
Gideon Hayden (Haden) Carter

1798–1838

D&C 75:34

The Prophet Joseph Smith told twenty-three-year-old Gideon that he “had one talent and if after being ordained” a priest, he “should hide it God would take it.”¹ Gideon believed his one talent was to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Rather than neglect the talent, he served one short mission after another in Ohio before being ordained an elder and being called on January 25, 1832, to labor in the ministry with Sylvester Smith (see D&C 75:34).²

Accepting the missionary call as the word of God, on April 5, 1832, Gideon Carter and Sylvester Smith started on their mission to the East. Along their route, they stopped in northeastern Pennsylvania to meet with the Saints in the area. They had the privilege of administering to a “sick sister, who recovered immediately.”³ Continuing northward, the twosome journeyed through New York and baptized several who testified of the truth of their Restoration message. Joining them on their journey from New York to Vermont was Gideon’s brother, Jared Carter. In Benson, Vermont, Gideon was critical of his brother’s prophecies. The criticism resulted in Jared leaving the company of Gideon and Sylvester.

After a few months in the East, Gideon returned to Ohio. He moved his possessions from Amherst to Kirtland to be closer to the Prophet Joseph Smith. Gideon participated in

¹ Joseph Smith quote, in Donald Q. Cannon and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *Far West Record Minutes of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830–1844* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 25.

² Revelation, 25 January 1832–B [D&C 75:23–36], 1. Joseph Smith Papers.

³ Andrew Jenson, *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia* 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: Andrew Jenson History Company, 1901), 3:615.

laying the cornerstones of the Kirtland Temple. He was a charter member of the Kirtland Safety Society and served on the Kirtland high council. When religious persecution escalated in Kirtland, Gideon joined the Latter-day Saint exodus.

By 1837 he had settled in Far West, Missouri. In the evening of October 24, 1838, news reached Latter-day Saints in Far West that a mob had captured two or possibly three of the brethren. David W. Patten resolved to rescue the imprisoned men and asked for volunteers to help him. Gideon was one of the first to volunteer. In the morning of October 25, 1838, the Battle at Crooked River ensued between the Latter-day Saints and the Missourians. Gideon Carter was killed in the battle. Parley P. Pratt saw him in death:

I turned to Gideon Carter, who was lying on his face, and saw him die. His face was so marred and disfigured with wounds and blood that I did not recognize him then, but learned afterwards that we had mistaken him for one of the enemy, and left him on the ground in mistake.⁴

Oliver Huntington wrote of seeing the body of Gideon Carter being brought to Far West for burial:

One day I saw a crowd around a wagon not far from our house, so I ran up to see what was going on; I climbed up and stuck my head over the edge of the box and the first thing my eyes met was the familiar face of Gideon Carter, and although the cursed, worse than in human mob, had dug his eyes out with sticks he still looked like him still. Gideon was killed in the [Crooked] River Battle, had a ball hole in his breast and a large gash of a sword in the back side of his head. He lay on the battle ground until the next day or two when the mob came and buried their own dead, dug his eyes out and kicked the dirt over him where he had laid until now, the brethren not daring to go that far from home or for some other cause I know not what.⁵

⁴ Parley P. Pratt, *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*, ed. Parley P. Pratt Jr. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 154.

⁵ Oliver B. Huntington Autobiography, typescript, 40. L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT.