

KIRTLA

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Church Magazines



“You’ve prayed me here, now what do you want of me?” Joseph Smith said to Newel K. Whitney upon Joseph’s arrival in Kirtland, Ohio. Their meeting took place in Whitney’s store, where items such as brooms, tools, shoes, and grain were sold.

If New York was the birthplace of the Church, Kirtland was its schoolhouse.

For eight years Kirtland, Ohio, was the primary headquarters of the Church and a gathering place for the Saints where they were schooled and organized. Kirtland was a place of persecution but also a place of great blessings.

In February 1831 the Prophet Joseph Smith first arrived in Kirtland and met Newel K. Whitney in an impressive manner. One account tells it this way:

“A sleigh containing four persons drove through the streets of Kirtland and drew up in front of the store of Gilbert and Whitney. One of the men, a young and stalwart personage alighted, and springing up the steps walked into the store and to where the junior partner was standing. ‘Newel K. Whitney! Thou art the man!’ he exclaimed, extending his hand cordially, as if to an old and familiar acquaintance. ‘You have the advantage of me,’ replied the merchant, as he mechanically took the proffered hand, ‘I could not call you by name as you have me.’ ‘I am Joseph the Prophet,’ said the stranger smiling. ‘You’ve prayed me here, now what

do you want of me?’ The Prophet, it is said, while in the East had seen the Whitneys, in vision, praying for his coming to Kirtland” (*History of the Church*, 1:146).

N. K. Whitney and Company Store

The Prophet Joseph Smith and his wife Emma lived in the Whitney store for about 18 months. And it was there that Joseph worked on translating the Bible. The Prophet also received numerous revelations in what is known as the Revelation Room above the store.

Next to the Revelation Room is the room where the School of the Prophets was held; it’s Adam Jones’s favorite place in Kirtland. Adam, 17, from the Stow Branch in Akron, Ohio, lives about an hour’s drive from



Kirtland. “I really like the School of the Prophets Room,” he says. “I like the spirit there. There’s a peacefulness that testifies of what the Saints went through and what they accomplished in Kirtland to help the gospel go

forward.”

Visiting the rooms where the Prophet taught the early missionaries and where he received so many important revelations—

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SCHOOL OF THE SAINTS





Adram Jones, shown above in the asbery, loves to feel the spirit that permeates the School of the Prophets Room (top, right). In this room above the Whitney store, the Prophet met with other priesthood leaders to study the gospel. Also upstairs is the Revelation Room (inset), where 17 revelations were received.

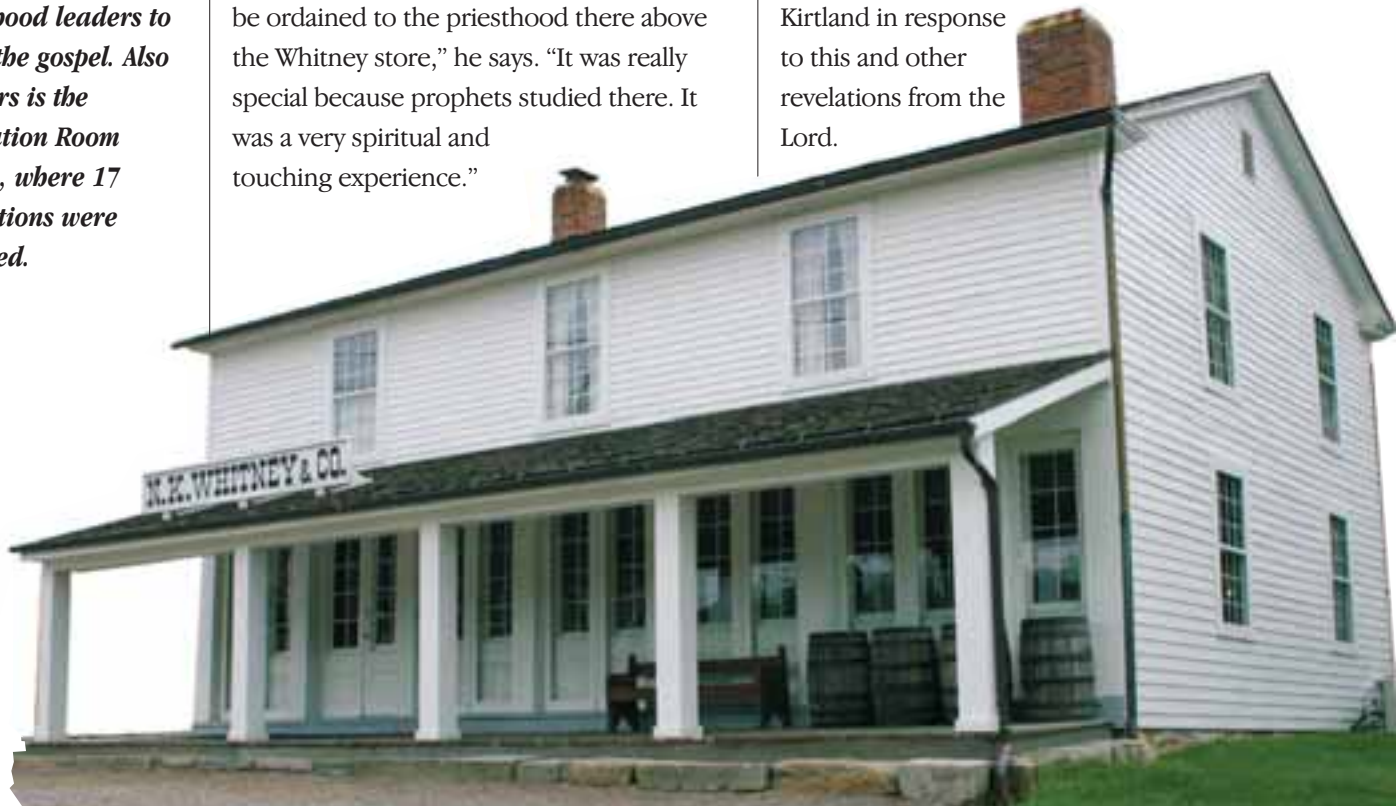
such as the oath and covenant of the priesthood (see D&C 84) and the Word of Wisdom (see D&C 89)—has strengthened Adam’s testimony of the Restoration. “Being here helps your faith and helps you understand about the history of the Church.”

Clark Haymond, 17, of the Solon Ward in Kirtland has a personal connection to the School of the Prophets Room. “I was able to be ordained to the priesthood there above the Whitney store,” he says. “It was really special because prophets studied there. It was a very spiritual and touching experience.”

Schoolhouse

Another revelation given to the Prophet Joseph above the Whitney store was Doctrine and Covenants 88. In verse 118 the Lord made clear the importance of education, saying, “Seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith.”

Along with the School of the Prophets, there were other schools established in Kirtland in response to this and other revelations from the Lord.





A HOME TEACHER TO THE PROPHET

Would you be a little nervous if you were called to be a home teacher to the prophet and his family? This is just what happened to William Cahoon, a young man who lived in Kirtland; and he was, in fact, a bit anxious about this responsibility.

"I was called and ordained to act as a teacher to visit the families of the Saints," he said. "I got along very well till I found that I was obliged to call and pay a visit to the Prophet. Being young, . . . I felt my weakness in visiting the Prophet and his family in the capacity of a teacher. I almost felt like shrinking from duty. Finally I went to his door and knocked, and in a minute the Prophet came to the door. I stood there trembling, and said to him:

" 'Brother Joseph, I have come to visit you in the capacity of a teacher, if it is convenient for you.'

"He said 'Brother William, come right in, I am glad to see you; sit down in that chair there and I will go and call my family in.'

"They soon came in and took seats. He then said, 'Brother William, I submit myself and family into your hands,' and then took his seat. 'Now Brother William,' said he 'ask all the questions you feel like.'

"By this time all my fears and trembling had ceased, and I said, 'Brother Joseph, are you trying to live your religion?'

"He answered 'Yes.'

"Then I said, 'Do you pray in your family?'

"He said, 'Yes.'

" 'Do you teach your family the principles of the gospel?'

"He replied, 'Yes, I am trying to do it.'

" 'Do you ask a blessing on your food?'

"He answered, 'Yes.'

" 'Are you trying to live in peace and harmony with all your family?'

"He said that he was.

"I turned to Sister Emma, his wife, and said 'Sister Emma, are you trying to live your religion? Do you teach your children to obey their parents? Do you try to teach them to pray?'

"To all these questions, she answered, 'Yes, I am trying to do so.'

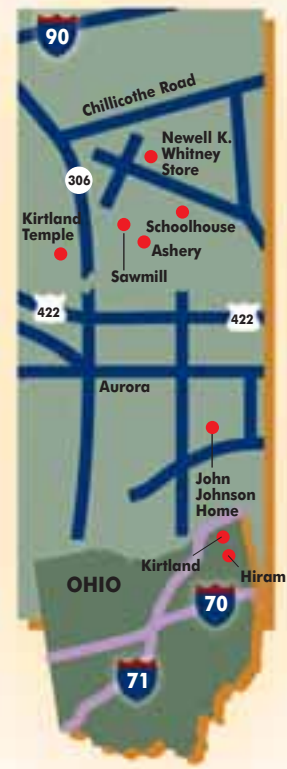
"I then turned to Joseph and said, 'I am now through with my questions as a teacher; and now if you have any instructions to give, I shall be happy to receive them.'

"He said, 'God bless you, Brother William; and if you are humble and faithful, you shall have power to settle all difficulties that may come before you in the capacity of a teacher.'

"I then left my parting blessing upon him and his family, as a teacher, and took my departure" (quoted in Marion G. Romney, "The Responsibilities of Home Teachers," *Ensign*, Mar. 1973, 14-15).



In March of 1832, a mob dragged the Prophet Joseph from his bedroom in the John Johnson home (opposite page, bottom). He was tarred and feathered but still had the strength to preach the next morning. **Right: Sisters Robbins and Anderson, in the restored schoolhouse, feel blessed to serve in the Kirtland area.**



There were a school of the elders, a grammar school, and various private schools where adults and youth studied not only the gospel but also subjects like math, gram-

mar, philosophy, government, literature, history, geography, and languages.

Near the Whitney store is the restored Kirtland schoolhouse, a replica of the original from the early 1800s. This building served not only as a schoolhouse but also as a gathering place for the Saints to worship through prayer, music, sermons, and partaking of the sacrament.

Ashery and Sawmill

Also restored in historic Kirtland are the ashery and sawmill. The ashery was an important industry that helped the Saints raise funds to build the temple and other Church buildings. The sawmill (below) was built to cut lumber for the temple's construction.

Consecrated to the Church by Newell Whitney, the ashery is where potash and pearlash were made. Both of these ingredients were used in making items such as soap, paper, gunpowder, cloth, and glass.

Today the Kirtland sawmill is one of the few functioning sawmills from the 1830s. During construction of the Kirtland Temple, the workers would meet at the sawmill for a prayer to begin the day. Those working on the temple then walked up the hill to the temple site, while the carpentry workers went to work at the sawmill.

Kirtland Temple

While still in New York, the Prophet Joseph received a revelation from the Lord that the Saints



were to gather in Ohio. The Lord told the Prophet, "There I will give unto you the law; and there you shall be endowed with power from on high" (D&C 38:32).

A short time later the Lord revealed the exact architecture, design, and measurements of the Kirtland Temple (opposite page, top). Construction on this, the first latter-day temple, started in 1833 and was finished after much work and sacrifice three years later.

"I love the story of how the Saints worked so hard to get that temple built," says Andrea Mann, 18, of the Solon Ward. "Every time I pass it, it's a good feeling. That's where so many important things happened."

One of the greatest occurrences in the Kirtland Temple was when the Savior, Moses, Elias, and Elijah appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery

to restore important priesthood keys (see D&C 110).

Tamara Dame of the Highland Ward in Ogden, Utah, tells about visiting the temple last summer: "It was amazing to be in the room where Jesus Christ, Moses, and other prophets appeared to Joseph Smith. There aren't words to explain how I felt in that room. I was 10 or



so feet from where all these righteous leaders stood. It was the most awesome experience.”

John Johnson Home

About 30 miles (48 km) south of Kirtland is the restored John Johnson home in Hiram, Ohio. The Prophet Joseph and his family lived here with the Johnsons in 1831 for a year. During that time, Joseph continued translating the Bible and received one of the greatest revelations ever given: section 76 of the Doctrine and Covenants describes how the Lord appeared to Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon and taught them about the kingdoms of glory.

“I love the John Johnson home,” says Lizz Harris, 18, of the Solon Ward. “I remember going there for the first time and having a strong spiritual feeling overcome me. The Spirit is there.”

The Johnson home is also a favorite of Chris Anthony, 16, of the Stow Branch. As Chris talks about the glorious vision shared by Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon in the upstairs room of the Johnson home, he says: “I now have an actual visual perspective of where the vision happened. It’s not just words on paper that we read every day. It’s something that I’ve seen and felt.”

“I think it’s amazing what Joseph was able to do,” Chris adds. “I don’t think there’s any better example other than Jesus Christ. Next to Him, Joseph Smith is such a great example for modern-day youth.”

For the young men and women who visited these restored historic sites in Kirtland, the feelings and experiences are written deeply in their hearts. They talk reverently of the strong Spirit they felt in places where the Savior appeared and where prophets, both ancient and modern, have brought to pass a wonderful work. **NE**



1831

In February Joseph Smith arrives in Kirtland, Ohio.

In February Edward Partridge (right) is ordained as the first bishop of the Church.

In June the first high priests are ordained at general conference.



1832

In February the revelation on the kingdoms of glory (see D&C 76) is received.

In December “the Olive Leaf” revelation (see D&C 88) is received, calling for the construction of a temple in Kirtland (right) and the establishment of the School of the Prophets.



1833

In February the Word of Wisdom (see D&C 89) is

received.

In July Joseph Smith concludes the first draft of his translation of the Bible (JST).



In December Joseph Smith Sr. (left) is ordained as the first Church patriarch.

1835

In February the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles is organized (see D&C 107:23–24).

In July Egyptian mummies and papyruses are exhibited in Kirtland, Ohio; Joseph Smith purchases them, and from the writings on the papyruses, translates the Book of Abraham.

The Doctrine and Covenants is accepted as scripture.

1836

On March 27 the Kirtland Temple is dedicated (see D&C 109).

On April 3 Jesus Christ appears to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple (right). Moses, Elias, and Elijah appear and give priesthood keys (see D&C 110).



1838

In January Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and other leaders are forced to flee Kirtland, Ohio.