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# Edson Fuller

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1809–1879

D&C 52:28

In spring of 1831, at age twenty-two, Edson Fuller entered baptismal waters in Chardon, Ohio. On June 3, 1831, he was ordained an elder. He attended the fourth conference of the Church held on June 3–6, 1831, in Kirtland, Ohio. On June 7 the Prophet Joseph Smith received a revelation calling Edson on a mission to Missouri (see D&C 52:28). Edson never took that missionary journey. He remained in Ohio, working as a carpenter, farmer, and storekeeper. He claimed the reason for not going to Missouri was personal visions that specified he needed to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ in Ohio not Missouri.<sup>1</sup> One who listened to his preaching was Joel Hills Johnson. He wrote that Edson Fuller and Harvey Whitlock “preached upon the first principles of the Gospel. . . . This preaching filled me with astonishment, it being the first discourse that I had ever heard that corresponded with the New Testament.”<sup>2</sup>

Evangelist historian Josiah Jones wrote of Edson’s unusual preaching style: “E. Fullers while lying on the floor has been seen to jump up and cling to a beam for a while and then drop like a log on the floor.”<sup>3</sup> Levi Hancock also wrote of Edson’s preaching: “Edson Fuller would fall and turn black in the face.”<sup>4</sup> As unusual as his preaching methods were, Edson baptized several residents in Ohio. One of his converts, David Johnson, however, desired to be “rebaptized for he felt dissatisfied with his former baptism, he having been

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<sup>1</sup> See Josiah Jones, “History of the Mormonites, Kirtland, 1831,” *The Evangelist* 9 (June 1, 1841): 135.

<sup>2</sup> Joel Hills Johnson Autobiography (1802–1868), 3. L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT.

<sup>3</sup> Jones, “History of the Mormonites, Kirtland, 1831,” 136.

<sup>4</sup> Levi Hancock Autobiography, typescript, 27. L. Tom Perry Special Collections. Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT.

baptized by Edson [Fuller], who, while baptizing him was under the influence of an evil spirit." On September 1, 1831, Edson was "silenced from holding the office of Elder."<sup>5</sup>

In 1840 Edson was still residing at Chardon, Ohio, but not associated with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. By 1845 he had moved from Ohio to Grand Rapids, Michigan.<sup>6</sup> By 1870 he was residing in Mecosta County, Michigan.<sup>7</sup> Edson died on April 4, 1879, in Des Moines, Iowa, at age seventy.

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<sup>5</sup> Autobiography of Jared Carter, typescript, 12. Church History Library.

<sup>6</sup> US Federal Census, 1840, 1850, 1860.

<sup>7</sup> US Federal Census, 1870.