagrang & County of Cass." Other notes on the outside of the letter read much like a shopping list, such as "Hay & Pork." It is unclear whether Benjamin Brown or another person wrote these notes.

some have seen the heavens open & seen the savior others have seen angels on the four corners of the house of the Lord with drawn swords & also stood thick on the ridge Elisha with his chariot of Fire, Peter John & James, & the highway cast up the ten tribes returning in chariots as far as the eye could extend some saw the Redemption of Zion and other thing to num [p. 1]

[see fig. 3] [page torn] not the wine & oil. Deeds to the church

[page torn] [w]hether the wicked will be raised

[page torn] 318 page and now my brethren

[page torn]nd prophet of old has testified

[page torn] of God and the people stoned him to death.

[illegible]

Whether the Saints that are raised will remain on earth during the thousand, years, for they lived & reigned with Christ a thousand years Rev 20th 4th

Book of Mormon 424th page Cain & his followers³⁴

Old father Adam was seen Butiful man his hair stood back & curled most butiful even down on his shoulders

Jared Carter Cr

\$71.00

Chains Willard Conn

1836

Kelsey in Pelham

near St. Catharines

Quaker Settlement

short Hills

Sally Brown lives

in Michigan Town of

Lagrang & County of

Cass

money

Hay & Pork

Bucket Bail

Ash Logs Broom

be open unto thee and thou shalt say it is enough.” The blessing is located in Church Archives.

34. Page 424 in the 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon, to which Brown refers here, is now Helaman 6, especially verses 21–27.

Sunday Evening after Joseph Spake opened, told them the day of Pentecost began, continued the Brethren began to prophesy many prophesied in the name of the Lord then began speaking in tongues and it filled as it were the whole house, perhaps there were forty speaking at once. Cloven tongues of fire was seen to sit on many of them as hands were seen laid upon one when he spoke in tongues to the Lamanites many visions were seen, one saw a pillar of cloud rest over the house bright as when the sun shines on a cloud like as gold, two others saw three personages hovering in the room with bright keys in their hands, and also a bright chain in their hands. I did not intend this for a letter but this morning while writing Brother Bovee concluded to start for home.

Sunday March 27th 1836 the order of the House of the Lord was there was no small children admitted, one woman however not knowing the order brought her child about 2 months old she stood out of the door for a long time, manifested a anxious desire to enter at length one of the Elders said Brethren we cannot Exercise faith my faith is this child will not cry a word in the House to day on this the woman & child entered and the child did not cry a word from 8 till 4 in the afternoon, but when the saints all shouted Hosana the child was nursing but let go & shouted also when the saints paused it paused when they shouted it shouted for three times when they shouted Amen it shouted also for three times then it resumed its nursing without any alarm.

Monday a young man fell and sprained his ankle so as he could not stand the Elders laid hands on him he was healed immediately.

On the Pentecost evening the west end of the House was illuminated by a light from heaven seen on the outside by many.

FIG. 4. As it continues, the writing begins to sound less like a letter and more like a chronicle of events of that marvelous week of dedication.

[see fig. 4] Sunday Evening after Joseph spoke opened & told them the day of Pentecost was continued³⁵ the the [sic] Brethren began to to prophesy many prophesied in the name of the Lord then began speaking in tongues and it filled as it were the whole house, perhaps there were forty speaking at once Cloven tongues of fire was seen to sit on many of them an hand was seen laid upon one when he spake in tongues to the lamanites many Visions seen, one saw a pillow or cloud rest down upon the house bright as when the sun shines on a cloud like as gold, two others saw three person-ages hovering in the room with bright keys in their hands, and also a bright chain in their hands ~~the~~ I did not intend this for a letter But this morning while writing Brother Bovee concluded to start for home

Sunday March 27th 1836 the order of the House of the Lord was there was no small children admitted, one woman however not knowing the order brought her child about 2 months old she stood out of the door for a long time, manifested an anxious desire to enter at length one of the Elders said Brethren we do not Exercise faith my faith is this child will not cry a word in the House to day on this the woman & child entered and the child did not cry a word from 8 till 4 in the after noon. But when the saints all shouted Hosana the child was nursing But let go & shouted also when the saints paused it paused when they shouted it shouted for three times when they shouted amen it shouted also for three times then it resumed its nursing without any alarm³⁶

35. This was the evening of March 27, 1836. Joseph's journal for the events after the dedication that day includes this entry: "Met in the evening and instructed the quorums respecting the ordinance of washing of feet which we were to attend to on wednesday following." Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2:203. Oliver Cowdery captured details of that evening in his contemporaneous "Sketch Book": "In the evening I met with officers of the church in the Lord's house. The Spirit was poured out—I saw the glory of God, like a great cloud, come down and rest upon the house, and fill the same like a mighty rushing wind. I also saw cloven tongues, like as of fire rest upon many, (for there were 316 present,) while they spake in tongues and others prophesied." Arrington, "Oliver Cowdery's Kirtland, Ohio, 'Sketch Book,'" 426. Stephen Post confirmed the events of that evening in his journal. He wrote that about 316 Saints gathered in the temple that evening, "and we received instruction from Joseph Smith Jr relative to our preaching and our endowment this eve the spirit of the Lord rested on the congregation many spake in tongues many prophesied, Angels were in our midst and ministered unto some, Cloven tongues like unto fire rested upon those who spake in tongues and prophesied." Stephen Post, Journal, March 27, 1836, Church Archives.

36. The rules of order to which Brown refers are in Joseph Smith's journal under January 14, 1836, and are published in Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*,

Brother Benjamin Lewis laid hands on a boy that had his
 arm broken so as it laid back on his elbow. he placed the
 bones napped a rag around it his wife poured on some vine
 gar he then asked the boy to move his fingers the boy did so
 this was at noon. the next morning the boy went to
 pulling weed in the garden with that hand no more trouble
 about it

I B. Brown heard Brother Colonel Parks of Uclio testify
 that heard in the evening between 8 & 9 the Report of a rifle
 apparently about forty rods off then they began as in an
 action passing a long the road then took a turn & came across
 the lot up to the house But the report grew more faint un
 till it was nothing but a snap and the noise of a flash in
 the pan was heard by all of the family and ~~as~~ many of the bre
 thren in that place. the interpilation given to two present
 which was judgements of God on that place

Father Stephens saw on Sunday evening two rows of Angels
 through the house, at another time the glory of God came
 down on the Elders from the head down half way

~~On~~ April 29th an angel was seen over the Elders Mary Broopes
 was given & speaking in tongues, this 29th of March two Corns
 continued all night in the House the twelve guarded it
 the Heavens was opened two saw the savior some saw Char
 iots and other thing one lay about half an hour & saw from
 Eternity to Eternity many Miraculous Experiences to
 Many Visions to

FIG. 5. This page records miraculous healings, judgments of God, visions of angels, and speaking in tongues. Much about the document presented here remains uncertain, including whether it should be treated as two documents or one. Although the letter begins with "Dear wife," there is no closing or signature, an omission that may indicate this was a page from a journal rather than from a letter.

Monday a young man fell and sprained his ankle so as he could not stand the Elders laid hand on him he was healed imediately

On the Penticost evening the west end of the House was illuminated by a light from heaven seen on the outside by many

[page 2]

[see fig. 5] Brother Benjamin Lewis laid hands on a boy that had his arm Broken so as it laid back on his elbow. he placed the bones raped a rag around it his wife poured on some vinegar he then asked the boy to move his fingers the boy did so this was at noon. the next morning the boy went to pulling weed in the garden with that hand no more trouble about it —

B. Brown heard Brother Colonel Parks of Uclid³⁷ testify that heard in the evening between 8&9 the Report of a rifle apparently about forty rods off then they began as in an action passing a long the road then took a turn & came accross the lot up to the house But the report grew more faint untill it was nothing but a snap and the noise of a flash in the pan was heard by all of the family and ~~all~~ many of the brethren in that place the interpilation Given to two present which was judgements of God on that place —

Father Stephens³⁸ saw on sunday evening two rows of Angels through the House, at another time the glory of God came down on the Elders from the head down half way —

~~Br~~ April 29th an angels was seen over the Elders Many Propesys given & speaking in tongues, this 29th of March two corums continued all night in the House the twelve guarded it the Heavens was opened two saw the savior

2:136–38. Eliza R. Snow confirmed this event. She adds that it was Joseph Smith Sr. to whom the unidentified woman came “in great distress, saying that she knew no one with whom she could leave her infant; and to be deprived of the privilege of attending the dedication seemed more than she could endure.” Father Smith, the Church’s Patriarch, “told her to take her child, at the same time giving the mother a promise that her babe should make no disturbance; and the promise was verified.” Snow continues, noting as Brown does that the “babe joined in the shout” as the congregation offered hosannas. See Snow’s account in Edward W. Tullidge, *The Women of Mormondom* (New York: Tullidge and Crandall, 1877), 94–95.

37. Most likely William Parks (1787–1856), who was living in Uclid Cuyahoga County, Ohio, as of 1832. Black, “Membership,” 33:888–90.

38. Perhaps Abraham Stephens, about whom very little is known. Book of Patriarchal Blessings Index, 4:163, Church Archives.

some saw chariots and other thing one lay about half an hour & saw from Eternity to Eternity many Miracilous Experiences told Many Visions told³⁹

39. Here Brown initially writes April 29 instead of the correct date, March 29. The meeting that endured all that night was called by a revelation to Joseph Smith, whose journal for March 29 records:

The word of the Lord came to us through Presdt J. Smith Jun that those who had entered the holy place must not leave the house untill morning but send for such things as were necessary, and also, that during our stay we must cleans[e] our feet and partake of the sacrament that we might be made holy before Him, and thereby be qualified to officiate in our calling upon the morrow in washing the feet of the Elders.

Accordingly we proceeded and cleansed our faces and our feet, and then proceeded to wash each others feet. . . .

. . . The Holy S[p]irit rested down upon us and we continued in the Lords house all night prophesying and giving glory to God. (Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2:204–5)