



Thankful for Missionary Work

BY PRESIDENT GORDON B. HINCKLEY

The boat on which I traveled to England docked at Plymouth the night of July 1, 1933. The three of us missionaries aboard took the boat train to London, arriving late at night. The next day I was assigned to go to Preston, Lancashire. After what seemed like a long, lonely train ride, I met my companion at the station, and he took me to our “digs,” a short distance from Vauxhall Chapel where the first LDS missionary sermon had been preached in 1837.

My companion then announced that we would go into town and hold a street meeting. I was terrified. We sang a hymn and offered prayer. Then he called on me to speak. A crowd gathered. They looked menacing to me. The world was then in the bottom of the Depression, and Lancashire had been particularly hard-hit. The people were poor. They wore wooden clogs on their feet. Their dress reflected the hard times in which they lived. They were difficult to understand; I was a westerner from the United States, and they spoke with a Lancashire dialect.

Those first few weeks I was discouraged. I wrote a letter home to my good father and said that I felt I was wasting my time and his money. He wrote a very short



When President Hinckley was a young man, he served a full-time mission to the British Isles. He tells us some of his experiences.

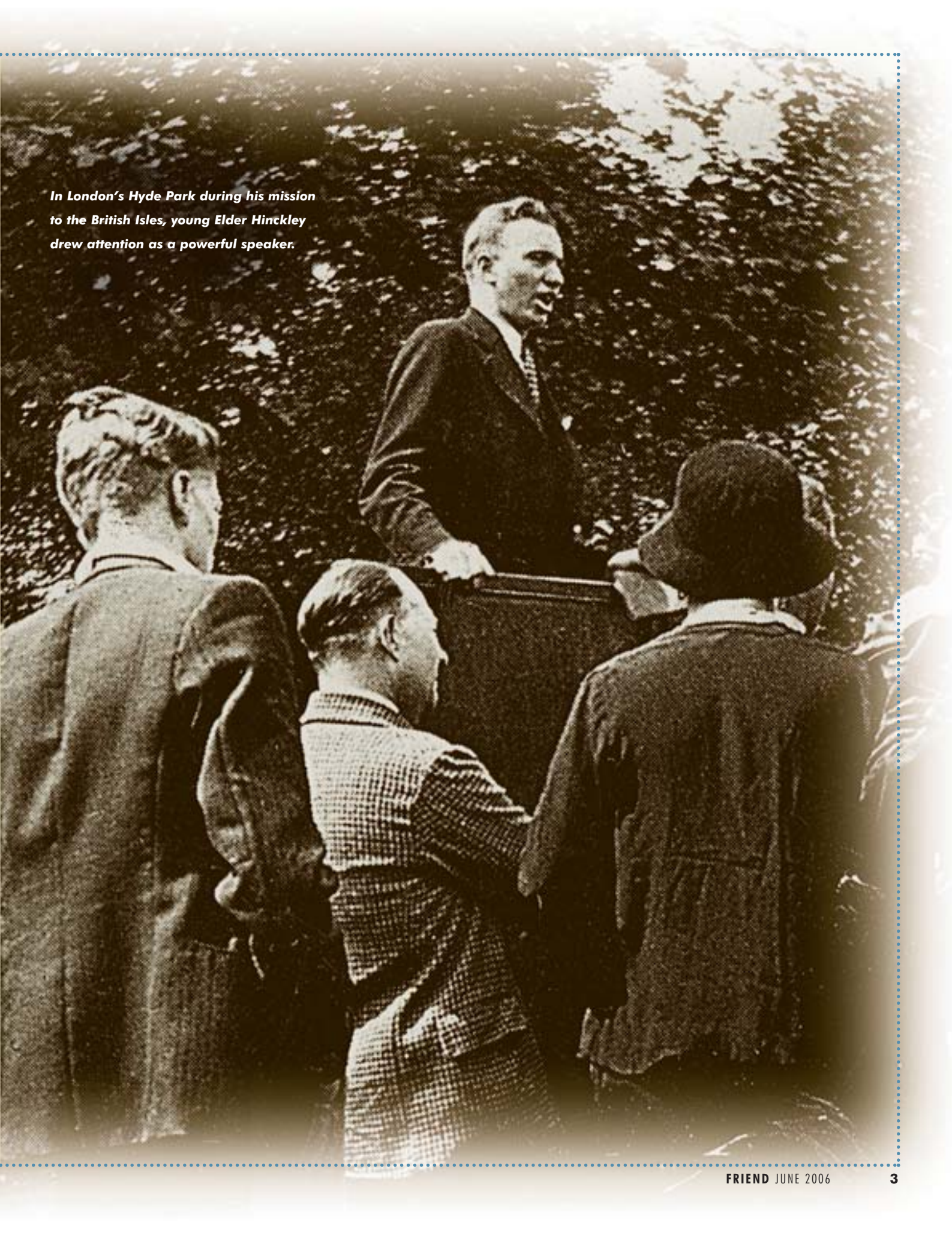
letter to me which said: “Dear Gordon, I have your recent letter. I have only one suggestion: forget yourself and go to work.” Earlier that morning my companion and I had read these words of the Lord: “Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel’s, the same shall save it” (Mark 8:35).

Those words of the Master, followed by my father’s letter, went into my very being. I went into our bedroom and got on my knees and made a pledge to the Lord. I covenanted that I would try to forget myself and lose myself in His service.

That July day in 1933 was my day of decision. A new light came into my life and a new joy into my heart. The fog of England seemed to lift, and I saw the sunlight. I had a rich and wonderful mission experience, for which I shall ever be grateful.

God be thanked for the glorious gospel of His Beloved Son, restored to earth. May we remember that each of us has the privilege and opportunity to make our own declaration of faith, courage, and truth that will help bring to fulfillment the God-given mandate [command] to take the gospel to the world. ●

From “Taking the Gospel to Britain: A Declaration of Vision, Faith, Courage, and Truth,” Ensign, July 1987, 2–7, and “Missionary Journal,” Ensign, July 1987, 8–11.



In London's Hyde Park during his mission to the British Isles, young Elder Hinckley drew attention as a powerful speaker.