

Nethertown, Drighlington
May 29th, 1865

Dear Sons and Daughters,

I now take up my pen to write a few lines to you in answer to your letter which came to hand on the 6th of March. I hope you will excuse me for my neglect as you state in your letter that you have wrote 4 letters but we have only recieved one and we was very thankful for that. We was verry thankful to hear of the safe arrival of Squire¹ and his dear wife and child. We was glad to hear that you was liveing so near each other. O how I long for the time when we shall have the privilidge to behold each others face again.² I feel truly thankfull that I have still a standing in the church of Jesus Christ of Latter day Saints and I say to Dear sons & Daughters be faithful and live your religion for it will be through our faithfulness if ever we be permitted to meet together again. I feel to say the Lord bless you with every thing your hearts can desire in righteousness. We are here in Old Babylon sorounded with wickedness on every hand and the word of the Lord is come out of her my people lest you be partakers of her plagus.

I have had the Demick in my right hand. I have had to play 7 weeks. I am very thankfull to my father in heaven that I have the privilidge to commence work again, but we have a very poor place at the present, and when we shall be able to gather means to emigrate ourselves from these lands with I don't know but the Lord has said that he will gather his elect from the four corners of the earth and if we be his elect, we have the promise and it is the promises of the Lord that stimulates us to go on. Was it not for the hope that we had within us we should die in dipair [dispair]. I am truly thankful for the testimony that I have in the work in which we are engaged for truly it is the work of the Lord. We have some rejoiseing times here. There has been 6 added to the church by baptism from Birkinshaw. The following are the names thereof: George Schofield and Henery Schofield, Joseph Haigh, Joseph Renton, John Peel, James Hibison. Drighlington Branch his [is] in a good condition. It consists of 8 officers at the present: 3 Elders, 2 priests, 2 teachers, 1 Deacon besides the president. We held about 26 meetings outdoors last summer. We have commenced outdoor preaching this summer. We have already held 15 meetings outdoors at Holm Lane End, Birkinshaw & Drighlington & Adwalton & Birley & Dewsbury & Batley & Batley Carr, Heckmondwike. We held counsel on Sunday the 28th off May at Westgate Hill at Sister Cowling's. President Hodgson gave counsel that we should hold 30 meetings next month the wether been favourable. I have to go to Holm Lane End, Bierley, Cleckheaton, Birkinshaw, and Gomersal. Brother Thomas Turner has to go to Dewsbury, Batley Carr, Batley, Heckmondwicke, & Birkinshaw Bottoms. Brother Stockdale has to go to Drighlington and Adwalton, Gildersome, Birstall and Tong. You will see by this that we shall not get rusty. I ever pray that God will bles us with a portion of his holy Spirrit That we might have strength given us to go forth and perform the labour assigned us that we might accomplish some good.

¹Squire Hepworth was a son of Joseph. He emigrated from England 21 May 1864 on the ship *General McClellan*.

²Joseph Hepworth emigrated from England 7 September 1870.

We are all well at the present. Mother Cowling³ is not so verry well. The Batley folks are all pretty well at the present. Emley's⁴ Uncle John Hobson is dead and buried. I was going to tell you the date but I have forgot and I cant find the card. Sister Hobson⁵ a been confined of a daughter and it is living. They are all well for anything that I now. She would like to hear from her two sons in the valey as she as not heard anything since you left this country. Your mother Dyson⁶ has also buried her child. The rest of the folks are all well for anything that I know. Your Uncle Coop⁷ desires to be remembered to you along with your Ant Martha.⁸ Rastrick is working in the brick yard and Albert [and] Willimina⁹ is working at the mill. They are all gettn along first rate. Your Ant Sarah Oxley¹⁰ wishes to be remmbered and wishes you to tell your ant Mary Thornton¹¹ she would very much like a letter from her as she as been silent ever since she got to the valey. She thinks that she is not sattisfied with her position. There is so many fals reports consarning the Latterday Saints as a people. She would fell better sattisfied had sister Mary to write a letter to her. I was at Bentons yesterday and he desires to hear from his wife Polly. They are all well. James as got married. James Wells is dead and they have taken Thomas Wells to the asylom. Your Ant Harriot¹² wants to know if there is any room for her in the valey and if there is any sewing when she gets there. Please to remmber me to all inquiring friends. I will write again soon and give you all particulars that I can. I remain your affectionate father in the gospel.

Joseph Hepworth

³Mother Cowling was Eliza Cowley nee Schofield, the mother of Hannah Cowling, wife of Edmund Hepworth.

⁴This Emily was the former Emily Dyson, who married Squire Hepworth.

⁵This Sister Hobson was Ann nee Lambert. She was the wife of John Hobson. John Hobson died 22 January 1865. After immigrating to the United States, Ann married Joseph Hepworth and they settled in Oxford.

⁶Mother Dyson was the mother of Emily Dyson, the wife of Squire Hepworth. Her given name was Amelia and her maiden name was Lambert. She was a sister to Ann Lambert Hobson. Ann was widowed when her husband John Hobson died on 22 January 1865. Ann emigrated from England on 2 July 1873. In the U.S. Joseph Hepworth and Ann Lambert Hobson renewed their friendship and were married 27 October 1873. They lived in Oxford, Idaho.

⁷Uncle Coop was William Coop, the husband of Martha nee Hirst.

⁸Aunt Martha was the above mentioned Martha Hirst Coop and a sister Mary Hirst.

⁹Rastrick, Wilhelmina, and Albert were children of William Coop and Martha nee Hirst.

¹⁰Sarah Oxley was a sister to Joseph Hepworth. She married William Oxley in 1844.

¹¹Mary Thornton was a sister to Joseph Hepworth, who married William Thornton.

¹²Aunt Harriot was Harriot Hirst, a sister to Mary Hirst. She was first married to Benjamin Porritt, then second to Charles Byard.