
Robert Blashel Thompson

1811–1841

D&C 124:12–14

Robert was a Methodist preacher in England before migrating to Upper Canada in 1834. The preaching of Parley P. Pratt caused him to forsake his Methodist leanings and enter baptismal waters in May 1836. He was ordained an elder by John Taylor on July 22, 1836. Within a year, Robert had moved to Kirtland and married Mercy Rachel Fielding, the sister of Mary Fielding Smith.

Robert and his wife joined the Hyrum Smith Company in leaving Kirtland and moving to Far West, Missouri. When religious persecution near Far West erupted into conflict, Robert fought in defense of the Saints in the Battle of Crooked River. Due to his participation in the battle, Missourians vowed to kill him. Robert fled into the wilderness of northern Missouri and suffered from exposure and starvation in an attempt to escape from his enemies. He avoided detection and made it safely across the Mississippi River to Quincy, Illinois.

In Quincy, Robert secured employment as a writer and reporter for the *Argus* newspaper and as a court clerk. At the Prophet Joseph's request, he gathered libelous reports and publications against the Church. When he moved upriver to Commerce (later Nauvoo), he was appointed Church clerk and scribe to the Prophet Joseph, colonel and aide-de-camp to the lieutenant general of the Nauvoo Legion, treasurer of the city of Nauvoo, and a regent of the University of Nauvoo.

On January 19, 1841, Robert was called by revelation to assist Joseph Smith in writing a proclamation to the kings, presidents, and governors of the earth: "Let my servant Robert B. Thompson help you to write this proclamation, for I am well pleased with him" (D&C 124:12). In the same revelation, the Lord promised, "I will bless him with a multiplicity of blessings: let him be faithful and true in all things from henceforth, and he shall be great

in mine eyes, but let him remember that his stewardship will I require at his hands" (D&C 124:13–14).

From May to August 1841, Robert worked alongside Don Carlos Smith as an associate editor of the *Times and Seasons*. On August 16, 1841, Robert was seized with the same lung infection that took the life of Don Carlos Smith the week before. He died on August 27, 1841, in his home at Nauvoo at age twenty-nine. The Prophet Joseph spoke at his funeral and said that he died "in full hope of a glorious resurrection."¹

The *Times and Seasons* printed a notice of his death:

With feelings, too pungent to be expressed, we have to record the death of our esteemed and much beloved BROTHER ROBERT BLATSELL THOMPSON. For the last five or six years he has been a faithful and an efficient Elder of this church; laboring incessantly for the cause of truth. ... He departs this life in the triumphs of faith, bearing testimony, in his dying moments of the truth of the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and of the faith of the new and everlasting covenant; rejoicing greatly, that his time had come, when he too could go, and be at rest in the paradise of God.²

¹ Smith, *History of the Church*, 4:411–412.

² "Death of Robert B. Thompson," *Times and Seasons* 2 (1 September 1841), 519.