While I was living in this cabin in the old barracks, we experienced a day of God’s power with the Prophet Joseph. It was a very sickly time and Joseph had given up his home in Commerce to the sick, and had a tent pitched in his door-yard and was living in that himself. The large number of Saints who had been driven out of Missouri, were flocking into Commerce; but had no homes to go into, and were living in wagons, in tents, and on the ground. Many, therefore, were sick through the exposure they were subjected to. Brother Joseph had waited on the sick, until he was worn out and nearly sick himself.

On the morning of the 22nd of July, 1839, he arose reflecting upon the situation of the Saints of God in their persecutions and afflictions, and he called upon the Lord in prayer, and the power of God rested upon him mightily, and as Jesus healed the sick around him in his day, so Joseph, the Prophet of God, healed all around on this occasion. He healed all in his house and door-yard; then, in company with Sidney Rigdon and several of the Twelve, he went through among the sick lying on the bank of the river, and he commanded them in a loud voice, in the name of Jesus Christ, to come up and be made whole, and they were all healed. When he had healed all that were sick on the east side of the river, they crossed the Mississippi River in a ferry boat to the west side, to Montrose, where we were. The first house they went into was President Brigham Young’s. He was sick on his bed at the time. The Prophet went into his house and healed him, and they all came out together.

As they were passing by my door, brother Joseph said: “Brother Woodruff, follow me.” These were the only words spoken by any of the company from the time they left brother Brigham’s house till we crossed the public square, and entered brother [Elijah] Fordham’s house. Brother Fordham had been dying for an hour, and we expected each minute would be his last.

I felt the power of God that was overwhelming his Prophet.

When we entered the house, brother Joseph walked up to brother Fordham, and took him by the right hand; in his left hand he held his hat.

He saw that brother Fordham’s eyes were glazed, and that he was speechless and unconscious.

After taking hold of his hand, he looked down into the dying man’s face and said: “Brother Fordham, do you not know me?” At first he made no reply; but we could all see the effect of the Spirit of God resting upon him.

He again said: “Elijah, do you not know me?”

With a low whisper, brother Fordham answered, “yes!”

The Prophet then said, “Have you not faith to be healed?”

The answer, which was a little plainer than before, was: “I am afraid it is too late. If you had come sooner, I think it might have been.”

He had the appearance of a man awaking from sleep. It was the sleep of death.

Joseph then said: “Do you not believe that Jesus is the Christ?”

“I do, brother Joseph,” was the response.

Then the Prophet of God spoke with a loud voice, as in the majesty of the Godhead: “Elijah, I command you, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, to arise and be made whole!”

The words of the Prophet were not like the words of man, but like the voice of God. It seemed to me that the house shook from its foundation.

Elijah Fordham leaped from his bed like a man raised from the dead. A healthy color came to his face, and life was manifested in every act.

His feet were done up in ... poultices. He kicked them off his feet, scattering the contents, and then called for his clothes and put them on. He asked for a bowl of bread and milk, and ate it; then put on his hat and followed us into the street, to visit others who were sick.

The unbeliever may ask: “Was there not deception in this?”

If there is any deception in the mind of the unbeliever, there was certainly none with Elijah Fordham, the dying man, nor with those who were present with him, for in a few minutes more he would have been in the spirit world, had he
As soon as we left brother Fordham’s house, we went into the house of Joseph B. Noble, who was very low and dangerously sick. When we entered the house, brother Joseph took him by the hand, and commanded him, in the name of Jesus Christ, to arise and be made whole. He did arise and was immediately healed.

While this was going on, the wicked mob in the place … had become alarmed, and followed us into brother Noble’s house.

Before they arrived there, brother Joseph had called upon brother Fordham to offer prayer.

While he was praying, the mob entered, with all the evil spirits accompanying them.

As soon as they entered, brother Fordham, who was praying, fainted and sank to the floor.

When Joseph saw the mob in the house, he arose and had the room cleared of both that class of men and their attendant devils. Then brother Fordham immediately revived and finished his prayer.

This shows what power evil spirits have upon the tabernacles of men. The Saints are only saved from the power of the devil by the power of God.

This case of Brother Noble’s was the last one of healing upon that day. It was the greatest day for the manifestation of the power of God through the gift of healing since the organization of the Church.