

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM N. WATKINS.

York Town, Upper Canada, Oct. 27, 1830,

Dear Brethren in the Lord,

Grace, mercy, and peace, rest on you all; and I pray God that every new-covenant blessing may be multiplied to you, and the whole Israel of God. Amen.

I have delayed writing chiefly because postage of letters is so very high, and because I had nothing very important to write; as the friends in New York promised to write respecting my arrival at that place; and my proceeding to York Town, Upper Canada, (in the British dominions.)

When I arrived in this town, I was received very gladly by brother and sister Lawson; and found a small society of about sixteen, who meet in church fellowship. They are chiefly emigrants, who were belonging to us and the Wesleyans in England. Two or three of them were local preachers. They held their meetings in a school house, in the suburbs. Since my arrival, the society is augmented to thirty-four members, and the congregations are large and attentive.

The Lord has wonderfully opened my way in the country. There is scarcely a house, but what I have access to, both among rich and poor.

I have opened several places in the country, and I have formed three societies, twenty persons have joined, and I anticipate the happy period when the little one shall become a thousand.

My wife speaks occasionally, and the Lord has made her a blessing to the people.

The roads through the woods in this country are impassable at some seasons of the year. And the settlements are very far from each other; so that a preacher cannot do much in the country without a horse. And the farmers in the country have subscribed nearly twelve pounds, to buy me a horse to supply them with week-day preaching. I have made arrangements to preach at each place once a fortnight; at three o'clock in the afternoon. The people cannot travel these roads after night.

I travelled in one week, since I arrived, nearly fifty miles; preached eight times; baptized one, and buried two people, besides visiting several families. This was thought by the friends, to be a miraculous week's work, without a horse, the roads being so bad, &c.

I have a neat little house, for which we pay fifteen shillings a month. I have a few goods, such as are absolutely necessary for present use; and shall buy more as soon as money can be raised.

There is but one (English) Wesleyan Missionary in this province. He is stationed at a place called Kingston, about two hundred miles from York; and it is generally believed, that he will be withdrawn next spring. I have paid them one visit, and preached them one sermon, They have one hundred in society, (and a chapel.)

We expect to commence building a chapel at York in a few weeks at furthest. God bless you all.

I remain, dear brethren,

Yours affectionately,
NATHANIEL WATKINS.

UPPER CANADA—*America.*

Extract of a letter from Nathaniel Watkins.

York, U. Canada, April 4, 1831.

Dear Fathers and Brethren in the Gospel,

Glory to God, amidst all my trials, the work of God is making rapid progress through the mission. We have Sabbath day preaching at eight places, and week day preaching at as many; and we have seven classes.

At the Qr. day held at York, March 7, 1831, the number of members was eighty-one, with eight preachers and exhorters; and with prudent measures this mission will fully establish itself in a short time.

Dear Brethren. I hope you will not be discouraged from sending missionaries to Canada. It is a glorious work. You would be delighted in our lovefeasts and class-meetings, in the wild woods of Canada, to hear reclaimed backsliders,—afresh quickened lukewarm professors,—and young converts, praise God that ever the P. Methodists sent a missionary amongst them. We have had of late as many as eight conversions in one week, and some very notorious sinners have been brought to God. One woman, a native of Birmingham, who had been in bondage seven years, being present at the renewal of the tickets, got her soul set at liberty, and shouted aloud the praises of God. The last time I preached in York, four cried for mercy, and all of them found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write.

Glory to God, I do not regret my undertaking, although I have had many severe trials, from different quarters. It is impossible for our friends in England to conceive the difficulties that a preacher has to cope with in Canada: the opposition from the different classes of professing Christians; the mixed multitude of different nations, colours, languages; the extreme cold, the unparalleled badness of the roads, &c. I often think of the dear friends in England, with earnest solicitude for their welfare.

I conclude, praying that all the fulness of the Spirit may rest upon you at the Annual Conference; desiring an interest in all your prayers;

I remain, yours in the bonds of Christian union,

N. WATKINS.

References

Primitive Methodist Magazine 1831/94; 1831/262