
Micah Baldwin Welton

1792–1861

D&C 75:36

Micah was born and reared in Watertown, Connecticut. It was not until the 1820s that he made the western trek to Ohio and put down roots. Micah supported himself as a millwright and a farmer. His belief in God in his early years in Ohio was well-known: “He was a firm believer in God and a great bible student. If anyone asked him a question he could quote the bible chapter and verse.”¹ Micah married Rebecca Smith on March 8, 1828, in Portage, Ohio. Their marriage certificate was signed by Eden Smith, who later became a missionary companion of Micah.²

At age 38, Micah was baptized on June 23, 1831, at Northampton, Ohio, by John Smith, his father-in-law.³ On October 25, 1831, he was ordained a priest in Orange, Ohio, by Oliver Cowdery. Within a month, on November 17, 1831, Reynolds Cahoon had ordained Micah an elder.

Micah attended the conference of the Church held at the home of Gideon Carter in Amherst, Ohio. During the conference, the Prophet Joseph Smith received a revelation calling him to labor as a missionary with Eden Smith, his brother-in-law: “And also my servant Micah B. Welton and also my servant Eden Smith” (D&C 75:36). The two men began their mission from Northampton, Ohio, on December 10, 1831. They preached in small communities in Northern Ohio before returning to Northampton nine days later. They started again on their mission but returned to Northampton a second time on February 4, 1832.

¹ Nina K. Wolff, “Micah Baldwin Welton” (n.p., n.d.). 1. Church History Library.

² Marriage certificate of Micah Welton and Rebecca Smith. FamilySearch.

³ Letter to John Smith, 2 July 1833. Joseph Smith Papers.

In May 1833, at a council held in Norton Township, Ohio, with Sidney Rigdon presiding, the standing of “Baldwin Welton” and other elders was discussed. The council concluded that “their ordinations were illegal, and that the churches should not receive them in their several offices.”⁴ It was not until March 31, 1836, that Micah received a license to preach:

To Whom It May Concern.

This certifies that Michael [Micah] B. Welton has been received into the church of the Latter day Saints, organized on the sixth of April, in the year of our Lord, one thousand, eight hundred & thirty, & has been ordained an Elder according to the rules & regulations of said Church, & is duly authorized to preach the gospel, agreeably to the authority of that Office. From the satisfactory evidence which we have of his good moral character, & his zeal for the cause of righteousness, & diligent desire to persuade men to forsake evil & embrace truth, we confidently recommend him to all candid & upright people as a worthy member of society. We, therefore, in the name, & by the authority of this church, grant unto this, our worthy brother in the Lord, this letter of commendation as a proof of our fellowship & Esteem. ...

Joseph Smith Jr., Chairman.

F. G. Williams, Clerk.

Kirtland, Ohio, March 31, 1836.⁵

After receiving the license, Micah moved his family to Clay County, Missouri. Due to religious persecution in the county, the family moved on to Quincy, Illinois. In that city of refuge, Micah was ordained a seventy in 1839.

Micah resided in Pike County, Illinois, before moving his family to Nauvoo. He purchased property in Nauvoo and once again became a farmer. He left his family and farm in 1844 to serve a mission in Kentucky. When he returned to Nauvoo, Micah spent much time working on the carpentry of the Nauvoo Temple. He received his endowment on January 29, 1846, in the temple.

⁴ History, 1838–1856, volume A-1 [23 December 1805–30 August 1834], 297. Joseph Smith Papers.

⁵ License for Micah Welton, 31 March 1836, 29. Joseph Smith Papers.

When the Saints fled from Nauvoo in 1846 to the Territory of Iowa, Micah remained in Illinois and voluntarily withdrew from Church fellowship. He died on August 13, 1861, at Truro, Illinois, at age sixty-eight.