

Identifying the Earliest Mormon Polygamists, 1841–44

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We hardly dared speak of it [i.e., plural marriage during Joseph Smith's lifetime]. The very walls had ears. We spoke of it only in whispers. —Zina Diantha Huntington Jacobs Smith Young, 1898

Of course there was things manifestly that the church was not to know—that they were not to reveal to the church, or were not to be revealed to the church. —Wilford Woodruff, 1892

FROM JOSEPH SMITH'S FIRST DOCUMENTED plural marriage in 1841 until his death more than three years later, some twenty-eight men and 106 women (as civil and plural wives) entered the prophet's order of celestial matrimony.¹ Given the secrecy surrounding Smith's controversial (and illegal) practice, the exact number of these earliest polygamists may never be

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1. This number counts Marinda N. Johnson Hyde and Mary Ann Frost Stearns Pratt once each. It does not include the deceased civil wives of John E.

known. However, enough information in the form of diaries, letters, autobiographies, reminiscences, affidavits, statements, and family histories has accumulated since the early 1840s—coupled with reasonable inferences and educated guesses—to enable a compelling, albeit tentative, identification.²

Based on the most convincing data presently available,³ the following men either definitely or probably married additional wives with Joseph Smith's permission prior to his death on June 27, 1844: James Adams, Ezra T. Benson, Reynolds Cahoon, William Clayton, Joseph W. Coolidge, Howard Egan, William Felshaw, William D. Huntington, Orson Hyde, Joseph A. Kelting, Heber C. Kimball, Vinson Knight, Isaac Morley, Joseph Bates Noble, John E. Page, Parley P. Pratt, Willard Richards, Hyrum Smith, John Smith, Joseph Smith, William Smith, Erastus Snow, John Taylor, Theodore Turley, Lyman Wight, Edwin D. Woolley, Brigham Young, and Lorenzo Dow Young. While the evidence in a few cases (i.e., Coolidge, Felshaw, Kelting, Page, and Wight) for an early plural marriage is circumstantial and conjectural, these twenty-eight men and

Page, Parley P. Pratt, Hyrum Smith, and Brigham Young, nor the husbands of women also married plurally to Joseph Smith, nor the men and women involved in John C. Bennett's unauthorized system of polygamy.

2. In early 1994, George D. Smith published the results of his investigations into early plural marriage: "Nauvoo Roots of Mormon Polygamy, 1841–1846: A Preliminary Demographic Report," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 37 (Spring 1994): 1–72. Smith's analysis included a comprehensive appendix entitled "Nauvoo Polygamous Families" which listed every known—as of 1994—early plural husband and wife sealed with Joseph Smith's (and later Brigham Young's) approval, together with dates of birth, marriage, sealing, age at sealing, and total family size prior to mid-1844, from mid-1844 to 1846, and from 1846 on. My essay revisits Smith's ground-breaking identifications.

3. In addition to the biographical and historical sources cited throughout this essay, the following two references were particularly invaluable: the individual and group genealogical records searchable at www.familysearch.org and the information assembled in Susan Easton Black's multi-volume *Membership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830–1848* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, Religious Studies Center, 1984–88). Despite their occasional errors, both works are essential sources. Unless otherwise indicated, all genealogical information for the men and women here treated comes from these two compilations.

their wives comprise the most likely candidates for membership in Joseph Smith's inner circle of plural marriage participants.⁴ (Biographical details not covered in the body of this essay may be found in the appendix.)

For Joseph Smith, a marriage that survived death had to be performed by an officiator authorized to employ the sealing power of God's restored priesthood authority. Marriages sanctioned, or "sealed," in this manner were termed eternal marriages. The highest state, or order, of eternal marriage was celestial, or plural, marriage. Only after the abandonment of plural marriage did the terms "celestial" and "eternal" marriage become interchangeable in LDS parlance. Plural marriages could be for time only, in which case the husband acted as his wife's terrestrial caretaker; for eternity only, in which the wife became her husband's "eternal possession" after death only; or for time and eternity, in which case the wife or wives were joined—or sealed—to their husband, both in this life and the next. The majority—though not all—of Mormon plural marriages were for time and eternity.⁵

4. Although I have elsewhere speculated that George J. Adams (1811–80) and William Henry Harrison Sagers (1815–86) also married polygamously during Smith's lifetime, I now believe they should be excluded. In 1843, Adams was summoned to LDS headquarters to answer charges of adultery. He admitted to a sexual encounter and was forgiven. Rumors surfaced soon afterward that he had taken a plural wife, but this cannot be corroborated. Still, it is likely that Adams was at least introduced to Smith's teachings on the subject. Following Smith's death, Adams joined William Smith (Joseph's younger brother) and Samuel Brannan in advocating and practicing polygamy without the approval of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles. As a result, he was excommunicated in 1845. Sagers was linked sexually to his sister-in-law, Phebe Madison, in late 1843, but she married civilly shortly before he was tried for adultery and forgiven. While Joseph Smith subsequently explained plural marriage to Sagers and others, there is no evidence that Sagers contracted an officially sanctioned plural marriage prior to Smith's death.

5. For helpful introductions to Mormon plural marriage, see Richard S. Van Wagoner, *Mormon Polygamy: A History*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1989); Lawrence Foster, *Religion and Sexuality: The Shakers, the Mormons, and the Oneida Community* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981); and Louis J. Kern, *An Ordered Love: Sex Roles and Sexuality in Victorian Utopias—The Shakers*,

Mormon plural marriage featured a strong patriarchal orientation.⁶ Viewed as a portion of the faithful husband's "privileges" and "possessions," plural wives comprised an integral element in Joseph Smith's celestial marital economy. Smith "often referred to the feelings that should exist between husband and wives," remembered one of his plural wives, saying

that they, his wives, should be his bosom companions, the nearest and dearest objects on earth in every sense of the word. He said men must beware how they treat their wives. They were given them for a holy purpose that the myriads of spirits waiting for tabernacles might have pure and healthy bodies. He also said many would awake in the morning of the resurrection sadly disappointed; for they, by transgression, would have neither wives nor children, for they surely would be taken from them, and given to those who should prove themselves worthy. Again he said, a woman would have her choice; this was a privilege that could not be denied her.⁷

Many—but not all—of the men and especially women entering into Joseph Smith's order of plural marriage did so primarily as a show of loyalty, obedience, and sacrifice to Smith, coupled with Smith's assurance that blessings unimaginable awaited them. For Smith, plural marriage represented the pinnacle of his theology of exaltation: the husband as king and priest, surrounded by queens and priestesses eternally procreating spirit children. As these spirit offspring enter mortality, they, by their obedience, accrue both to themselves, through their own children, and to their eternal parents additional glory, power, and exaltation—the entire process of exaltation cycling forever worlds without end.

Evidence

This section compiles the evidence for each pre-martyrdom plural marriage in alphabetical order by the husband's surname.

the Mormons, and the Oneida Community (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1981).

6. B. Carmon Hardy, "Lords of Creation, Polygamy, the Abrahamic Household, and Mormon Patriarchy," *Journal of Mormon History* 20 (Spring 1994): 119-52.

7. Lucy Walker Smith Kimball, quoted in Lyman Omer Littlefield, *Reminiscences of Latter-day Saints* (Logan: Utah Journal Co., Printers, 1888), 45-46.

That **James Adams** married Roxena Higby Repsher (also Repshire) as a plural wife was attested to by Repsher on October 13, 1869. According to Repsher: “On the eleventh day of July A.D. 1843 at the City of Nauvoo, County of Hancock, State of Illinois, She was married to James Adams for time and all eternity, (James Adams already having one wife [^]living[^]) by President Joseph Smith.”⁸ Roxena had previously married Daniel Mayhope Repsher (born 1804) on February 22, 1821; however, she had apparently separated from Repsher by the time of her marriage to Adams. The exact state of Roxena’s separation is unclear, and evidently not everyone agreed, at least initially, with her decision. Nearly a year earlier on August 31, 1842, Joseph Smith had told members of Nauvoo’s all-female Relief Society: “sis[ter]. Repshar had long since been advised to return to her husband—has been ascertain’d by good evidence that she left her husband without cause—that he is a moral man and a gentleman—she has got into a way of having revelations, but not the rev[elations]. of God—if she will go home we will pray for her, but if not our prayers will do no good.”⁹ Roxena and Daniel did not reconcile, and Daniel married Hannah Walton (born 1826) in the Nauvoo Temple on January 24, 1846. There is no evidence that either of James Adams’s marriages was repeated in the Nauvoo Temple.

Ezra T. Benson’s early plural marriage to his civil wife’s younger sister is attested to in two 1869 affidavits. In the first, dated September 6, 1869, his civil wife, Pamela Andrus, testified: “On the nineteenth day of November A.D. 1843 She was married or sealed to Ezra T Benson for time and all eternity by Hyrum Smith in the presence of Adeline B. Andrus her

8. Repsher’s statement is found among the many affidavits on “Celestial Marriage” that Joseph F. Smith collected in 1869-70 in two record books (hereafter Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books) housed in Archives, Family and Church History Department, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter LDS Church Archives). The affidavits in these two books are not arranged in any particular order. They also occasionally contain duplicates. Some of these documents, along with later statements, were published in Joseph Fielding Smith, *Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage* (1905; reprint., Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1970), 67ff. Carets (^) indicate text added interlinearly in the original document.

9. Nauvoo Relief Society, Minutes, August 31, 1842, in *Selected Collections from the Archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Brigham Young University Press, [December 2002]): 1:19.

sister, which was done in the City of Nauvoo County of Hancock, State of Illinois, and further, on the twenty seventh day of April A.D. 1844 at the same place She was present and witnessed the marrying or sealing of her sister Adeline to her Husband E[zra]. T. Benson by President Hyrum Smith.”¹⁰ In the second, dated September 5, 1869, his first plural wife, Adeline Andrus, stipulated: “On the Twenty-seventh day of April, A.D. 1844 in the City of Nauvoo, county of Hancock State of Illinois, She was married or Sealed to Ezra T. Benson, for time and all eternity, (he already having one wife,) by President Hyrum Smith; in the Presence of Pamela A. Benson, and also that her sister, Pamela, was Sealed to E[zra]. T. Benson Nov[ember]. 1843.”¹¹

Evidence for **Reynolds Cahoon’s** early plural marriage apparently exists only in Cahoon family history. Stella Cahoon Shurtleff and Brent Farrington Cahoon, comps. and eds., *Reynolds Cahoon and His Stalwart Sons* (n.p., 1960), 78, and Mary L. S. Putnam and Lila Cahoon, eds. and comps., *Reynolds Cahoon: His Roots and Branches* (Bountiful, Utah: Family History Publishers, 1993), v, 65, 78, both report Cahoon’s plural marriage to Lucina Roberts Johnson, a widow, sometime in late 1841 or early 1842. Lucina had married Peter Henry Johnson (born 1801) on November 24, 1824. She had six children before Peter died in 1838. Lucina evidently bore Cahoon a daughter, named Lucina Johnson Cahoon, about 1843, who died shortly after birth.

William Clayton’s early plural marriages are among the best documented. Clayton’s 1874 affidavit¹² and James B. Allen’s biography, *Trials of Discipleship: The Story of William Clayton, a Mormon* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 188–220 (republished as *No Toil Nor Labor Fear: The Story of William Clayton* [Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2002], 185-218), detail both the challenges of life in Nauvoo polygamy as well as Clayton’s marriages, first to Ruth Moon in 1836 and then to her younger sister, Margaret Moon, as a plural wife in 1843. Prior to Jo-

10. Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books.

11. Ibid. See also John Henry Evans and Minnie Egan Anderson, *Ezra T. Benson: Pioneer, Statesman, Saint* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1947), 63, 65, 355–56; and Donald Benson Alder and Elsie L. Alder, comps., *The Benson Family* (Salt Lake City: Ezra T. Benson Genealogical Society, Inc., 1979), 38, 54.

12. William Clayton, “Affidavit,” February 16, 1874, holograph, LDS Church Archives.

seph Smith's death, Clayton also unsuccessfully courted Mary Aspin (born 1815) and Sarah Ann Booth (born 1826) as plural wives. Clayton's daily first-person account of early Mormon plural marriage is found in George D. Smith, ed., *An Intimate Chronicle: The Journals of William Clayton* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books in association with Smith Research Associates, 1991, 1995), 93–197.

Though secondhand, the evidence for **Joseph W. Coolidge's** early plural marriage seems persuasive. According to a conversation between Coolidge and Joseph F. Smith recorded in Smith's diary on August 28, 1870: "Joseph Smith had sealed more than one wife to Jos[eph]. W. Coolidge, and he [i.e., Coolidge] 'knew' as he said, what he spoke. I record this as the testimony of a man who has not been with the Church for more than 20 years."¹³ Coolidge had married Elizabeth Buchanan civilly in 1834. If Joseph F. Smith's report is correct (i.e., that Joseph Smith sealed more than one wife to Coolidge), Coolidge's first plural marriage was probably to Elizabeth's younger sister, Mary Ann Buchanan, sometime before Joseph Smith's death on June 27, 1844. Coolidge and his families did not join the main body of the Saints for their move west in 1846–47.

Howard Egan's early plural marriage is better documented. Sometime early in 1844, Hyrum Smith, Joseph Smith's older brother, reportedly told John D. Lee that Egan had been "sealed to Mrs. [Catherine Reese] Clawson, and that their marriage was a most holy one; that it was in accordance with a *revelation* that the Prophet had recently received direct from God. He then explained to me fully the doctrines of polygamy, and wherein it was permitted, and why it was right."¹⁴ Reese had married Zephaniah Clawson (born 1798) on January 8, 1824. They had six children before Clawson died about 1839.

In 1869, Mary Ellen Kimball, a plural wife of Heber C. Kimball, added that "She was present, and a witness to the marriage or Sealing of Catherine Clawson to Howard Egan, (who already had one wife) by Hyrum Smith, Patriarch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day

13. Joseph F. Smith, Diary, August 28, 1878, in *Selected Collections from the Archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Brigham Young University Press, [December 2002]): 1:26.

14. John D. Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled, or the Life and Confessions of John D. Lee* (St. Louis: Bryan, Brand & Co., 1877), 288.

Saints.”¹⁵ Mormon apostle George A. Smith, writing to Joseph Smith III in 1869, corroborated this early plural marriage.¹⁶ Tamson Parshley, Egan’s civil wife, remained with him throughout his life; Catherine Reese divorced him in 1852.

The evidence for **William Felshaw**’s early plural marriage is compelling but circumstantial. The only known sources for his plural marriage to Charlotte Walters (born 1824) on July 28, 1843, are his family genealogical records (at www.familysearch.org) and Susan Black’s *Membership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, s.v. “Felshaw, William.” In apparent corroboration of his and Walters’s marriage, however, Charlotte gave birth to their first daughter, Katherine, on January 25, 1845, suggesting that conception occurred in May 1844; and when Charlotte was endowed in the Nauvoo Temple on February 3, 1846, she was identified explicitly as “Charlotte Felshaw”—both of which imply an early marriage to Felshaw.

William D. Huntington’s early plural marriage is also best attested to in his and his family’s genealogical records (at www.familysearch.org) and in Black, *Membership*, s.v. “Huntington, William Dresser.” Huntington married Caroline Clark civilly in 1839 and three and a half years later was sealed to her younger sister, Harriet Clark. William was the brother of two of Joseph Smith’s plural wives, Zina Diantha Huntington Jacobs and Presendia Lathrop Huntington Buell. Another brother, Dimick Huntington, introduced his sisters to Smith’s teachings on polygamy and performed their plural marriage ceremonies. It is interesting that William, the younger of the two brothers, not Dimick, entered Smith’s order of plural marriage during Smith’s lifetime.

The primary evidence for **Orson Hyde**’s two early plural marriages is found in an 1869 affidavit and in the autobiography of one of his wives.¹⁷ On September 15, 1869, Hyde testified:

I, Orson Hyde, do hereby certify and declare according to my best rec-

15. Mary Ellen Kimball, Affidavit, August 6, 1869, Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books.

16. George A. Smith, Letter to Joseph Smith III, October 9, 1869, Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (chronology of typed entries and newspaper clippings, 1830–present), October 9, 1869, LDS Church Archives.

17. See also the genealogical information in Myrtle Stevens Hyde, *Orson Hyde: The Olive Branch of Israel* (Salt Lake City: Agreka Books, 2000), 496–99.

ollection, that on the 4th day of Sept[ember] I was married to Miss Marinda N. Johnson, In Kirtland Ohio, in the Year of our Lord 1834. And in the Month of Feb[ruary] or March, I was married to Miss Martha R. Browitt, by Joseph Smith the Martyred Prophet and by him She was Sealed to me for time, and for all Eternity, in Nauvoo Ill[inois]. And in the month of April of the same year 1843, I was married by the same person to Mss. Mary Ann Price, and by him she was Sealed to me for time and for all Eternity, in Nauvoo Ill[inois] while the woman to whom I was first married was yet living and gave her cordial consent to both transactions and was personally present to witness the ceremony's.¹⁸

Mary Ann Price Hyde recorded in her memoirs, apparently in the 1880s:

On the return of Orson Hyde from his mission to Palestine [on December 7, 1842] he carried letters of introduction to me and invited me to visit his wife. I was there met by Joseph Smith, the Prophet, who, after an interesting conversation introduced the subject of plural marriage and endeavoured to teach me that principle. I resisted it with every argument I could command for, with my traditions, it was most repulsive to my feelings and rendered me very unhappy as I could not reconcile it with the purity of the gospel of Christ. Mr. Hyde took me home in a carriage and asked me what I thought of it and if I would consent to enter his family? I replied that I could not think of it for a moment.

Thus it rested for awhile and Mr. Hyde married another young lady [i.e., Martha R. Browett].¹⁹ In the mean time I was trying to learn the character of the leading men, for I sincerely hoped they were men of God. But, in my mind, plurality of wives was a serious question.

I soon learned to my satisfaction, that Mr. Orson Hyde was a conscientious, upright[,] and noble man and became his third wife. Mrs. [Marinda Nancy] Hyde had two sweet little girls and I soon learned to love them and their dear mother who in the Spring of 1842 [sic, 1843] received me into her house as her husband's wife. Sealed to him by Joseph the Prophet in her presence.²⁰

Orson Hyde and Marinda Nancy Johnson's marriage is one of at least two cases in which Joseph Smith evidently married as a plural wife the civil wife of one of his apostles. (The other may be Parley P. Pratt's

18. Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books. Myrtle Stevens Hyde, *Orson Hyde*, 498, dates Hyde's marriage to Price as July 20, 1843.

19. Browett and Hyde divorced ca. 1850.

20. Mary Ann Price Hyde, "Autobiography," holograph, n.d., not paginated, LDS Church Archives.

wife, Mary Ann Frost Stearns.) Johnson and Smith's marriage is treated in Todd Compton, *In Sacred Loneliness: The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1997), 228–44. Though two separate sealing dates have been proposed for Joseph and Marinda's plural marriage—April 1842 and May 1843—the earlier date is probably the more correct. It is the date found in Smith's personal diary, though recorded later, and is in keeping with Smith's practice of marrying married or widowed women during this period of time. Marinda's May 1, 1869, affidavit reporting a May 1843 sealing to Smith probably refers to a resealing.²¹

Marinda was never sealed to Hyde during Smith's lifetime, and Hyde received his second anointing on January 25, 1844, alone. During Smith's lifetime, only two other men, Orson Pratt and Parley P. Pratt, received their second anointings without their wives. The second anointing was the highest ordinance in Smith's temple-related theology during which wives were anointed as queens and priestesses to their husbands, and husbands as kings and priests to God; the second anointing thus functioned as a de facto "marriage" sealing. Although after Smith's death, Marinda was evidently sealed to Hyde, an occurrence Todd Compton terms "extremely anomalous,"²² it is not entirely clear if she was also anointed to him, although given their sealing, she probably was. In 1870, Marinda and Orson divorced, Marinda counting herself as Smith's—not Hyde's—eternal companion.

Like Coolidge's, the evidence for **Joseph A. Kelting's** early plural marriage is inferential—perhaps because like Coolidge, Kelting did not remain with the LDS Church for long after Joseph Smith's death.²³ Kelting married Elizabeth Ann Martin in 1832. Then, according to an affidavit he signed on March 1, 1894:

Calling at the home of the prophet one day, early in the spring of 1844, on some business or other not now remembered, the prophet invited me into a room up stairs in his house, called the mansion. After we entered the room he locked the door and then asked me if I had heard the rumors connecting him with polygamy. I told him I had. He then began a

21. Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books.

22. Compton, *In Sacred Loneliness*, 243.

23. Unlike Coolidge, Kelting was excommunicated from the LDS Church January 6, 1849. See the entry for this date in Pottawattamie High Council Minutes, typed excerpts in my possession, original in LDS Church Archives.

defense of the doctrine by referring to the Old Testament. I told him I did not want to hear that, as I could read it for myself. He claimed to be a prophet—I believed him to be a prophet—and I wanted to know what he had to say about it. He expressed some doubts as to how I might receive it, and wanted to know what stand I would take if I should not believe what he had to say about it. I then pledged him my word that whether I believed his revelation or not, I would not betray him. He then informed me that he had received a revelation from God, which taught the correctness of the doctrine of a plurality of wives, and commanding him to obey it. He acknowledged to having married several wives. I told him that was alright. He said he would like a further pledge from me that I would not betray him. I asked him if he wanted me to accept the principle by marrying a plural wife. He answered yes. A short time after this I married two wives in that order of marriage.²⁴

In a second affidavit, dated September 11, 1903, Kelting reported:

I first knew Joseph Smith, the Prophet, in Ohio. I once called upon him afterwards at his residence in Nauvoo, Illinois, and told him I wanted a private interview. We walked up stairs together. His wife, Emma, was down stairs, and he did not wish her to hear what we were going to talk about.

We went into the front room, and he locked the door. I told him it was mooted about that he was teaching plural marriage, and asked him the question, "Are you mooted plural marriage?"

His answer was, "cannot answer you, as you are both a lawyer and sheriff of Hancock County, and it might militate against you as an officer as well as against us."

I said, "Joseph, whatever you tell me as your friend is safe; I came here to find this out, and I assure you upon the *square* (and we were both Masons) it shall never injure you in any shape."

"I did moot plural marriage," said the Prophet.

"Did you have a revelation to teach this?" I asked.

"I did," he answered.

"Have you more than one wife sealed to you by this authority," I asked.

"I have," said he.

After giving me this information, he referred me to Brigham Young if I wanted any more on this subject, Brigham seeming to be the man he trusted most with this matter, and was putting him to the front.

24. Joseph A. Kelting, quoted in B. H. Roberts, *Succession in the Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon & Sons Publishing Co., 1900), 119–20; original affidavit in LDS Church Archives.

The Prophet assured me that the revelation was as authoritative and binding as any revelation given through him up to that time; and, in fact, that it was paramount to all the rest.²⁵

Kelting's use of "a short time" in the first affidavit suggests that he married polygamously prior to Smith's death. As Kelting received both his wife, Elizabeth, and Minerva O. Woods through the veil in the Nauvoo Temple when all three received their endowments on December 24, 1845, and all were sealed less than a month later on January 20, 1846, I speculate that Kelting may have married Woods sometime before the end of June 1844.

Like William Clayton's, Joseph Smith's, and Brigham Young's, **Heber C. Kimball's** plural marriages have received the most scholarly attention. Stanley B. Kimball's biography, *Heber C. Kimball: Mormon Patriarch and Pioneer* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 307–16, treats the topic in detail. In addition, Heber Kimball's first plural wife, Sarah Peak Noon, testified on September 7, 1869: "President Joseph Smith personally taught her the doctrine of a plurality of wives, and that on the [blank] day of [blank] A.D. 1842 at the City of Nauvoo, County of Hancock, State of Illinois She was married or Sealed for time and all eternity to Heber C. Kimball by President Joseph Smith in the presence of President Brigham Young."²⁶ Sometime in October or November 1842, Peak gave birth to her and Kimball's son, Adelson (sometimes Adelbert).²⁷

Heber's experience with plural marriage reveals much of Joseph Smith's approach and method of instruction. "Brother Heber," Smith announced probably sometime before the close of 1841, "I want you to give Vilate [Murray Kimball, Kimball's civil wife] to me to be my wife." "Dumb-founded," Kimball fell into a dark funk for several days. Finally, after pouring out his soul in prayer to God, he asked Vilate to accompany him to Smith's residence. After being ushered into a private room, Kimball turned to Smith and, pointing to Vilate, said, "Brother Joseph, here is Vilate." Smith, according to Kimball, "wept like a child" and im-

25. Joseph Kelting, Affidavit, September 11, 1903, LDS Church Archives.

26. Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books.

27. Adelson died five or six months later during the week of April 18–24, 1843. See *The Wasp*, April 26, 1843, 3; information courtesy H. Michael Marquardt.

mediately sealed the faithful couple “for time and all eternity,” saying, “Brother Heber, take her, and the Lord will give you a hundredfold.”²⁸

Throughout this episode, Vilate was evidently unaware of her husband’s situation, for Smith also instructed Kimball at or around this same time to marry plurally without telling Vilate, a caution that would have been unnecessary if Vilate knew of Smith’s doctrine.²⁹ Heber agreed but grew conflicted about the subterfuge. Vilate eventually asked what was troubling him; and when Kimball explained his predicament, they settled on two elderly sisters who, they felt, “would cause [Vilate] little, if any, unhappiness.”³⁰ According to Lorenzo Snow, another early apostle and later LDS Church president, when Joseph Smith learned of Kimball’s intention, he vetoed the plan, declaring that the “arrangement is of the devil you go and get you a young wife one you can take to your bosom and love and raise children by.”³¹

Smith then “commanded” Kimball to marry thirty-one-year-old Sarah Noon, whose husband had apparently deserted her. In fact, Kimball’s grandson noted, “Heber was told by Joseph that if he did not do this he would lose his Apostleship and be damned.”³² “I can say,” Heber confided to Vilate, “I never suffered more in all the day[s] of my life than since

28. James Lawson (Kimball’s son-in-law), Statement, in Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, 2d ed. (1880; reprinted, Salt Lake City: Stevens and Wallace, 1945), 440. Heber told Lawson this story when Lawson was courting Kimball’s adopted daughter, Elizabeth Ann Noon Kimball, whom Lawson married in 1856. Elizabeth was the daughter of Sarah Peak Noon by her first husband, William Spencer Noon. Author Orson F. Whitney was Kimball’s grandson, the son of his and Vilate’s daughter, Helen Mar Kimball Smith Whitney, also one of Joseph Smith’s plural wives.

29. Kimball, *Heber C. Kimball*, 9–96.

30. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, 336.

31. Quoted in Stan Larson, ed., *Prisoner for Polygamy: The Memoirs and Letters of Ruder Clawson at the Utah Territorial Penitentiary, 1884–87* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 12.

32. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, 336 note. Though the sources disagree as to whether Vilate helped to choose the two elderly sisters, I believe she did. The two sisters, Laura and Abigail Pitkin, were subsequently sealed to Kimball in the Nauvoo Temple on February 3, 1846.

these things c[a]me to pass.”³³ “You have my *first and best* and Eternal love fore time and Eternity,” he added on September 3, 1843. “And I pray God the Eternal Father to let you live while I live, fore thare is no Soul that can fill your place in my heart.”³⁴

Sometime prior to his death in mid-1842, **Vinson Knight** married Philinda C. Eldredge Myrick.³⁵ Philinda had wed Levi N. Myrick on November 18, 1827, but he had been killed in the Haun’s Mill Massacre in late 1838. According to Knight family history,

It is said that Martha [McBride Knight, Vinson Knight’s first wife] was the first woman to give her consent for her husband to enter Plural Marriage. She knew some thing was worr[y]ing her husband and he couldn’t seem to tell her about it. One evening as she was sitting in the grape arbor behind the house Vinson returned home carrying a basket. He explained to her that he had taken some fruit and vegetables to the widow, Mrs. Levi Merrick, whose husband had been killed at Haun’s Mill, M[iss]o[uri]. He also explained to her that he had been told to enter Plural Marriage. That if he had to, this Sister Merrick would be the one he could help best. He must have been greatly relieved when Martha replied, “Is that all.”³⁶

Knight may have attempted to effect a second plural marriage before his death. On June 23, 1843, William Clayton recorded in his diary: “This A.M. President Joseph [Smith] took me and conversed considerable concerning some delicate matters. . . . Also Brother [Vinson] Knight he [i.e., Joseph Smith] gave him [i.e., Knight] one [i.e., a plural wife] but he

33. Letter quoted in Danel W. Bachman, “A Study of the Mormon Practice of Plural Marriage before the Death of Joseph Smith” (M.A. thesis, Purdue University, 1975), 185.

34. Heber C. Kimball, Letter to Vilate Kimball, September 3, 1843, holograph, LDS Church Archives.

35. See Compton, *In Sacred Loneliness*, 369; and D. Michael Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books in association with Smith Research Associates, 1994), 559. See also Franklin D. Richards, Diary, December 9, 1887, LDS Church Archives: “This evening Sister Gilbert Belnap daughter of Vinson Knight’s once Presiding Bishop until his death in Nauvoo. Her mother [i.e., Martha McBride Knight] was sealed to the Prophet Joseph [Smith]. Her father received another wife—widow Merrick whose husband was martyred at Haun’s Mill.”

36. Della Belnap, “Martha McBride Knight,” typescript, not paginated, LDS Church Archives; courtesy Todd Compton.

went to loose conduct and he could not save him.”³⁷ Following Knight’s death, Eldredge married Daniel H. Keeler civilly on February 1, 1843. There is no evidence that Knight’s marriages were repeated in the Nauvoo Temple.

The evidence for **Isaac Morley’s** two early plural marriages is both inferential and based on family tradition. Historian Maureen Ursenbach Beecher was the first to note that Eliza R. Snow recorded the name of her older sister Abigail Leonora Snow Leavitt as “A L Morley.” Abigail had been scribe for Eliza’s copy of her patriarchal blessing, which Isaac Morley had pronounced on December 19, 1843. Beecher notes that Eliza’s identification of her sister by Morley’s name “confirms her knowledge that her sister’s sealing to Isaac Morley . . . had in fact already taken place.”³⁸ Abigail’s name appears simply as “A. Leonora Leavitt” in Morley’s own book of his patriarchal blessings in LDS Church Archives.

In fact, Eliza Snow clearly implies a plural marriage between Isaac and Abigail at least as early as September 1843 in her *Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow . . .* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Company, 1884), 70, 73, and 75. Abigail had married Enoch V. Leavitt (1799-1866) in 1821, but by 1830 had left him. She and two daughters joined the LDS Church in 1831. According to Morley family history, Isaac subsequently took as his second plural wife Hannah B. Finch Merriam on January 14, 1844.³⁹ Finch had married Edwin P. Merriam (born 1803) on November 5, 1831. After three children had been born, Merriam died on September 14, 1842.

Shortly after his marriage to Finch, Morley and his civil wife, Lucy Gunn, broached the subject of plural marriage with their daughter Cordelia (born 1823). “In the spring of forty-four [1844],” Cordelia remembered in her autobiography, “plural marriage was introduced to me by my parents from Joseph Smith, asking their consent and a request to me to be his wife. Imagine if you can my feelings, to be a plural wife, some-

37. Smith, *An Intimate Chronicle*, 108. *An Intimate Chronicle* misidentifies “[Vinson] Knight” as “[Newel] Knight.”

38. Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, ed., *The Personal Writings of Eliza Roxcy Snow* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2000), 273 note 41. Earlier, Beecher had used the verb “suggests” instead of “confirms.” Maureen Ursenbach, “Eliza R. Snow’s Nauvoo Journal,” *BYU Studies* 15 (Summer 1975): 414 note 43.

39. Vera Morley Ipson, “History and Travels of the Life of Isaac Morley Sr.,” 1958, 2, LDS Church Archives.

thing I never thought I ever could. I knew nothing of such religion and could not accept it. Neither did I.”⁴⁰ Cordelia was sealed to Smith by proxy after his death.

According to his sworn testimony dated June 26, 1869, **Joseph Bates Noble** reported that

in the fall of the year A.D. 1840 Joseph Smith, taught him the principle of Celestial marriage or a “plurality of wives”, and that the said Joseph Smith declared that he had received a Revelation from God on the subject, and that the Angel of the Lord had commanded him, (Joseph Smith) to move forward in the said order of marriage, and further, that the said Joseph Smith, requested him, (Jos. Bates Noble) to step forward and assist him in carrying out the Said principle, saying “in revealing this to you I have placed my life in your hands, therefore do not in an evil hour betray me to my enemies.”⁴¹

In a second statement given that same day, Noble added “that, on the fifth day of April A.D. 1841, At the City of Nauvoo, County of Hancock, State of Illinois, he married or sealed Louisa Beaman, to Joseph Smith, President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latterday Saints, according to the order of Celestial Marriage revealed to the Said Joseph Smith.”⁴² Louisa Beaman was the sister of Noble’s civil wife, Mary A. Beaman.

About performing the sealing of Louisa Beaman to Joseph Smith, Noble later testified:

626 Q:— . . . Did you not marry Joseph Smith and Louisa Beeman over at Montrose in Iowa in your house where you lived at that time before you moved over to Nauvoo? A:— No sir it was not performed there. It was performed on this side of the river.

627 Q:— Do you mean that it was performed in Nauvoo? A:— Yes sir.

628 Q:— At whose house? A:— At mine.

40. “Autobiography of Cordelia Morley Cox,” 1, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (hereafter Perry Special Collections).

41. Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books.

42. Ibid. See also Franklin D. Richards, Diary, January 22, 1869: “Br[other] Joseph B. Noble . . . related that he performed the first sealing ceremony in this Dispensation in which he united Sister Louisa Beman to the Prop[h]et Joseph in May—I think the 5th day—in 1841 during the evening under an Elm tree in Nauvoo. The Bride disguised in a coat and hat.” Noble was not consistent in remembering where exactly he performed this marriage ceremony. See his testimony quoted below.

629 Q:—Who was present? A:— My family. . . .

680 Q:— You performed the ceremony and returned across the river that same night did you not? Is that not what you said? A:— Yes sir.

681 Q:— What made you say the other day that Joseph Smith and that women you sealed to him slept together that night? A:— Because they did sleep together.

682 Q:— If you were not there that night how do you know they slept together? A:— Well they slept together I know. If it was not that night it was two or three nights after that.

683 Q:— Where did they sleep together? A:— Right straight across the river at my house they slept together. . . .

686 Q:— . . . Did he [i.e., Joseph Smith] sleep with her [i.e., Louisa Beaman] the first night after the ceremony was performed? A:— He did.

687 Q:— Now you say that he did sleep with her? A:— I do.

688 Q:— How do you know he did? A:— Well I was there.

689 Q:— And you saw them go to bed together? A:— I gave him counsel.

690 Q:— What counsel did you give him? A:— I said “blow out the lights and get into bed, and you will be safer there”, and he took my advice or counsel. (Witness laughs heartily)

691 Q:— Let the record show that the witness is applauding himself upon the smartness of his answer. . . .

700 Q:— Well did you stay there until the lights were blown out? A:— No sir I did not stay until they blowed out the lights then.

701 Q:— Well you did not see him get into bed with her that time? A:— No sir.

702 Q:— And so you don’t know whether he followed your advice from your own knowledge? A:— No sir I did not see him, but he told me [he] did.

703 Q:— Well do you know from your knowledge that he did? A:— Well I am confident he did.

704 Q:— But you don’t know it of your own knowledge from seeing him do it? A:— No sir, for I was not there.

705 Q:— Was Emma Smith there? A:— No sir.

706 Q:— Did she know any thing about it? A:— No sir, I think not.

707 Q:— Were they married at his house? A:— No sir.

708 Q:—Where were they married—were they married at your house? A:— Well it was a house that I had rented, —or a house that I owned by the bye, for I owned a whole block there that I had bought.⁴³

Two years later to the day after Louisa’s sealing to Smith, Noble, ac-

43. Joseph Bates Noble, Testimony, in “Respondent’s Testimony, Temple

ording to his “Individual Record” (at www.familysearch.org) and Black (*Membership*, s.v. “Noble, Joseph Bates”), married Sarah B. Alley as his first plural wife. Their child, George, was born ten months later. “I have a secret to tell you but I am almost afrade,” Vilate Kimball wrote to her husband, Heber C., on June 29, 1843, of Alley’s pregnancy. “It was committed to Sarah [Noon, whom Heber had married in 1842] and she was requested not to tell me, but she said she concidered me a part of her self and she would tell me, and I might tell you for it was just what you had prophesyed would come to pass. Now if you know what you have said about sarah Abby [i.e., Sarah B. Alley] then you have got the secret, for it is even so and she is tickled about it and they all appear in better spirits than they did before. How they will carry it out, is more than I know. I hope they have got more faith than I have.”⁴⁴

Apparently, Noble had hoped to marry sooner. According to William Clayton’s diary for May 17, 1843: “pres[iden]t. J[oseph Smith] said to bro[ther]. [Benjamin F.] Johnson & I that J[oseph]. B[ates]. Nobles when he was first taught this doctrine [i.e., plural marriage] set his heart on one [potential plural wife] & pressed J[oseph]. to seal the contract but he never could get opportunity. It seemed that the Lord was unwilling. Finally another [potential plural wife] came along & he then engaged that one and is a happy man. I learned from this anecdote never to press the prophet but wait with patience & God will bring all things right.”⁴⁵ Noble took his second plural wife, Mary Ann Washburn, nearly four months after this conversation took place.⁴⁶

John E. Page’s early plural marriages are documented in an interview conducted by Joseph Fielding Smith with Page’s third civil wife, Mary Judd. Page’s first two wives, Betsey Thompson and Lorain Stevens, had died before he married Mary in 1833 and 1838 respectively. In August 1904, Joseph Fielding Smith, future LDS Church Historian, apostle,

Lot Case,” 424, 426–27, Library-Archives, Community of Christ, Independence, Missouri.

44. Vilate Murray Kimball, Letter to Heber C. Kimball, June 29, 1843, holograph, LDS Church Archives.

45. Smith, *Intimate Chronicle*, 103.

46. See Hazel Noble Boyack, *A Nobleman in Israel: A Biographical Sketch of Joseph Bates Noble, Pioneer to Utah in 1847* (Cheyenne, Wyo.: Pioneer Printing, 1962), 32; courtesy H. Michael Marquardt.

and president, visited Judd, who reported that “she gave her husband, John E. Page, other wives.”⁴⁷ In a fuller statement, Smith reported that Page evidently married polygamously during Joseph Smith’s lifetime:

In 1904 I went to the World’s Fair in St. Louis. James G. Duffin was presiding over the Central States Mission at that time, and I went with him to see Mary Page Eaton, wife of John E. Page. She was an aged woman, and I was introduced to her. The two of us sat there and talked and I questioned her about plural marriage. I asked her, “Did John E. Page have wives other than you?” She replied, “Yes.” I said, “How did he get them?” She said, “I gave them to him.” I said, “How come you did that?” She said, “Well, he wanted them and I gave them to him.” I said, “Well, that was in the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith.” She said, “Yes, it was.”⁴⁸

According to D. Michael Quinn, Page may have married Nancy Bliss as a plural wife in 1844, but they separated in 1845.⁴⁹

Both of **Parley P. Pratt**’s early wives left statements of their marriages to him. Though she divorced him in the spring of 1853, Pratt’s civil wife, Mary Ann Frost Stearns, reported on September 3, 1869: “On the twenty-fourth day of July A.D. 1843, at the City of Nauvoo County of

47. Smith, *Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage*, 49-50; emphasis Smith’s.

48. Quoted in Minutes of the Meeting of the Council of the Twelve, the Patriarch to the Church, the Assistants to the Twelve, the First Council of the Seventy, and the Presiding Bishopric, May 5, 1954, photocopy of typescript in my possession. It should be noted that, in 1842, Judd had denied knowing about plural marriage:

“244 Q:— When did you, if at all, know of the practice of plurality of wives,—or the preaching of the doctrine of plurality of wives? A:— I never heard it preached while Joseph [Smith] lived.

“245 Q:— You never did? A:— No sir, not while he lived.” Mary [Judd Page] Eaton, Testimony, “Complainant’s Testimony, Temple Lot Case,” 642.

49. Quinn, *Origins of Power*, 567. See also the entry in Christian Christiansen’s journal which reports a visit ca. 1856 to “Brother Page” near Quincy, Illinois, “who had two wives given him by Joseph Smith in Nauvoo who lived with him without anyone’s speaking to him about it.” Quoted in Davis Bitton, *Guide to Mormon Diaries and Autobiographies* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1977), 66; courtesy H. Michael Marquardt. Todd Compton believes that the second of Page’s Nauvoo wives was probably Mary’s sister, Rachel Judd. Compton, quoted in Levi Peterson, email to Gary Bergera, November 4, 2004.

Hancock, State of Illinois She was married or Sealed to Parley P. Pratt for time and eternity, by President Hyrum Smith, in the presence of Mary Ann Young and Elizabeth Brotherton.”⁵⁰ Frost previously had married Nathan Stearns (born 1809) on April 1, 1832. They had one child before Stearns died in mid-1833.

Mary Ann also attested that same day in a second affidavit: “On the twenty-fourth day of July A.D. 1843, at the City of Nauvoo, County of Hancock, State of Illinois, She was present and witnessed the marrying or Sealing of Elizabeth Brotherton to Parley P. Pratt for time and eternity, by Hyrum Smith Patriarch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in the presence of Mary Ann Young.”⁵¹

On August 2, 1869, Elizabeth Brotherton, Pratt’s first plural wife, stated: “On the twenty fourth day of July A.D. 1843, in the City of Nauvoo County of Hancock, State of Illinois, She was married or sealed to Parley P. Pratt for time and all eternity, by Patriarch Hyrum Smith, in the presence of Mary Ann Young, and Mary Ann Pratt, Mary Ann Pratt being Sealed at the same time.”⁵² “[B]e buisy [sic] in doing good,” Parley wrote to Elizabeth less than three months after their marriage, “and God will bless you, and I will bless you, and you shall want for no good thing. and soon you shall have a house and home, and enjoy more and more of the society of those you love. perhaps I may not see you tonight because of other matters. If not I will see you tomorrow night at the same place at six O Clock or between that and nine.”⁵³

Parley and Mary Ann’s sealing was evidently more complicated than Mary Ann’s affidavit indicates. Pratt family tradition holds that Pratt and Sterns, as well as Pratt and Brotherton, were initially sealed by Hyrum Smith on June 23, 1843, but that, when Joseph Smith learned of the ceremony performed in his absence and without his permission, he rescinded them. Although the reasons are not clear, Joseph Smith had apparently

50. Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid. See also the genealogical data in *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*, edited by Parley P. Pratt Jr. (1873; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985 printing), 429–31; and *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt: Revised and Enhanced Edition*, edited by Scot Facer Proctor and Maurine Jensen Proctor (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000), 586–92.

53. Parley P. Pratt, Letter to Elizabeth Brotherton Pratt, October 7, [1844], Parley P. Pratt Papers, LDS Church Archives.

wanted Pratt's first plural wife to be Olive Gray Frost.⁵⁴ However, Parley evidently prevailed, and one month later, on July 24, 1843, Joseph asked Hyrum⁵⁵ to seal Pratt and his first civilly married wife, Thankful Halsey Pratt (married 1827, died 1837), for eternity, with Frost acting as proxy for Halsey; then seal Pratt and Sterns; and finally seal Brotherton to Pratt as his first plural wife. Smith subsequently wed Olive Frost, probably at around this same time.⁵⁶

Mary Ann's support of plural marriage vacillated. Vilate Kimball, writing to Heber C. on June 29, 1843, describes Mary Ann's reaction to the doctrine:

I have had a viset from brother Parley [P. Pratt] and his wife [Mary Ann]. They are truly converted [to plural marriage]. It appears that J[ose]p[h] has taught him some principles and told him his privilege and even appointed one [i.e., Elizabeth Brotherton] for him. I Dare not tell you what it is [as] you would be astonished and I guess some tried. She has be[e]n to me for counsel. I told her I did not wish to advise in such matters. Sister Pratt has be[e]n rageing against these things. She told me her self that the devel had ben in her until within a few days past. She said the Lord has shown her it was all right. She wants Parley to go ahead, says she will do all in her power to help him. They are so ingagued I fear they will run to[o] fast. They asked

54. According to Pratt family records, as quoted in Proctor and Proctor, *Parley P. Pratt, Revised and Enhanced*, 407 note 9: "Elizabeth Brotherton, daughter of Thomas and Sarah Brotherton, born March 27, 1816 in Manchester, England, sealed to Parley P. Pratt as his wife for time and all eternity, ~~June~~ July 24, 1843. Done at the house of Brigham Young in Nauvoo, by the hand of Patriarch Hyrum Smith." Some family members read the correction of month as evidence of a June 1843 sealing between both Pratt and Brotherton and Pratt and Sterns. For more on the dating of Parley's and Mary Ann's sealing, see Andrew F. Ehat, "Joseph Smith's Introduction of Temple Ordinances and the 1844 Mormon Succession Question" (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1982), 66-71, summarizing Pratt family historian Stephen L. Pratt. "The sealing power was not in Hyrum [Smith] legitimately," Brigham Young later reported, presumably in reference to the Pratts' June 1843 sealing, "neither did he act on the sealing principle only as he was dictated by Joseph [Smith]. This was proven, for Hyrum did undertake to seal without counsel, & Joseph told him if he did not stop it he would go to hell and all those he sealed with him." Brigham Young, Letter to William Smith, August 10, 1845, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Church Archives.

55. Mary Ann Frost Pratt, Affidavit, September 3, 1869, Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books. Mary Ann makes it clear that Hyrum, not Joseph, officiated.

56. Compton, *In Sacred Loneliness*, 6, 586-92.

me many questions on principle. I told them I did not know much and I rather they would go to those that had authority to teach. Parley said he and I were interrupted before he got what instruction he wanted and says he did not know when he should have an opportunity. He seemed willing to wait. I told him these were sacred things and he better not make a move until he got more instruction.⁵⁷

Reportedly, Parley was eager to take additional wives, which Mary Ann initially sanctioned. As William Clayton, writing in his diary on August 20, 1843, noted: "I also had talk with M[ary]. Aspen who is in trouble. P[arley]. P. P[ratt] has through his wife [Mary Ann Pratt] made proposals to her but she is dissatisfied[.] Sister P[ratt]. is obstinate. When P[arley]. went away sister P[ratt]. cautioned A. [Aspin] against me & said the Twelve would have more glory than me &c. I tried to comfort her & told her what her privilege was."⁵⁸ However, Mary Ann's views changed, perhaps as the challenges of life as a plural wife became apparent. As Parley later wrote of her: "Afterwards Alienated from her husband and Saught by all manner of falsehoods to destroy his Influence and Character. But repenting of these things and Confessing them before President B[Brigham]. Young in the temple at Nauvoo and Solemnly conveneting to take back her words of falsehood, Wherever they had been Spoken she was frankly forgiven by her husband [himself]."⁵⁹

Although Parley and Mary Ann may have been sealed in July 1843, Joseph Smith subsequently indicated that they had not been sealed for eternity and Mary Ann was not later anointed to Parley as a part of his second anointing.⁶⁰ Instead, she was sealed and anointed to Joseph Smith by

57. Vilate Kimball, Letter to Heber C. Kimball, June 29, 1843, holograph, LDS Church Archives.

58. Smith, *Intimate Chronicle*, 118. Pratt also successfully courted Belinda Marden. She wrote a poem in April 1844 that begins: "For nought to me is all beside / If of his presence I'm denied / The happy hours with him I've spent / To me a holy charm have lent." She concludes, speaking as though in Parley's voice: "My dear, your prayers for future life / Are granted—You shall be my wife." Parley P. Pratt Notebook, Perry Special Collections. Pratt and Marden were sealed on November 20, 1844.

59. Parley P. Pratt, quoted in "Family Record of Parley Parker Pratt," March 11, 1850, Parley P. Pratt Papers.

60. Wilford Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal, 1833–1898*, typescript,

proxy in the Nauvoo Temple in early 1846.⁶¹ Thus, Joseph Smith may have wanted to take Mary Ann as a plural wife, as he had Orson Hyde's wife, Marinda. When he discovered that Hyrum had sealed the Pratts, he cancelled the sealing, then arranged to have Parley and Thankful sealed for eternity, Parley and Mary Ann sealed for time, Parley and Elizabeth Brotherton sealed for both time and eternity, and finally had himself sealed to Mary Ann and to her sister, Olive, for eternity.⁶²

Willard Richards's first plural marriages—to teenage sisters Sarah

edited by Scott G. Kenney, 9 vols. (Midvale, Utah: Signature Books, 1983–85): 2:340, recorded about Pratt's second anointing on January 21, 1844: "Joseph [Smith] said concerning Parley P Pratt that He had no wife sealed to him for Eternity and asked if their was any harm for him to have another wife for time & Eternity as He would want a wife in the Resurrection or els his glory would be Cliped. Many arguments He used upon this subject which were rational & consistant. Br[other] Joseph said now what will we do with Elder P[arley] P Pratt? He has no wife sealed to him for Eternity. He has one living wife but she had a former Husband and did not wish to be sealed to Parly for Eternity. Now is it not right for Parley to have another wife that can [blank]?" Yet according to his own diary, Joseph Smith was not present for Pratt's second anointing (Brigham Young performed the rite), and presumably Smith made these comments in another setting. That Woodruff's statements regarding Mary Ann's having a "former husband" and not wanting "to be sealed to Parly for Eternity" were crossed out suggests that this information may not have been correct or perhaps that Woodruff later learned that Pratt had been sealed to Elizabeth Brotherton six months earlier.

61. According to Pratt family tradition, Brigham Young believed that "if Joseph [Smith] had lived he would have had Mary Ann [Pratt] sealed to him [in the Nauvoo Temple]." Consequently, following Smith's death, Young advised Parley to "Take Sister Mary Ann and her children; take good care of them and take them to Joseph [Smith] and it will do more for your exaltation than anything you can do in the matter." LDS Church President John Taylor later explained to one of Parley and Mary Ann's children: "Your mother was sealed [in the Nauvoo Temple] to the Prophet Joseph [Smith], your father acting as proxy." John Taylor, Letter to Moroni L. Pratt, October 29, 1886, First Presidency Letterpress Copybooks, LDS Church Archives.

62. Even so, the Pratts' marriage was not happy. "A few days after the foregoing Ordinance [i.e., Mary Ann's sealing to Joseph Smith]," Parley commented: "She forsook her husband [i.e., Parley] who had moved Out from Nauvoo, on his way to the Mountains Choosing to return (Like Lots Wife) and remain In Nauvoo till Spring. She accordingly returned and took two of the Children with her

and Nanny Longstroth in January 1843—are attested to only in Richards’s family history. Prior to his first plural marriage, Richards had married Jennetta Richards civilly in 1838. According to Sarah Longstroth’s descendants:

When Joseph Smith told Grandpa [i.e., Willard Richards] to take another wife, he had no one in mind; so the Prophet said, “Willard, what about some of the women you knew in England?” And immediately Grandfather thought of the Longstroth family and how they had taken good care of him when he was so ill. The Longstroths had come to America and were living in St. Louis, and Willard went down there and asked the parents for Sarah and Nanny. Sarah was sixteen, and Nanny was fourteen. The parents thought Nanny was too young, so Willard said, “Let me marry her, and she can come back home and stay with you and when you feel that she is ready you can send her to me.” With the consent of the girls this was agreed upon. A few weeks later, Grandpa Longstroth brought the girls to Nauvoo. They married Dr. Willard Richards in January 1843. Joseph Smith performed the ceremony.

Nanny returned to St. Louis with her father, and Sarah may have stayed in Nauvoo for awhile, but later was with her family in Rockport, Mo. where they were living in 1843 and early 1844. The Longstroths moved to Nauvoo in Mar 1844 and it is known that Sarah was living with her family when Willard’s wife Jennetta died (July 1845). Sarah and Nanny were sealed to Willard Richards in the Nauvoo Temple Jan[uary] 22 and 25, 1846 and it was after this time that the marriages were consumated.⁶³

Richards’s third Nauvoo plural marriage—to Susannah (Lee) Liptrot—as well as the plural marriage of his own sister Rhoda to Joseph Smith five months later are documented in his diary, though in shorthand. As deciphered, Richards’s diary entry for June 12, 1843, reads: “Marr[ie]d Susana L[ee] Liptrot a[nd] Rhoda [Richards] to Joghf [Joseph

viz—Moroni and Olivia Pratt. . . . After this she came to the Council Bluffs, where her husband had an interview with her and still kindly Invited her to go with him; but she still refused and wished to return to the State of Maine.” Quoted in “Family Record of Parley Parker Pratt.”

63. Ann Richards Martin, “Sarah Longstroth (1826–1858),” in *Richards Family History*, edited by Joseph Grant Stevenson, (Provo, Utah: Stevenson’s Genealogical Center, 1991), 3:279; see also p. 285.

Smith].”⁶⁴ Susannah was the widow of John Liptrot (born 1804), married in England before 1829. All four early wives were subsequently resealed (Jennetta, by proxy) to Richards in the Nauvoo Temple.⁶⁵

The two early plural marriages of Joseph Smith’s older brother, **Hyrum Smith**, are documented in the testimonies of Hyrum’s wives. His first civil wife, Jerusha Barden, died in 1837. Later that same year, he married British convert Mary Fielding. On August 11, 1843, he took as his first plural wife Mary’s sister, Mercy R. Fielding Thompson, the widow of Robert B. Thompson, who had died on August 27, 1841. Before the end of the month, Hyrum married a second plural wife, Catherine Phillips. “On the eleventh day of August A.D. 1843 at the City of Nauvoo, County of Hancock State of Illinois,” Mercy stipulated on June 19, 1869, “She was married or Sealed for time to Hyrum Smith, Presiding Patriarch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, by Joseph Smith, President of the Same, according to the laws of said Church regulating marriage. In the presence of her sister Mary Smith.”⁶⁶ In an untitled autobiographical sketch, dated December 20, 1880, Mercy added:

On the 11 of August 1843 I was called by direct revelation from Heaven through Brother Joseph the Prophet to enter into a state of Plural Marriage with Hyrum Smith the Patriarch. This subject when first communicated to

64. Willard Richards, Diary, June 12, 1843, LDS Church Archives, transcription courtesy D. Michael Quinn. See also the notation after July 1, 1866, in Wilford Woodruff, *Historian’s Private Journal*, LDS Church Archives: “Willard Richards & Susannah Liptrot were sealed June 12, 1843, by Joseph Smith in Josephs Store Nauvoo.” My appreciation to D. Michael Quinn and George D. Smith for pointing out these sources.

65. Also of interest is Richards’s account of his fourth plural marriage, this one performed after Joseph Smith’s death. Richards and his new wife, twenty-one-year-old Alice Longstroth (born January 28, 1824, died November 21, 1909)—sister to Sarah and Nanny—mutually covenanted a plural union between themselves without the aid of an outside officiator: “At 10. P.M. took Alice L.....h by the [hand] of our own free will and avow mutually acknowledge each other husband & wife, in a covenant not to be broken in time or Eternity for time & for all Eternity, to all intents & purposes as though the seal of the covenant had been placed upon us. for time & all Eternity & called upon God. & all the Holy angels—& Sarah Long—th to witness the same.” Richards, Diary, December 23, 1845. Willard and Alice were not resealed in the Nauvoo Temple, and Alice subsequently wed Moses Whittaker (1820–52) and later George D. Watt (1824–1909).

66. Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books.

me tried me to the very core of my former traditions and every natural feeling of my Heart rose in opposition to this Principle but I was convinced that it was appointed by him who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. Soon after Marriage I became an inmate with my sister in the House of Hyrum Smith where I remained until his Death sharing with my sister the care of his numerous family I had from the time I moved to his House acted as scribe Recording Patriarchal Blessings.⁶⁷

Hyrum and Mercy had participated six weeks earlier, on May 29, 1843, in a proxy ceremony uniting Hyrum and Jerusha with Mercy acting as proxy for Jerusha, then the union of Mercy and Robert with Hyrum acting as proxy for Robert. Thus, Hyrum and Mercy's celestial marriage was for time only. In 1883, Mercy explained to Joseph Smith III, who was reluctant to believe that his father had practiced plural marriage:

My beloved husband, R[obert]. B. Thompson, your father's private secretary to the end of his mortal life, died August 27th, 1841, (I presume you will remember him.) Nearly two years after his death your father told me that my husband had appeared to him several times, telling him that he did not wish me to live such a lonely life, and wished him to request your uncle Hyrum to have me sealed to him for time. Hyrum communicated this to his wife (my sister) who, by request, opened the subject to me, when everything within me rose in opposition to such a step, but when your father called and explained the subject to me, I dared not refuse to obey the counsel, lest peradventure I should be found fighting against God; and especially when he told me the last time he came with such power that it made him tremble. He then enquired of the Lord what he should do; the answer was, "Go and do as thy servant hath required. He then took an opportunity of communicating this to your uncle Hyrum who told me that the Holy Spirit rested upon him from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet. The time was appointed, with the consent of all parties, and your father sealed me to your uncle Hyrum for time, in my sister's room, with a covenant to deliver me up in the morning of the resurrection to Robert Blas[h]el Thompson, with whatever offspring should be the result of that union, at the same time conseling your uncle to build a room for me and move me over as soon as convenient, which he did, and I remained there as a wife the same as my sister to the day of his death. All this I am ready to testify to in the presence of God, angels and men.⁶⁸

67. Mercy Fielding Thompson Smith, untitled autobiographical sketch, December 20, 1880, LDS Church Archives.

68. Mercy Fielding Thompson, Letter to Joseph Smith III, September 5,

A decade later, giving testimony in the Temple Lot Case, she commented:

If there was communication between the eternal world and this I should never have been sealed to any body—if I had not obeyed the command of the Lord, when the Lord sent it through an angel to his prophet Joseph Smith—and sent my own husband or a message from him in the eternal world to me through the prophet, and to his brother Hyrum that he should take me, and my little child—that is the word that my dead husband sent from the eternal world to brother Hyrum that he should take charge of me and my little child and keep us in this world, and on the day of resurrection to deliver us up safely to my husband. Now that was the message from my husband to the prophet, or to brother Hyrum through the prophet, commanding Hyrum to take me to live with my sister with my little child, and he did not act on it quick enough, and so he came the second time—or he went and enquired of the Lord—and the Lord spoke to him through the angel, and when he inquired of the Lord the voice told him to go and do as his servant required him to do and that was the time that he went to Hyrum and told him what he had been ordered to do, and he then sent my sister over to me to break the word to me.⁶⁹

Of her own experience as Hyrum Smith's plural wife, Catherine Phillips testified in 1903:

I was married to Hyrum Smith, brother of the Prophet Joseph Smith, as his plural wife, and lived with him as his wife.

The sealing was performed by the Prophet Joseph Smith himself in Nauvoo, State of Illinois, in August, 1843, in the brick office belonging to my husband, and occupied at the time as a dwelling by Brother and Sister Rob[er]t. and Julia Stone, and was witnessed by my mother, Sister Stone and her daughter Hettie.

In consequence of the strong feeling manifested at the time against plural marriage and those suspected of having entered into it, I, with my mother, moved to St. Louis near the close of the year, where I was living when the Prophet Joseph and my husband were martyred.⁷⁰

Hyrum Smith's conversion to plural marriage was difficult. As Brigham Young recalled in 1866:

Right north of the Masonic Hall in Nauvoo the ground was not fenced, this was in the year 1842 [sic, 1843]. There were some rails laid along to fence up some lots. Hyrum [Smith] saw me and said, "brother Brigham, I want to talk to you." We went together and sat upon those rails that were piled up. He commenced by saying, "I have a question to ask you. In the first place I say unto you, that I do know that you and the twelve know some things that I do not know. I can understand this by the mo-

tions, and talk, and doings of Joseph, and I know there is something or other, which I do not understand, that is revealed to the Twelve. Is this so?" I replied "I do not know any thing about what you know, but I know what I know.["] Then he said, "I have mistrusted for along time that Joseph has received a revelation that a man should have more than one wife, and he has hinted as much to me, but I would not bear it." . . .

I will now go back to where I met Hyrum. He said to me, "I am convinced that there is something that has not been told me. I said to him, "brother Hyrum, Joseph would tell you everything the Lord reveals to him, if he could." I must confess I felt a little sarcastic towards Hyrum, although he was just as honest as an Angel, and as full of integrity as the Gods' but he had not that ability which Joseph possessed to see and understand men as they were. I took advantage of this, and I said to him, "Brother Hyrum, I will tell you about this thing which you ~~say you~~ do not know ~~about~~ if you will swear with an uplifted hand, before God, that you will never say another word against Joseph and his doings, and the doctrines he is preaching to the people." He replied, "I will do it with all my heart; ~~I want to be saved~~" and he stood upon his feet, saying, "I want to be knowing the truth and to be saved." And he made a covenant there, never again to bring forward one argument or use any influence against Joseph's doings. Joseph had ~~a good~~ many wives sealed to him. I told Hyrum the whole story, and he bowed to it and wept like a child, and said God be praised. He went to Joseph and told him what he had learned, and renewed his covenant with Joseph, and they went heart and hand together while they lived, and they were together when they died, and they are together now defending Israel.⁷¹

Hyrum subsequently became a staunch proponent of his younger brother's doctrine. He presented his brother's revelation on plural marriage (LDS D&C 132) to members of the Nauvoo Stake high council in August 1843 and performed many plural marriage sealings from June 1843 until his and his brother's deaths a year later.

John Smith, Joseph Smith's uncle, married Clarissa Lyman on September 11, 1815. According to Jesse Nathaniel Smith, John then married Mary Aikens as his first plural wife on August 13, 1843.⁷² Aikens had first married Silas Smith (born 1779) in 1828. They had three children before Silas died in 1839. About the same time as his plural marriage to Aikens,

71. Brigham Young, Sermon, October 8, 1866, LDS Church Archives.

72. *Journal of Jesse Nathaniel Smith: The Life Story of a Mormon Pioneer, 1834-1906* (Salt Lake City: Jesse N. Smith Family Association, 1953), 7.

John Smith was also sealed, according to Benjamin F. Johnson, to Julia Ellis Hills Johnson:

My mother having finally separated from my father, by the suggestion or counsel of the Prophet [Joseph Smith] she accepted of and was sealed by him to father John Smith. In this I felt not a little sorrow, for I loved my father and knew him to be naturally a kind and loving parent, a just and noble spirited man. But he had not obeyed the Gospel, had fought it with his words; and as I knew a stream must have a fountain and does not rise above it, so I consoled myself, assured by the Prophet's words that a better day would come to my father.⁷³

Julia Ellis had married Ezekiel Johnson (born 1773) in 1801. They had sixteen children. Johnson, who never joined the LDS Church, died in early 1848 in Nauvoo. Prior to Julia Johnson's marriage to John Smith, his nephew Joseph Smith had married as plural wives two of Johnson's daughters: Delcena Johnson Sherman in July 1842, and Almera W. Johnson in May/June 1843. Following Joseph Smith's death, Mary Aikens was sealed to her deceased husband (with John Smith as proxy) in the Nauvoo Temple. Julia Johnson was both resealed and anointed to John Smith.

The abundant evidence for **Joseph Smith's** Nauvoo plural wives was first published in Andrew Jenson, "Plural Marriage," *Historical Record* 6 (May 1887): 233–34. Jenson was followed by Fawn Brodie, *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet*, 2d ed., rev. and enl. (1945; New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971), 457–88; Thomas Milton Tinney, *The Royal Family of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Junior* (Salt Lake City: Tinney-Green[e] Family Organization Publishing Company, 1973); Danel W. Bachman, "A Study of the Mormon Practice of Plural Marriage before the Death of Joseph Smith" (1975); George D. Smith, "Nauvoo Roots of Mormon Polygamy" (1994); D. Michael Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power* (1994), 587–88; and most recently Todd Compton, *In Sacred Loneliness*. Although some readers may disagree in a handful of instances with Compton's identifications of Smith's Nauvoo wives,⁷⁴ I believe he is accurate. In fact, I am persuaded that the evidence allows for an additional four (if not more) plural wives—Mary Houston, Sarah Scott

73. Benjamin F. Johnson, *My Life's Review: Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin Johnson* (Provo, Utah: Grandin Book Co., 1997), 88–89.

74. See Richard Lloyd Anderson and Scott H. Faulring, Review of *In Sacred Loneliness*, in *FARMS Review of Books* 10 (1998): 2. But see Compton's response,

Mulholland, Mary Ann Frost Stearns Pratt, and Phebe Watrous Woodworth—bringing the total of Joseph Smith’s known Nauvoo plural wives to at least thirty-six.⁷⁵

Houston, Woodworth, and Pratt were all sealed and anointed to Joseph Smith by proxy in the Nauvoo Temple, a privilege suggesting a plural marriage during Smith’s lifetime. In fact, Woodworth’s daughter, Flora Ann, *had* married Smith during May or June 1843, probably at around the same time as her mother’s own possible plural marriage to Smith. Sarah Scott, who had married James Mulholland (1810–39) in early 1839, wed Alexander Mullinder/Mullander (born ca. 1810) civilly on October 25, 1843, with Apostle John Taylor performing the ceremony. Mulholland was probably a “front” husband to conceal Sarah’s plural marriage to Smith—much the same arrangement by which Smith had authorized Joseph Kingsbury and Sarah Whitney’s “prete[n]ded marriage” on April 29, 1843. Scott was sealed to Mulholland for eternity and to Heber Kimball, not Mullinder, for time on February 3, 1846, in the Nauvoo Temple. The record of that ceremony identifies her explicitly as “Sarah Smith,” imply-

“Truth, Honesty and Moderation in Mormon History: A Response to Anderson, Faulring and Bachman’s Reviews of *In Sacred Loneliness*” (July 2001), privately circulated. Compton identifies thirty-three plural wives, Anderson and Faulring twenty-nine. In his response, Compton presents his reasons for keeping thirty-three and even notes that the actual number may be higher.

75. I do not believe that Fanny Alger, whom Compton counts as Smith’s first plural wife, satisfies the criteria to be considered a “wife.” Briefly, the sources for such a “marriage” are all retrospective and presented from a point of view favoring plural marriage, rather than, say, an extramarital liaison, which seems clearly to be Oliver Cowdery’s interpretation of the relationship. In addition, Smith’s doctrine of eternal marriage was not formulated until after 1839–40. For Compton’s counter-argument, see his *In Sacred Loneliness*, 25–42. I also believe the circumstances of Lucinda Pendleton Morgan Harris’s plural marriage to Smith better fits the context of Smith’s pattern of contracting plural marriages ca. 1841–42 with married or widowed women than it does to the late 1830s, the period some have assigned to Harris’s and Smith’s plural marriage. Most recently, Lyndon W. Cook, comp., *Nauvoo Marriages Proxy Sealings, 1843–1846* (Provo, Utah: Grandin Book, 2004), 12–13, has suggested that three more women be added to the list of Smith’s plural wives: Lydia Kenyon Carter (married ca. 1841–43), Sarah Bapson (probably Sarah [Rapson] Poulterer, married ca. 1841–43), and Hannah Ann Dubois Smith Dibble (married ca. 1842–43).

ing an earlier sealing to Joseph Smith. Finally, Orson F. Whitney, son of Helen Mar Kimball Smith Whitney, Joseph Smith's youngest plural wife, wrote in his biography of his grandfather, Heber C. Kimball, that Mary Houston and Sarah Scott were known plural wives of Joseph Smith during Smith's lifetime.⁷⁶

A few other clarifications seem appropriate. First, although Zina Huntington's family history reports that Joseph Smith initially approached her as a prospective plural wife in the winter of 1839–40,⁷⁷ Zina herself insisted that Smith never directly broached plural marriage with her until the day of their marriage in October 1841. Rather, "my brother Dimick told me what Joseph had told him [regarding plural marriage]," she recounted. "Joseph did not come until afterwards. . . . [T]he Lord had revealed to Joseph Smith that he was to marry me. I received it from Joseph through my brother Dimick."⁷⁸

Joseph Smith may have initially raised the topic indirectly with Dimick, possibly at the same time in late 1840 when he was preaching plural marriage to Joseph Bates Noble and one or two others. Smith evidently opposed Zina's civil marriage to Henry Jacobs in March 1841.⁷⁹ Only after that marriage did the prophet's overtures become explicit. "He [Joseph Smith] sent word to me by my brother [Dimick]," Zina remembered, "saying, 'Tell Zina I put it off and put it off till an angel with a drawn sword

76. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball* (1888), 431; (1945), 419.

77. See Compton, *In Sacred Loneliness*, 80; and Martha Sonntag Bradley and Mary Brown Firmage Woodward, *Four Zinas: A Story of Mothers and Daughters on the Mormon Frontier* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2000), 111–12.

78. See Zina D. H. Young, interviewed by John W. Wight (an elder of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints), October 1, 1898, in Zina Card Brown Family Collection, LDS Church Archives; published as "Evidence from Zina D. Huntington-Young," *Saints' Herald* 52, no. 2 (January 11, 1905): 28–30.

79. See Benjamin F. Johnson's reminiscence: "Of the Prophets Partiality or Love for Sister Zina I will only say she was always in his favor. & that after a two & half years mission to Canada & the middle States I returned to learn she had but recently married [Henry Jacobs], which perhaps did not ^quite^ please the Prophet for in answer to this great love for her she soon became his own wife, was among the first to accept the plural order of marriage." "'Aunt Zina' as I Have Known Her from Youth—By 'Uncle Ben,'" n.d., in Zina Card Brown Family Collection.

stood by me and told me if I did not establish that principle upon the earth, I would lose my position and my life.”⁸⁰ Impressed by Joseph’s urgency, Dimick finally agreed to raise the subject with Zina. Zina did not learn for certain of Smith’s intention until October 27, 1841, when he proposed to her, she agreed, and Dimick performed the ceremony.

Second, H. Michael Marquardt has shown that despite their affidavits attesting to their resealing to Joseph Smith on May 11, 1843, for the benefit of Smith’s civil wife, Emma Hale Smith,⁸¹ sisters Emily Dow and Eliza Partridge were in fact probably resealed to Smith twelve days later on May 23, 1843.⁸²

Third, both Almera Johnson and Ruth Vose Sayers recalled Hyrum Smith performing their plural marriages to Joseph Smith: Almera in the spring of 1843, and Ruth in February 1843.⁸³ However, Hyrum evidently did not accept his brother’s doctrine until May 26, 1843. Thus, if the two women are remembering correctly that Hyrum was the officiator, the two ceremonies presumably would have occurred between May 26, 1843, and Joseph’s and Hyrum’s deaths on June 27, 1844. If the dates are correct, then someone else may have officiated. In Ruth’s case, it is possible that she was reporting a resealing performed by Hyrum.

A possible, if garbled, account of Ruth and Joseph’s plural relationship is found in Wilhelm Ritter von Wymetal’s sensational *Mormon Portraits[;] or the Truth about the Mormon Leaders from 1830 to 1886[.] Volume First[.] Joseph Smith the Prophet His Family and His Friends* (Salt Lake City: Tribune Printing and Publishing Co., 1886), 64–66. Wymetal’s story is third-hand at best but seems to report the accidental discovery by Richard

80. Zina D. H. Smith, in “Joseph, the Prophet. His Life and Mission as Viewed by Intimate Acquaintances,” *Salt Lake Herald Church and Farm Supplement*, January 12, 1895, 212.

81. Affidavits dated May 1, and July 1, 1869, Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books; see also Emily Dow Partridge Young, “Incidents in the Life of a Mormon Girl,” holograph, 185-86, LDS Church Archives.

82. H. Michael Marquardt, “Emily Dow Partridge Smith Young on the Witness Stand: Recollections of a Plural Wife” (2001), privately circulated; see also H. Michael Marquardt, “A Preliminary List of Women Married or Sealed to Joseph Smith (1841–44),” privately circulated.

83. Almera Johnson Smith, Affidavit, August 1, 1883, LDS Church Archives; Ruth Vose Sayers Smith, Affidavit, May 1, 1869, Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books.

Rushton Jr. (1814–84) of Ruth Sayers in Joseph Smith’s Mansion House during the last week of April 1843 while Emma Smith was in St. Louis. Wymetal identifies her as “the beautiful and attractive wife of Elder Edward Blossom, a high councilor of Zion, (afterwards exalted to the apostleship by Brigham Young).” Ruth, age thirty-five at the time, was married to Edward Sayers, a florist, and the recalled identification of Sayers as “Edward Blossom” may be understandable. However, Sayers was not Mormon and hence was not a Nauvoo Stake high councilor or later apostle. Wymetal, or his sources, may have confused Ruth Sayers with Lucinda Harris,⁸⁴ whose husband, George, was a high councilor in Nauvoo, but was never an apostle. For an interesting account of Edward Sayers in Utah in 1853, see Mrs. B[enjamin]. G. Ferris (Cornelia Woodcock Ferris), *The Mormons at Home . . .* (New York: Dix & Edwards, 1856), 185–86. Ferris also describes Vienna Jacques Shearer (124–26, 154–56, 186–87), reputedly one of Joseph Smith’s plural wives. If Ferris’s information is correct, Shearer was probably not sealed to Joseph Smith during his life (although she was sealed to Smith by proxy in 1858).

William Smith, Joseph Smith’s mercurial younger brother, married Caroline Grant civilly in 1833. Ten years later, following a poorly executed foray into John C. Bennett’s unauthorized system of plural marriage in early 1842, William evidently married first Mary Ann Covington Sheffield, then perhaps Mary Jones prior to Joseph Smith’s death. In both instances, according to Covington, Brigham Young performed the ceremony. Mary Ann Covington had previously married James Sheffield (born 1814) in England in early 1836 but reportedly left him when he mistreated her. She arrived in Nauvoo in early 1843. In 1892, Covington, then in Salt Lake City, affirmed her and Jones’s plural marriages to William Smith.⁸⁵

13 ... A:— Well I went to live at Orson Hyde’s and soon after that time Joseph Smith wished to have an interview with me at Orson Hyde’s. He

84. Thanks to rare book dealer Rick Grunder, we know that Lucinda Pendleton Morgan married George Harris on November 23, 1830, and not November 30, 1830. See www.rickgrunder.com/Newspapers%20for%20Sale/lucindaharris.htm. See also *Spirit of the Times & People’s Press* (Batavia, New York) 1 (November 30, 1830): 3; courtesy H. Michael Marquardt.

85. In response to hostile questioning, Covington apparently expressed some uncertainty on the exact date of her marriage to William Smith. However,

had the interview with me [in April 1843], and then asked me if I had ever heard of a mans having more wives than one, and I said I had not. He then told me that he had received a revelation from God that a man could have more wives than one, and that men were now being married in plural marriage. He told me soon after that his brother William wished to marry me as a wife in plural marriage if I felt willing to consent to it. . . .

14 Q:— State to the reporter whether or not you consented? . . .

15 . . . A:— Yes sir.

16 Q:— You consented? A:— Yes sir I did.

17 Q:— State to the reporter whether or not you were ever married to William Smith? A:— I was married to him.

18 Q:— Who performed the ceremony? A:— Brigham Young.

19 Q:— Can you state who was present at the performance of the ceremony besides Brigham Young? A:— Not any body but William Smith and myself.

20 Q:— State to the reporter whether or not—whether or not you ever witnessed any other ceremonies, where any one was married in plural marriage? . . .

21 Q:— How many did you witness? A:— I witnessed one.

22 Q:— What was that? A:— I witnessed one other plural marriage to William Smith.

23 Q:— State to the reporter who that was? . . . A:— It was Mary Jones—her name was Mary Jones.⁸⁶

24 Q:— Who performed the ceremony? A:— It was Brigham Young. . . .

27 Q:— Was that last ceremony you have mentioned where he was

her memory of other past events is impressive, and I can find no persuasive reason to doubt her account of her marriage.

86. Covington may have meant Mary Jane Rollins (born December 25, 1829, died July 22, 1880), whom William married on June 22, 1845, one month after the death of his civil wife. *Nauvoo Neighbor*, July 2, 1845, 3. The exact status of William Smith's marriage to Rollins is unclear. Their marriage does not appear in "A Record of Marriages, in the City of Nauvoo, Illinois, kept and made agreeable to a City ordinance bearing date the 17th day of February 1842, entitled 'An Ordinance concerning Marriages,'" LDS Church Archives. However, this book is probably incomplete: no marriages were recorded between March 18 and October 9, 1845, and only four additional marriages were recorded thereafter, the last occurring on December 31, 1845. That William married so soon after Caroline's death may suggest a prior relationship with Rollins. Non-Mormon journalist Thomas Sharp hinted as much when he wrote in the *Warsaw Signal*, July 2, 1845: "Patriarch Bill Smith, brother of the Prophet, whose wife died about four weeks since, was again married on last Sunday week—having been a widower about 18 days. His bride is about 16 and he is 35. Bill will do very well for a father to the

married to Mary Jones performed after or before the ceremony where you were married to him? A:— After. . . .

30 Q:— Was this after or before the death of Joseph Smith? . . . A:— It was before the death of Joseph Smith.

145 Q:— In whose house were you married to William B. Smith? . . .

146 . . . A:— Well it was in her house—in Agnes Smith’s house. . . .

183 Q:— And you swear positively that you roomed with William B. Smith as his wife one night, but you can’t say whether it was five nights or ten nights? A:— Yes sir, I know I did one night—and I can’t say how many more. . . .

197 Q:— Is it not a fact that you were just sealed to him for eternity, and that that is how Brigham Young sealed you to him,—just for eternity? A:— I was sealed to him for time and eternity. I was sealed to him as everybody else was.⁸⁷

While Covington reports that her marriage to William Smith took place in the fall of 1843, the ceremony may have actually occurred sometime during April-May 1844 (or perhaps in late spring 1843), as William was living in the eastern United States from the summer of 1843 to April 1844.

On October 19, 1845, William was excommunicated from the LDS Church for various infractions, including unauthorized plural marriages, undertaken after Joseph Smith’s death. In late 1846, Covington married Joseph A. Stratton (born 1821). Stratton died in 1850 in Salt Lake City. In 1864 Covington wed Chauncey Walker West, who had married Mary

church but his wife won’t do for mother. *Wonder if Bill was not engaged before his former wife died.*” The marriage was short-lived. Rollins left Smith by the end of the summer; the two formally divorced in early 1847; and Rollins subsequently married Frank Williamson on March 13, 1849.

87. Mary Ann Covington Sheffield Smith Stratton West, Testimony, in “Respondent’s Testimony, Temple Lot Case,” 495–96, 500, 501. On the other hand, William Smith, “Complainant’s Testimony, Temple Lot Case,” 168, asserted that polygamy was not introduced into the LDS Church until after his brother’s death. “Your father never sealed or married any plural wives to me,” he also wrote to Joseph Smith III on July 20, 1892, “nor did he ever tell me that he believed in Polygamy—nor did he ever read any revelation in my presance [sic] in the Council of the twelve—nor did I hear of any talk of revelation on Poligamy not untill after the Brigham Mormons left Nauvoo—in the Spring 1846. . . . how much your father may have had to do with this doctrine—Previous to his death I know nothing about it. if any Person got Polygamy teachings from William Smith—no other one is responsible for it but himself.” Holograph in Community of Christ Library-Archives.

Ann's sister Sarah in 1855 and who would add a third Covington sister, Susan, as his plural wife in 1867.⁸⁸ Later, Covington was sealed to Stratton, with West acting as proxy.

Like most early Mormon diarists, **Erastus Snow** did not record his first plural marriage. However, unlike most early diarists, he did record—in code—his early eternal sealing to his civil wife, Artimesia Beaman (married 1838). She was a sister of Joseph Smith's first Nauvoo plural wife, Louisa Beaman. As translated, Snow's diary entry for February 15, 1844, reads: "Record of Marriage On the 15th day of February 1844 I Erastus Snow according to the laws provisions of the Holy Priesthood, was married and sealed for Times Eternity to Artimesia Beman by Hyrum Smith Patriarch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints."⁸⁹ According to a later statement by Snow, he was sealed to Minerva White, his first plural wife, in March 1844. Hyrum Smith, "officiating under the Prophet's direction," performed the ceremony.⁹⁰ Both wives were later resealed and anointed to Snow in the Nauvoo Temple.

Five years before he died, Snow publicly described his introduction to early Mormon plural marriage:

The Prophet Joseph Smith in the year 1841 [sic, 1843] made known the principle of the Celestial Order of Marriage to him me. He invited me out for a walk with him and told me that when He was translating the Scriptures that part of it w[h]ere one of the Old Prophets was deviding His property to His ofspring. ^Then it was that the Lord revealed unto him^ That the time had come now when the principle should be practiced. Joseph told me the Names of some of the wives or wom[e]n which

88. See Franklin L. West, *Chauncey W. West: Pioneer—Churchman* (Salt Lake City: Author, 1965), 24, 32. Mary Ann bore two children, one of whom survived to adulthood, before Chauncey died on January 9, 1870.

89. Erastus Snow, *Diary, June 1841–February 1847*, text opposite p. 50, LDS Church Archives.

90. "Apostle Erastus Snow's Testimony," in Jenson, "Plural Marriage," 232, courtesy H. Michael Marquardt. In contrast, Snow family genealogical records report that this first plural marriage occurred on February 2, 1844. Moroni Snow, "The Descendants of Erastus Snow," *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine* 3 (April 1912): 64. According to Andrew Karl Larson, *Erastus Snow: The Life of a Missionary and Pioneer for the Early Mormon Church* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1971), 87, Joseph Smith performed Snow's plural marriage. However, Snow's personal report that Hyrum Smith officiated seems more likely. By 1844, Joseph Smith had ceded most such responsibilities to Hyrum.

had been sealed to him by Joseph B. Noble. That Emma His 1st wife was acquainted with ^these wom[e]n^ and had administered to him but she had turned against him now. That in the conversation the Prophet was pure and Noble. He [i.e., Erastus Snow] testified that He was perfectly acquainted with the Wives of the Prophet Joseph. The 1st ones Name was Luisa Demon [i.e., Louisa Beaman] who was a pure and virtuous woman all her life.

Emma believed that there could not be a Holy Alliance between the man and the woman unless the woman consented to it with all her heart.

Emma used her womanly nature to teas and annoy Joseph and went so far as to threaten Joseph that she would leave Him and cohabit with another man and the Lord forbade her in the Revelation. . . .

I [i.e., Erastus Snow] know and do bare record that He [i.e., Joseph Smith] did [practice plural marriage] and counceled me to obey and enter into this order and about a year after my conversation with him upon the subject He sent His brother [i.e., Hyrum Smith] who sealed [on April 2, 1844] a second wife [i.e., Minerva White] to me and she is living now.

The Law was that the 1st wife place the right hand of the 2d into the hand of her husband and expressed her willingness and consent. He [i.e., Erastus Snow] entered into that order of Marriage with more Secredness then when He married His 1st wife.⁹¹

Like Erastus Snow's early plural marriage, the evidence for **John Taylor's** two plural marriages is found only in his family's genealogical records. As summarized in Taylor's official biography, *The Life of John Taylor*, by B. H. Roberts (1892; reprinted, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1963), 465–66, 471–83, Taylor married Leonora Cannon civilly in 1833, followed by plural wives, Elizabeth Kaighan on December 12, 1843, and Jane Ballantyne two months later on February 25, 1844.⁹² Though not stated, Hyrum Smith probably performed both ceremonies. In 1845–46, all three wives were resealed and anointed to Taylor (as were an additional five plural wives) in the Nauvoo Temple.

“When this principle was first made known to us by Joseph Smith,” remembered Taylor, an apostle since 1838,

it was in Nauvoo. . . . We were assembled in the little office over the brick store. There being present Bro[ther]s B[righam] Yo[u]ng Heber C. Kimball.

91. “A Sinopsas of Remarks made by Apostle E[rastus] Snow July 22 [1883] at Nephi [Utah] Sunday evening,” reported by Thomas Crawley, clerk of the Juab Utah Stake Conference, LDS Church Archives.

92. See also Nellie T. Taylor, “John Taylor, His Ancestors and Descendants,” *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine* 21 (July 1930): 105–6.

Orson Hyde & myself.⁹³ Bro[ther] Willard Richards may have been present too, but I am not positive. Upon that occasion, Joseph Smith laid before us the whole principle pertain[ing] to that doctrine, and we believed it. Having done this Joseph felt, as he said, that he had got a big burden rolled off his shoulders. He felt the responsibility of that matter resting heavily upon him. Notwithstanding, however, that we receiv[e]d the principle & believed it, yet we were in no great hurry to enter into it. Sometime after this, I was riding out of Nauvoo when I met Joseph coming in. We met in the old graveyard . . . and I moved to Bro[ther] Joseph and he moved to me, I think we were both on horseback, but of that I am not sure, Said he “Bro[ther] Taylor stop” and I stopped. He looked me right in the eye, and spoke with all the solemnity that I ever heard him speak, said he: “Brother Taylor, that principle has got to be complied with forthwith; and if not, the Key will not be turned.” He had told us before that if this principle was not entered into, the Kingdom could not go one step further.⁹⁴

“Did I feel to stand in the way of this great, eternal principle,” Taylor added, “and treat lightly the things of God? No. I replied: ‘Brother Joseph, I will try and carry these things out,’ and I afterwards did, and I have done it more times than once.”⁹⁵

According to *The Theodore Turley Family Book*, compiled by Nancy Romans Turley and Lawrence Edward Turley (n.p., 1978], 56) as well as his “Individual Record” (www.familysearch.org), **Theodore Turley** married Mary Clift as his first plural wife “prior to 1842.” He previously had married Frances Kimberly civilly in 1821. On October 20, 1842, Mary gave birth to a son, Jason. However, as closer scrutiny makes clear, Jason was fathered not by Turley, but by Gustavus Hills, who had formed a liaison with Clift as part of John C. Bennett’s unauthorized system of polygamy.⁹⁶ Jason died at age one on October 26, 1843. In March-April 1844, Turley married Mary’s sisters, Eliza and Sarah Clift, as his plural wives, at which time he presumably also married Mary. The family antedated Theo-

93. If Taylor’s memory is correct, Hyde’s presence dates this meeting to sometime after his return to Nauvoo on December 7, 1842.

94. Taylor, quoted in Minutes of Meeting, October 14, 1882, L. John Nuttall Papers, Perry Special Collections.

95. John Taylor, n.d., *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool, Eng.: Latter-day Saints’ Book Depot, 1855–86), 24:231.

96. See my discussion of this incident in “‘Illicit Intercourse,’ Plural Marriage, and the Nauvoo Stake High Council, 1840–1844,” *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 23 (2003): 75–77.

dore and Mary's plural marriage, no doubt reflecting the family's desire to provide Jason with legitimate parentage, at least in the eyes of the LDS Church. All three wives were resealed and anointed to Turley in the Nauvoo Temple.

As with other poorly documented plural marriages, the evidence for **Lyman Wight's** early marriages is circumstantial. According to Wight family history:

At this time, September of 1844, many things were probably going through Lyman Wight's mind. He was now in Prairie, La Crosse County, Wisconsin with his family and four wives. Three of them recently acquired. There was Jane Margaret Ballantyne, 25 year old daughter of John and Janet Ballantyne, Scottish emigrants with the company. Jane was pregnant and expecting a child in late winter. Then there was Mary Hawley, 22 year old daughter of Pierce and Sarah Hawley, Vermonters with the company. The next was Mary Ann Hobart, 17 year old daughter of Otis and Sophoronia [sic] Hobart. . . . There, of course, was the ever faithful Harriet [Benton], now age 44 and at the end of her childbearing years. Harriet was old enough to be the other wives' mother. Harriet appears to stoically accept the new and everlasting covenant of plural marriage or perhaps she welcomed the company. We have no record of her opinion.⁹⁷

If Wight, an LDS apostle since 1841, had married polygamously by September 1844 and if one of his wives were due to give birth by March 1845 at the latest, the plural marriages would have most probably been performed before Joseph Smith died on June 27, 1844.

Lyman left Nauvoo for the Wisconsin pineries ca. July 21–22, 1843. Among the 150 or so people accompanying him and his family were his three wives: Jane Ballantyne, Mary Hawley, and Mary Ann Hobart, as well as their parents and siblings.⁹⁸ According to Joseph Smith's diary, Lyman returned to Nauvoo by May 1, 1844. Wight subsequently left for Washington, D.C., on May 22, 1844, and returned to Nauvoo on August 6, 1844. He and other members of the Pine Company then left Nauvoo for Wisconsin on August 28, 1844. Assuming that Lyman married plurally before Joseph Smith died, he probably did so before the third week of July 1843.

In Wisconsin, Wight actively preached plural marriage. Gideon

97. Jermy Benton Wight, *The Wild Ram of the Mountain: The Story of Lyman Wight* (Afton, Wyo.: Afton Thrifty Print/Star Valley Llama, 1996), 236.

98. *Ibid.*, 216.

Carter (born 1831) recalled as much during an interview with B. H. Roberts in 1894:

I remember that while he [i.e., Wight] and his company were stopping at Prairie La Crosse in the fall and winter of 1844-45, Lyman Wight's son, Orange L. Wight, who was the husband of my sister Matilda, married a plural wife, a young lady to whom he had been engaged before marrying my sister, but with whom he had broken though some misunderstanding. I understood that Lyman Wight performed the ceremony. *En route* from Texas one Joel Miles married a plural wife; and Lyman Wight himself, before we arrived in Texas, also married a plural wife; and I remember distinctly that while living in Texas he had three wives, and I think he had four.

Question by B. H. Roberts: Mr. Carter, did Lyman Wight say that Joseph Smith taught plural marriage, and did he practice it by virtue of the prophet Joseph Smith having introduced it?

Answer: He did. He said that he saw and heard read the revelation establishing plural marriage before Joseph Smith's death. I have heard Lyman Wight relate many times how Joseph Smith announced the revelation to his brother Hyrum. Hyrum did not at first receive it with favor. His whole nature revolted against it. He said to Joseph that if he attempted to introduce the practice of that doctrine as a tenet of The Church it would break up The Church and cost him his life. "Well," Joseph replied, "it is a commandment from God, brother Hyrum, and if you don't believe it, if you will ask the Lord He will make it known to you." The matter caused Hyrum much distress and anguish of heart, he well-nigh sweat blood over it, so repugnant was it to his feelings, and such his dread of seeing it introduced into The Church; but he inquired of God, according to Wight's statement, and he received from the Lord the same revelation that Joseph had—that it was a true doctrine, and a commandment from God. . . .

Lyman Wight also said that Joseph Smith had given him authority to perform these plural marriage ceremonies in connection with other ceremonies in the Church.⁹⁹

Orange Wight recounted some of the challenges facing young men in Nauvoo during the early years of plural marriage:

At first the Doctrine was taught in private. . . . I noticed when in company with the you[n]g folks the Girls were calling one another Spirituals. . . . Now altho[ugh] only in my 20th year would not be 20 untill 29 November [18]43, I concluded to lo[o]k about and try to pick up one or more of the young Ladies, before they were all gone, so I commenced keeping company with Flora Woodworth, Daughter of Lucian Woodworth, called the

99. Quoted in Roberts, *Succession in the Presidency*, 122–25; original in LDS Church Archives.

Pagan Prophet. I was walking along the street with Flora near the Prophets residence when he Joseph [Smith] drove up in his carriage stoped and spoke to I and Flora and asked us to get in the carrage and ride with him he opened the doore for us and when we were seated oposite to him he told the driver to drive on we went to the Temple lot and many other places during the Afternoon and then he drove to the Woodworth house and we got out and wen[t] in.

After we got in the house sister Woodworth took me in an other room and told me that Flora was one of Josephs wives, I was awar[e] or believed that Eliza R. Snow and the two patrage [Partridge] Girls were his wives but was not informed about Flora. But now sister Woodworth gave me all the information nessary, so I knew Joseph Believed and practiced Poligamy.¹⁰⁰

Lyman Wight was excommunicated from the LDS Church on December 3, 1848, for insubordination. Though his wives remained with him, they were never resealed or anointed to him in the Nauvoo Temple.

Edwin D. Woolley's early plural marriages are documented and summarized in Leonard J. Arrington's biography, *From Quaker to Latter-day Saint: Bishop Edwin D. Woolley* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 111–14, 489. Woolley married Mary Wickersham civilly in 1831. Before the end of 1843, he also married two plural wives: Louisa Gordon Rising and Ellen Wilding. Gordon was separated from David L. Rising (born ca. 1816, married mid-1838). The second of their two children was born ca. 1841–42, but David did not die until September 1845. As Woolley and Louisa's first child, Edwin Gordon, later wrote: "Edwin D. Woolley was among the first who adopted the principle of plural marriage as taught by the Prophet Joseph, and he received at the hands of the Prophet for his first plural wife Louisa Chapin Gordon, the mother of the subject of this sketch, and afterwards received a second plural wife by the same authority, so that before leaving Nauvoo at the time of the exodus in 1846 he had

100. Orange Lysander Wight, Untitled reminiscence, 1903, LDS Church Archives. There is some speculation that Orange may have been an early polygamist as well; his untitled reminiscence is unclear. According to Wight family history, however, Orange married Matilda Carter on February 6, 1844, and Sarah Hadfield plurally on February 7, 1845. Wight, *Wild Ram of the Mountain*, 239, 445, 501. Joseph I. Earl, Letter to Francis M. Lyman, September 14, 1905, LDS Church Archives, further clarifies: "Orange L. Wight says he and Sarah Hadfield his second wife were mar[r]ied by his Father at La Crosse Wisconsin, between the first [sic] and fifteenth of Jan 1845."

three living wives.”¹⁰¹ Though all three women were resealed to Woolley in the Nauvoo Temple, only Wickersham was anointed to him.

The most thorough treatment of **Brigham Young’s** plural marriages is Jeffery Ogden Johnson’s “Determining and Defining ‘Wife’: The Brigham Young Households,” in *Brigham Young’s Homes*, edited by Colleen Whitley (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2002), 1-12, 219-30. Second only to Joseph Smith, Brigham Young was the most married of early Mormon polygamist husbands. Following the death of his first civil wife, Miriam Works, in 1832, he married Mary Ann Angell in early 1834, then took as his first plural wives Lucy Ann Decker Seeley in mid-1842, Augusta Adams Cobb and Harriet Cook in November 1843, and Clarissa Decker (Lucy’s sister) in May 1844.¹⁰² In about 1835, Lucy had married William Seeley (born 1816). After three children, they reportedly separated by 1842. Seeley died on May 20, 1851. Augusta Adams married Henry Cobb (born 1798) in late 1822. They had seven children, who remained in Boston after Adams joined the LDS Church. Adams and Cobb evidently separated by 1843. Cobb died in mid-1872.¹⁰³

All four of Young’s plural wives left affidavits of their sealings to him. In the first, Lucy Decker stated: “On the fourteenth day of June A.D. 1842, in the City of Nauvoo, County of Hancock, State of Illinois, She was married or Sealed for time and all eternity to President Brigham

101. Edwin Gordon Woolley, autobiographical sketch, n.d., 2-3, LDS Church Archives.

102. Before marrying Lucy Decker, Young had courted Martha Brotherton (born 1824) as his first plural wife. She, however, rejected his proposal and subsequently published her description of the episode in *American Bulletin* (St. Louis), July 16, 1842, then in *Warsaw Signal*, July 23, 1842. Reprints followed in the *Louisville Journal*, July 25, 1842; *New York Herald*, July 25, 1842; *Alton Telegram*, July 30, 1842; and *Quincy Whig*, August 6, 1842. Following Brotherton’s death, Young had her sealed to him by proxy on August 1, 1870. Stanley Ivins, research into LDS sealing records, Ivins Papers, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City. Brotherton’s sister, Elizabeth, became Parley P. Pratt’s first plural wife in mid-1843.

103. The marital status of Lucy Decker and Augusta Adams at the time of their marriages to Brigham Young is not entirely clear. While they may have separated from the husbands prior to Young’s proposals, it is also possible that Young’s offers of marriage facilitated their decision to leave their husbands. My thanks to Todd Compton for pointing out this possibility.

Young, by the Prophet Joseph Smith, in the presence of Elder Willard Richards one of the Twelve.”¹⁰⁴ In two affidavits, both made on the same date, Augusta Adams attested: “On the Second day of November A.D. 1843, She was married or sealed, for time and all eternity to Pres[iden]t. Brigham Young, by the Prophet Joseph Smith, in the City of Nauvoo, County of Hancock State of Illinois, in the presence of Mary Ann Young, Fanny Murray, and Harriet Cook.” The second one reads: “On the Second day of November A.D. 1843, in the City of Nauvoo, County of Hancock State of Illinois, She witnessed the marrying or Sealing of Fanny Murray to President Joseph Smith, by President Brigham Young; Mary Ann Young and Harriet Cook, being present.”¹⁰⁵

Harriet Cook also made two affidavits, also both on the same date: “On the Second day of November, A.D. 1843, in the City of Nauvoo, Hancock Co[unty]. State of Illinois, She was married to President Brigham Young by the Prophet Joseph Smith, for time and eternity, in the presence of Mary Ann Young, Fanny Murray Smith, and Augusta Adams Young.” The second one reads: “On the Second day of November A.D. 1843, in the City of Nauvoo, Hancock Co[unty]. State of Illinois, She was present and witnessed the marrying or Sealing of Fanny Murray to President Joseph Smith, for time and eternity, by President Brigham Young; Mary Ann Young, and Augusta Adams Young being present.”¹⁰⁶

The fourth wife, Clara Decker stated: “On the eighth day of May A.D. 1844, in the City of Nauvoo, Hancock Co[unty]. State of Illinois, She was married or Sealed for time and eternity to President Brigham Young, by Elder Willard Richards, one of the Twelve, by Sanction of Pres[iden]t. Joseph Smith, and in the presence of Elder Lorenzo D. Young, Harriet P. Young & Lucy Ann Young.”¹⁰⁷

Brigham Young’s affection for his wives is evident in a letter he wrote from Philadelphia on August 17, 1843, to his first wife, Mary Ann

104. Lucy Decker Young, Affidavit, July 10, 1869, Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books.

105. August Adams Cobb, Affidavit, July 12, 1869, Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books.

106. Harriet Cook Young, Affidavit, March 4, 1870, Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books.

107. Clara Decker Young, Affidavit, March 4, 1870, Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books.

Angell: "Give my love to . . . Br[other] Deckers famely [Young had married Lucy Decker two months earlier] and finely all that you have an opertunity . . . take the first Share of my Love to your self and then to the rest . . . Give my love to Sister Haritt [i.e., Harriet Cook, whom Young would marry on November 2, 1843, ten days after his return to Nauvoo] if she is there. . . . She is a fine wooman."¹⁰⁸ Mary Ann, Lucy, Augusta, Harriet, and Clarissa were all later sealed to Young in the Nauvoo Temple. Mary Ann, Lucy, and Harriet (and presumably Clarissa) were also anointed to him. Augusta was anointed to Joseph Smith.

The last of the early Mormon polygamist husbands, **Lorenzo Dow Young**, married Persis Goodall civilly in 1826, then wed Harriet P. Wheeler Decker plurally in early 1843. Lorenzo's older brother, Brigham, probably performed the ceremony. Harriet previously had married Isaac P. Decker (1799–1873) in 1820. They had six children, including Lucy and Clarissa, who married Brigham Young as plural wives. Harriet and Isaac apparently separated by 1843. According to Decker family history:

Isaac [Decker] did not believe in polygamy, and after having lost his fortune as a banker for the Church in Nauvoo, he could not afford more than one wife, but being a stubborn "Dutchman" he did not tell the church authorities his reason for not entertaining polygamy. He [i.e., Wayne Decker] says that Brigham Young, becoming regusted [sic] with Isaac, worked on Harriet to marry Lorenzo, telling her that Isaac was not a faithful member of the Church because he did not live up to its Scriptures. That is the reason Harriet did marry Lorenzo [Dow Young] then, and a few years later when Isaac did come out west, he got even with Harriet by marrying three or four other wives just to spite her.¹⁰⁹

Persis and Lorenzo had separated by January 27, 1846, when she was sealed and anointed to Levi Richards (1799–1876) as a second wife in the Nauvoo Temple.¹¹⁰ Harriet remained with Lorenzo, to whom she was resealed and anointed in the Nauvoo Temple.

Analysis

108. Brigham Young, Letter to Mary Ann Angell Young, August 17, 1843, Special Collections, Beinecke Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.

109. Marguerite L. Sinclair, Letter to Frank M. Young, June 21, 1947, Lorenzo Dow Young Papers, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City. After arriving in Salt Lake City, Decker married at least five wives.

110. Some Richards family members, evidently basing their conclusions on

Not surprisingly, given both the secretive nature of early Mormon plural marriage as well as later trends in territorial Utah, more than half of these early polygamist husbands had no more than two wives prior to Joseph Smith's death. Close to an additional third had a maximum of three wives. (See Table 1.)

On average, husbands were older than their wives at all marriages, both civil and plural. (See Table 2.) The youngest man to marry civilly was Lorenzo Dow Young (to Persis Goodall) at age eighteen, the oldest John Smith (to Clarissa Lyman) at thirty-four. The youngest man to marry plurally was William D. Huntington (to Caroline Clark) at twenty-four, the oldest John Smith (to Mary Aikens Smith) at sixty-two. The youngest woman to marry civilly was Tamson Parshley (to Howard Egan) at age thirteen, the oldest Leonora Cannon (to John Taylor) at thirty-six. The youngest woman to marry plurally was Helen Mar Kimball (to Joseph Smith) at fourteen, the oldest Julia Ellis Hills Johnson (to John Smith) at sixty.

While at first glance, it may appear that a high percentage of plural wives were married to other men at the time of their plural marriage (18 percent), Joseph Smith's plural marriages accounted for all of these as well as for more than a third of his own plural marriages.¹¹¹ In fact, the majority of plural wives had never previously been married at the time of their plural marriage. Still it is not always possible to differentiate convincingly between married and separated wives. (See Table 3.)

Also of interest is the fact that twenty-one women (26 percent of Nauvoo plural wives) were biological sisters. Six of Joseph Smith's wives (16 percent of his plural wives and 7.5 percent of all plural wives) are included in this category (the asterisk indicates Joseph Smith's sister-wives): Pamela and Adeline Andrus Benson, Ruth and Margaret Moon Clayton, Elizabeth and Mary Ann Buchanan Coolidge, Caroline and Harriet Clark

an incorrect marriage date between Persis and Levi of January 27, 1848, believed that Persis "always resented that she was left behind in Winter Quarters and never became a part of Lorenzo [Dow Young]'s family in Utah." *Pioneer Women of Faith and Fortitude*, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: International Society Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1998), 3:2562.

111. For an apologetic explanation of Smith's marriages to already-married women, see Samuel Katich, "A Tale of Two Marriage Systems: Perspectives on Polyandry and Joseph Smith" (Foundation for Apologetic Information and Research, 2003), available at www.fairlds.org/pubs/polyandry.pdf.

Table 1
Total Number of Wives Per Husband, 1841–44
 Includes Civil and Plural Wives

<i>Total Number of Wives</i>	<i>Number of Husbands</i>	<i>Percentage of Husbands</i>
Two	14	50.0
Three	9	32.0
Four ^a	3	11.0
Five ^b	1	3.5
Thirty-seven ^c	1	3.5

^aWillard Richards, Theodore Turley, and Lyman Wight

^bBrigham Young

^cJoseph Smith

Huntington, Sarah and Nanny Longstroth Richards, Mary and Mercy Fielding Smith, *Zina and Presendia Huntington Smith, *Emily and Eliza Partridge Smith, *Maria and Sarah Lawrence Smith, and Eliza, Mary, and Sarah Clift Turley.

The majority of plural husbands were members of an elite class of LDS priesthood holders. All of them had been ordained to the Melchizedek Priesthood and all held the office of Seventy or higher. Just being practicing polygamists prior to Joseph Smith's death put them in a select category. But all of them were also members of either Smith's Quorum of the Anointed (early temple endowment initiates) or of the Council of Fifty (political kingdom of God), or had received their second anointings. One-third of plural husbands received all of these privileges prior to Smith's death; but more than a third of plural husbands received none of these blessings before Smith died. (See Tables 4 and 5.)

Given the retrospective significance of Nauvoo's Female Relief Society, it is interesting that only forty-seven (3.5 percent) of the 1,331 identified members were involved in early polygamy as either civil or plural wives. More precisely, 16 percent of women married to Nauvoo's early plural husbands were members of this women's organization: 61 percent of the civilly married wives (n = 17) and 38 percent of the plural wives (n =

Table 2
Age at Civil and Plural Marriages, 1841–44

<i>Number and Type of Marriage</i>	<i>Husbands</i>		<i>Wives</i>	
	<i>Average Age</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Average Age</i>	<i>Range</i>
First civil ^a	24	18–34	21	13–36
First plural	39	24–62	28	16–46
Second plural	42	32–62	28	14–60
Third plural	42	36–48	22	15–31
Fourth plural	40	38–42	27	15–40
Fifth+ plural ^b	38	38	30	14–58

^aDoes not include the second and/or third civil marriages of John E. Page, Parley P. Pratt, Hyrum Smith, and Brigham Young

^bApplies only to Joseph Smith

Table 3
**Marital Status of Plural Wives,
at Time of Plural Marriage, 1841–44**

<i>Marital Status</i>	<i>Including Joseph Smith's Wives</i>		<i>Excluding Joseph Smith's Wives</i>		<i>Joseph Smith's Wives Only</i>	
	<i>Number/Percentage</i>	<i>Number/Percentage</i>	<i>Number/Percentage</i>	<i>Number/Percentage</i>	<i>Number/Percentage</i>	<i>Number/Percentage</i>
Single	46	58	28	63	18	50
Widowed	11	14	6	14	5	14
Separated	10	13	10	23	0	0
Married	13	16	0	0	13 ^a	36
Total	80		44		36	

^aPresendia L. Huntington Buell, Sarah Kingsley Howe Cleveland, Elizabeth Davis Goldsmith Brackenbury Durfee, Lucinda Pendleton Morgan Harris, Elvira A. Cowles Holmes, Marinda N. Johnson Hyde, Zina D. Huntington Jacobs, Mary E. Rollins Lightner, Sylvia P. Sessions Lyon, Mary Ann Frost Stearns Pratt, Ruth D. Vose Sayers, Patty Bartlett Sessions, and Phebe Watrous Woodworth

Table 4
Pre-Martyrdom (June 27, 1844) Plural Husbands' Positions

Membership/Positions	Number	Percentage
Anointed Quorum	16	57
Second Anointing	11	39
Council of Fifty	14	50
One of the above	17	61
All of the above	10	36
None of the above	11	39
Seventy	3	11
High Priest	14	50
Apostle	11	39

30). Significantly, however, 50 percent of Joseph Smith's plural wives were Relief Society members (n = 18).¹¹²

On average, civil wives gave birth to their first child thirteen months after their marriage.¹¹³ For plural wives (excluding Joseph Smith's plural wives and a handful of cases in which the first child followed marriage by sixty or more months¹¹⁴) the period between marriage and first birth was nearly twice as long (twenty-four months). In fact, evidently only four children—excluding those attributed to Joseph Smith¹¹⁵—were born to plural wives prior to Smith's death: Lucina Cahoon (daughter of Reynolds Cahoon and Lucina Roberts Johnson Cahoon), Daniel Clayton (son of

112. Calculated from Maurine Carr Ward, "‘This Institution Is a Good One’: The Female Relief Society of Nauvoo, March 17, 1842 to 16, March 1844," *Mormon Historical Studies* 3 (Fall 2002): 87–203.

113. I exclude Caroline Huntington from the total of civil wives because her first child was evidently born more than seven years after her marriage to William Huntington.

114. These plural wives were Martha Hyde (84 months), Elizabeth Pratt (96 months), Nanny Richards (74 months), all of Joseph Smith's plural wives, Mary Ann Wight (72 months), and Clarissa Young (65 months).

115. The following four children may or may not have been fathered by Joseph Smith with his plural wives: Orson W. Hyde (mother Marinda Nancy Johnson Hyde), Josephine R. Lyon (mother Sylvia Sessions Lyon), Florentine M. Lightner (mother Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner), and Moroni Pratt (mother

Table 5

Status and Priesthood Office of Plural Husbands, 1841-44

Dates in italics postdate Joseph Smith's death

State	Initiated into Anointed Quorum	Received Second Anointing	Joined Council of Fifty	Priesthood Office at Plural Marriage
Missouri	May 4, 1842	Died	Died	High priest
Illinois	December 15, 1845	January 16, 1846	December 25, 1846	High priest
Indiana	October 12, 1843	November 12, 1843	March 11, 1844	High priest
Ohio	February 3, 1844	January 26, 1846	March 11, 1844	High priest
Illinois	December 16, 1845	January 26, 1846	N.A.	High priest
Indiana	December 16, 1845	N.A.	N.A.	Seventy
Ohio	December 12, 1845	January 27, 1846	N.A.	High priest
Ohio	December 20, 1845	January 24, 1846	N.A.	Seventy
Ohio	December 2, 1843	January 25, 1844	March 13, 1844	Apostle
Ohio	December 24, 1845	January 22, 1846	N.A.	High priest
Ohio	May 4, 1842	January 20, 1844	March 11, 1844	Apostle
Ohio	by July 31, 1842	Died	Died	High priest
Ohio	December 23, 1843	February 26, 1844	March 1, 1845	High priest
Ohio	by March 20, 1845	January 23, 1846	N.A.	High priest
Ohio	January 26, 1845	N.A.	N.A.	Apostle
Ohio	December 2, 1843	January 21, 1844	March 1, 1845	Apostle
Ohio	May 4, 1842	January 27, 1844	March 11, 1844	Apostle
Ohio	May 4, 1842	October 8, 1843	March 11, 1844	Apostle*
Ohio	September 28, 1843	February 26, 1844	March 14-April 11, 1844	High priest
Ohio	May 5, 1842	May 28, 1843	March 1, 1844	Apostle*
Ohio	May 12, 1844	N.A.	April 25, 1844	Apostle
Ohio	December 12, 1845	January 23, 1846	March 11, 1844	Seventy
Ohio	September 28, 1843	January 30, 1844	March 11, 1844	Apostle
Ohio	December 20, 1845	February 3, 1846	March 1, 1845	High priest
Ohio	May 14, 1844	N.A.	May 3, 1844	Apostle
Ohio	December 22, 1845	February 7, 1846	N.A.	High priest
Ohio	May 4, 1842	November 22, 1843	March 11, 1844	Apostle
Ohio	December 13, 1845	January 26, 1846	N.A.	High priest

* Member of the First Presidency.

113. I exclude Caroline Huntington from the total of civil wives because her first child was evidently born more than seven years after her marriage to William Huntington.

114. These plural wives were: Martha Hyde (84 months), Elizabeth Pratt (96 months), Nancy Johnson (96 months), Mary Ann Wight (96 months), and Elizabeth Wight (96 months).

115. The following plural wives were: Caroline Huntington, Elizabeth Wight, Nancy Johnson, Mary Ann Wight, Elizabeth Wight, and Elizabeth Wight.

William Clayton and Margaret Moon Clayton), Adelman Kimball (son of Heber C. Kimball and Sarah Peak Noon Kimball), and George Noble (son of Joseph B. Noble and Sarah B. Alley Noble).¹¹⁶ In contrast, fourteen children were born to civil wives during the same thirty-month period. The ratio of births by status of wife is: .5 per civil wife, .05 per plural wife. Thus, early plural wives were ten times less likely to give birth before Joseph Smith died than were civil wives.

Drawing upon the above findings, the “average,” or representative, early Mormon polygamist husband was twenty-four years old when he married civilly and thirty-nine years old when he first married plurally. He had been ordained to the office of high priest in the Melchizedek Priesthood and, prior to Joseph Smith’s death, was either a member of the Quorum of the Anointed or Council of Fifty, or had received his second anointing. The “average” wife was twenty-one years old at the time of her civil marriage or twenty-eight years old at the time of her plural marriage. If a plural wife, she had never previously married and was not a member of Nauvoo’s Relief Society (unless she was married plurally to Joseph Smith). A civilly married couple’s first child was born thirteen months after their marriage, while a plurally married couple’s first child was born two years after their marriage, which would put this birth after the death of Joseph Smith.

Perhaps the identification of the earliest Mormon polygamist husbands and wives will always remain preliminary at best. In many instances, we are asked to rely on sources and surmises that may not hold up

son Hyde), Josephine R. Lyon (mother Sylvia Sessions Lyon), Florentine M. Lightner (mother Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner), and Moroni Pratt (mother Mary Ann Frost Stern Pratt). Todd Compton, “Fawn Brodie on Joseph Smith’s Plural Wives and Polygamy: A Critical View,” in *Reconsidering No Man Knows My History: Fawn M. Brodie and Joseph Smith in Retrospect*, edited by Newell G. Bringhurst (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1996), 164–73.

116. George Reynolds, a secretary to the First Presidency, Letter to H. Neidig, June 7, 1892, First Presidency Letterpress Copybooks, hypothesized about the low birth rate: “The facts that you refer to are almost as great a mystery to us as they are to you; but the reason generally assigned by the [plural] wives themselves is, that owing to the peculiar circumstances by which they were surrounded, they were so nervous and in such constant fear that they did not conceive.”

under closer examination. The biographical and genealogical records from which we tease conclusions are only as reliable as the materials used by the compilers, writers, and submitters themselves. Ideally, first-person eyewitness accounts are the most desirable; unfortunately, they are also the scarcest. Despite these limitations, I believe this tentative list helps to bring us nearer to identifying the men and women who fully embraced, during Joseph Smith's lifetime, his celestial doctrine of eternal plural marriage.

Appendix
The Earliest Mormon Polygamists, 1841–44:
An Alphabetical Listing

<i>Husband/Wife/Child(ren)</i>	<i>Birth-Death</i>	<i>Civil Marriage/ Eternal Sealing</i>	<i>Sealing Officiator</i>
James Adams	January 24, 1783–August 11, 1843		
Harriet Denton	January 31, 1787–August 21, 1844	ca. 1809	
Infant	?–?		
Lovenia	May 3, 1813–September 5, 1838		
Charlotte	May 2, 1815–January 10, 1832		
Lucian	December 10, 1816–?		
Vienna	July 10, 1818–?		
Roxena Higby Repsher-S ^a	March 20, 1805–?	July 11, 1843	Joseph Smith
Ezra T. Benson	February 22, 1811–September 3, 1869		
Pamela Andrus	October 21, 1809–September 14, 1877	January 1, 1832	
Charles	September 26, 1832–October 14, 1832		
Chloe	April 1835–October 13, 1835		
Charles	July 9, 1837–February 18, 1873		
Adin	March 1841–March 1841		

^aMarital status at time of plural marriage: M = married, NM = never married, S = separated, W = widowed.

Jonathan	March 1841–March 1841	
Pamela	February 28, 1842–?	
Harvey	September 26, 1844–September 26, 1844	
Isabelle	March 9, 1846–?	
Charlotte	July 4, 1850–?	
Adeline Andrus–NM	March 18, 1813–April 20, 1898	April 27, 1844
George	May 1, 1846–May 16, 1919	
Florence	September 17, 1851–December 24, 1852	
Frank	October 16, 1853–May 5, 1937	
Reynolds Cahoon		
Thirza Stiles	April 30, 1790–April 29, 1861	
William	October 18, 1789–November 20, 1866	December 11, 1810
Lerona	November 7, 1813–April 4, 1893	
Pulaski	October 25, 1817–June 18, 1840	
Daniel	September 18, 1819–February 1892	
Andrew	April 7, 1822–November 13, 1903	
Julia	August 4, 1824–December 13, 1900	
Mahonri	September 24, 1830–September 1, 1831	
Lucina Roberts Johnson–W	July 26, 1834–January 24, 1888	
Lucina	March 5, 1806–1861 or 1863	ca. 1841–42
Rais	ca. 1843	
	October 13, 1845–February 27, 1911	Joseph Smith?

Truman	January 18, 1850–February 4, 1811	
William Clayton	July 17, 1814–December 4, 1879	
Ruth Moon	June 13, 1817–January 15, 1894	October 9, 1836
Sarah	August 1, 1837–January 27, 1919	
Margaret	April 25, 1839–October 11, 1921	
Henrietta	May 6, 1841–August 20, 1841	
William	February 28, 1843–April 25, 1913	
Vilare	December 8, 1844–July 18, 1918	
Newell	January 12, 1847–February 10, 1941	
David	September 17, 1849–March 31, 1918	
Lydia	November 22, 1852–June 9, 1909	
Algenia	November 21, 1854–August 19, 1929	
Brigham	May 12, 1857–February 12, 1927	
Margaret Moon–NM	January 14, 1820–August 25, 1870	April 27, 1843
Daniel	February 18–August 27, 1844	Joseph Smith
Joseph	January 10, 1847–February 11, 1873	
Lydia	March 28, 1849–May 30, 1894	
James	June 8, 1852–October 5, 1908	
Lovinia	December 27, 1854–October 22, 1938	
Don Carlos	October 31, 1857–June 25, 1940	

Joseph W. Coolidge	May 31, 1814-January 13, 1871	
Elizabeth Buchanan	July 11, 1815-June 23, 1913	December 17, 1834
Henry	October 6, 1835-May 23, 1918	
Moroni	September 7, 1837-September 25, 1838	
John	July 20, 1839-October 20, 1839	
Rebecca	October 20, 1840-November 16, 1870	
Joseph	February 18, 1843-February 29, 1844	
Sarah	January 28, 1845-November 7, 1905	
Timothy	April 29, 1847-June 17, 1894	
William	December 10, 1849-	
George	July 21, 1852-April 22, 1915	August 24, 1854-?
Mary		
Kate	December 15, 1856-October 31, 1857	before June 27, 1844
Mary Ann Buchanan-NM	August 5, 1827-?	Not identified
Howard Egan		
Tamson Parshley	June 15, 1815-March 15, 1878	
Howard	July 27, 1825-March 31, 1905	December 1, 1838
Richard	April 12, 1840-March 17, 1916	
Charles	March 29, 1842-April 20, 1918	
	March 25, 1844-1845	

Horace	August 12, 1847–March 24, 1862	
William	June 13, 1851–April 15, 1929	
Ira	February 5, 1861–December 13, 1933	
Catherine Reese Clawson - W	January 27, 1804–November 7, 1860	1844 divorced 1852
William Felshaw	February 3, 1800–September 24, 1867	
Mary H. Gilbert	June 23, 1808–August 26, 1871	February 1, 1827
Nancy	December 10, 1827–December 10, 1827	
Lemuel	November 14, 1828–November 14, 1828	
Josiah	April 1830–April 1830	
Betsy	July 1, 183–July 1, 1831	
Julia	June 27, 1832–February 27, 1923	
William	July 3, 1834–September 14, 1840	
John	November 23, 1836–March 29, 1920	
Anne	December 28, 1839–January 16, 1848	
Lucy	March 8, 1842–December 24, 1915	
Caroline	May 3, 1845–February 19, 1923	
Hannah	November 2, 1848–May 29, 1872	
Sarah	February 3, 1851–November 18, 1863	
Susannah	February 3, 1851–January 2, 1941	

Charlotte Walters-NM	November 28, 1824-September 12, 1884	July 28, 1843	Not identified
Katherine	January 25, 1845-September 29, 1879		
Mary	March 2, 1848-?		
Eleanor	October 12, 1850-April 9, 1903		
William	March 10, 1853-?		
William D. Huntington	February 28, 1818-March 20, 1881		
Caroline Clark	September 15, 1819-February 28, 1901	September 24, 1839	
Hyrum	January 24, 1847-December 11, 1936		
Lucia	March 27, 1850-September 10, 1938		
John	April 17, 1853-June 4, 1896		
Harriet Clark-NM	August 2, 1825-August 2, 1918	February 5, 1843	Joseph Smith?
Don Carlos	July 20, 1845-?		
Chauncy	June 15, 1847-June 16, 1847		
Julia	December 8, 1848-July 8, 1851		
Harriet	February 20, 1852-January 14, 1922		
Anna	November 25, 1853-?		
George	February 2, 1858-June 15, 1905		
Lottie	February 9, 1870-July 24, 1962		
Orson Hyde	January 8, 1805-November 28, 1878		

Marinda N. Johnson	June 28, 1815–March 24, 1886	September 4, 1834 divorced 1870
Nathan	1835–35	
Laura	May 21, 1837–August 10, 1909	
Emily	December 13, 1839–December 6, 1909	
Orson	November 9, 1843–November 23, 1843	
Frank	January 23, 1846–June 28, 1908	
Alonzo	February 28, 1848–June 14 or 15, 1910	
Delia	December 28, 1849–December 25, 1907	
Heber	November 10, 1852–November 11, 1853	
Mary	July 10, 1854–January 29, 1855	
Zina	April 23, 1858–February 24, 1939	
Martha R. Browett–NM	June 5, 1817–October 30, 1904	February–March 1843 Joseph Smith? divorced 1850
Adella	April 1850–July 1850	
Mary Ann Price–NM	June 5, 1816–June 16, 1900	March 1843 Joseph Smith
Urania	August 15, 1846–August 27, 1846	
Joseph A. Keltling	October 13, 1811–after March 1894	
Elizabeth Ann Martin	April 3, 1818–ca. May 1, 1850	May 5, 1832
Minerva O. Woods–NM	October 18, 1827–July 12, 1896?	before June 27, 1844 Not identified

Heber C. Kimball	June 14, 1801–June 22, 1868	
Vilate Murray	June 1, 1806–October 22, 1867	November 7, 1822
Judith	July 29, 1823–May 20, 1824	
William	April 10, 1826–December 29, 1907	
Helen Mar	August 22, 1828–November 15, 1896	
Roswell	June 10, 1831–June 15, 1831	
Heber	January 1, 1835–February 8, 1885	
David	August 23, 1839–March 28, 1883	
Charles	January 2, 1843–December 2, 1925	
Brigham	January 29, 1845–July 23, 1867	
Solomon	February 2, 1847–February 7, 1920	
Murray	January 20, 1850–June 29, 1852	
Sarah Peak Noon–S	May 3, 1811–December 3, 1873	early 1842
Adelmon	October/November 1842–April 1843	Joseph Smith
Henry	ca. 1844–before 1868	
Sarah	July 1, 1845–December 1, 1860	
Vinson Knight	March 14, 1804–July 31, 1842	
Martha McBride	March 17, 1805–November 20, 1901	July 6, 1826
Almira	June 21, 1827–January 23, 1912	
Rizpah	May 13, 1829–March 17, 1895	

Adaline	May 4, 1831–June 10, 1919	
James	September 4, 1833–April 11, 1912	
Nathaniel	October 30, 1836–December 31, 1839	
Martha	February 9, 1839–March 24, 1844	
Rudolphus	September 29, 1841–September 3, 1842	
Philinda C. Eldredge Myrick-W	August 2, 1809–July 24, 1852	before July 31, 1842 Joseph Smith
Isaac Morley	March 11, 1786–June 24, 1865	
Lucy Gunn	January 24, 1786–January 3, 1848	June 20, 1812
Philena	October 2, 1813–March 18, 1894	
Lucy	October 4, 1815–October 19, 1908	
Editha	January 25, 1818–March 30, 1893	
Calista	May 11, 1820–July 14, 1822	
Infant	1821–21	
Cordelia	November 28, 1823–June 10, 1915	
Theresa	July 18, 1826–October 7, 1858	
Isaac	May 2, 1829–May 21, 1908	
Abigail Leonora Snow Leavitt-S	August 23, 1801–February 11, 1872	before September 1843 Not identified
Hannah B. Finch Merriam-W	March 19, 1811–April 16, 1874	January 14, 1844 Not identified
Joseph	July 15, 1845–October 18, 1846	
Simeon	June 12, 1849–March 19, 1853	

Mary	March 26, 1852–January 29, 1918	
Joseph B. Noble	January 14, 1810–August 17, 1900	
Mary A. Beaman	October 19, 1810–February 16, 1851	September 11, 1834
Meriam	November 8, 1835–November 22, 1835	
Joseph	November 1, 1836–March 27, 1844	
Nephi	August 20, 1838–August 31, 1838	
Louisa	September 9, 1839–September 10, 1839	
Edward	February 2, 1841–November 28, 1909	
Mary	April 19, 1843–April 19, 1843	
Hiram	May 6, 1844–November 6, 1846	
Eliza	August 12, 1847–March 1, 1927	
Benjamin	July 31, 1849–January 17, 1921	
Sarah B. Alley-NM	October 17, 1819–December 28, 1846	April 5, 1843
George	February 2, 1844–January 12, 1911	Joseph Smith?
Mary Ann Washburn-NM	November 18, 1828–October 10, 1882	September 8, 1843
Mary	February 25, 1847–December 10, 1855	Joseph Smith?
Tamar	August 28, 1849–September 12, 1849	
Joseph	October 10, 1853–July 11, 1921	
Hyrum	November 14, 1854–June 15, 1855	
Alfred	ca. 1857–57	

John E. Page^b	February 25, 1799–October 14, 1867	
Betsy Thompson	ca. 1810–October 1, 1833	July 1, 1831
Infant	ca. 1832 or 1833–May 1, 1835	
Lorain Stevens	ca. 1804–October 1838	December 26, 1833
John	September 27, 1834–?	
Manasseh	1836–?	
Ephraim	1837–?	
George	1838–?	
Mary Judd	November 26, 1818–March 6, 1907	January 1839
Excenia	1840–?	
Celestia	1843–?	
Orson		1844–?
Celena		1850–?
Mary		
Justin	July 25, 1851–?	
Jerome	March 8, 1861–?	
Nancy Bliss [?]	?–?	before June 27, 1844 Not identified

^bPage's first three wives were all monogamous marriages.

Parley P. Pratt	April 12, 1807-May 13, 1857	
Thankful Halsey	March 18, 1797-March 25, 1837	September 9, 1827
Parley	March 25, 1837-August 26, 1897	May 9, 1837
Mary Ann Frost Stearns-W	January 14, 1808-August 24, 1891	divorced spring 1853
Nathan	August 31, 1838-December 21, 1843	
Olivia	June 1, 1841-June 12, 1906	
Susan	April 5, 1843-December 28, 1844	
Moroni	December 7, 1844-April 18, 1913	
Elizabeth Brotherton-NM	March 27, 1816-May 9, 1897	July 24, 1843
Abish	1851-66	Hyrum Smith
Willard Richards	June 24, 1804-March 11, 1854	
Jennetta Richards	August 21, 1817-July 9, 1845	September 24, 1838
Heber	July 17, 1839-December 28, 1839	
Heber	October 11, 1840-May 12, 1919	
Rhoda	September 15, 1843-May 3, 1882	
Sarah Longstroth-NM	February 19, 1826-January 26, 1858	January 18, 1843
Willard	January 25, 1847-May 30, 1942	Joseph Smith
Joseph	October 4, 1848-October 30, 1914	
Sarah	August 25, 1850-March 22, 1915	

Pauline	May 11, 1853–September 21, 1947	January 18, 1843	Joseph Smith
Nanny Longstroth–NM	April 15, 1828–January 7, 1911		
Alice	March 24, 1849–June 17, 1940		
Mary	November 18, 1850–July 20, 1915		
Stephen	July 29, 1853–July 3, 1922		
Susannah Lee Liprot–S	May 19, 1808–December 27, 1872	June 12, 1843	Joseph Smith
Hyrum Smith ^c	February 9, 1800–June 27, 1844		
Jerusha Barden	February 15, 1805–October 14, 1837	November 2, 1826	
Lovina	September 16, 1827–October 8, 1876		
Mary	June 27, 1829–May 29, 1832		
John	September 22, 1832–November 6, 1911		
Hyrum	April 27, 1834–September 21, 1841		
Jerusha	January 13, 1836–June 27, 1912		
Sarah	October 2, 1837–November 6, 1876		
Mary Fielding	July 21, 1801–September 21, 1852	December 24, 1837	
Joseph	November 13, 1838–November 19, 1918		
Martha	May 14, 1841–October 19, 1923		
Mercy R. Fielding Thompson–W	June 15, 1807–September 15, 1893	August 11, 1843	Joseph Smith
Catherine Phillips–NM	August 1, 1819–September 26, 1905	August 1843	Joseph Smith

^cSmith's first two marriages were monogamous.

John Smith	July 16, 1781-May 23, 1854		
Clarissa Lyman	June 27, 1790-February 14, 1854	September 11, 1815	
Daughter	May 9, 1816-May 9, 1816		
George	June 26, 1817-September 1, 1875		
Caroline	June 6, 1820-January 8, 1895		
John	November 17, 1823-February 27, 1893		
Mary Aikens Smith-W	August 13, 1797-April 27, 1877	August 13, 1843	Joseph Smith?
Julia Ellis Hills Johnson-S	September 26, 1783-May 30, 1853	ca. 1843-44	Joseph Smith
Joseph Smith Jr.	December 23, 1805-June 27, 1844		
Emma Hale	July 10, 1804-April 30, 1879	January 18, 1827	
Alvin	June 15, 1828-June 15, 1828		
Thaddeus	April 30, 1831-April 30, 1831		
Louisa	April 30, 1831-April 30, 1831		
Joseph III	November 6, 1832-December 10, 1914		
Frederick	June 20, 1836-April 13, 1862		
Alexander	June 2, 1838-August 12, 1909		
Don Carlos	June 13, 1840-September 15, 1841		
Son	February 6, 1842-February 6, 1842		
David	November 17, 1844-August 29, 1904		
Louisa Beaman-NM	February 7, 1815-May 15, 1850	April 5, 1841	Joseph B. Noble

Zina D. Huntington Jacobs-M	January 31, 1821-August 27, 1901	October 27, 1841	Dimick Huntington
Presendia L. Huntington Buell-M	September 7, 1810-February 1, 1892	December 11, 1841	Dimick Huntington
Lucinda Pendleton Morgan Harris-M	September 27, 1801-after 1860	1841-42	Not identified
Agnes M. Coolbrith Smith-W	July 9, 1808-December 26, 1876	January 6, 1842	Brigham Young
Sylvia P. Sessions Lyon-M	July 31, 1818-April 12, 1882	February 8, 1842	Not identified
Mary E. Rollins Lightner-M	April 9, 1818-December 17, 1913	late February 1842	Brigham Young
Patty Bartlett Sessions-M	February 4, 1795-December 14, 1892	March 9, 1842	Willard Richards
Martinda N. Johnson Hyde-M	June 28, 1815-March 24, 1886	April 1842	Not identified
Elizabeth Davis Goldsmith	March 11, 1791-December 18, 1876	May 1843	Not identified
Brackenbury Durrfee-M		before June 1842	Not identified
Sarah Kingsley Howe Cleveland-M	October 20, 1788-April 21, 1856	before June 29, 1842	Not identified
Eliza R. Snow-NM	January 21, 1804-December 5, 1887	June 29, 1842	Brigham Young
Delcena Johnson Sherman-W	November 19, 1806-October 21, 1854	June-July 1842	Not identified
Sarah Ann Whitney-NM	March 22, 1825-September 4, 1873	July 27, 1842	Newel K. Whitney
Martha McBride Knight-W	March 17, 1805-November 20, 1901	August 1842	Heber C. Kimball
Emily D. Partridge-NM	February 28, 1824-December 9, 1899	March 4, 1843	Heber C. Kimball
Eliza M. Partridge-NM	April 20, 1820-March 2, 1886	May 11 or 23, 1843	James Adams
Lucy Walker-NM	April 30, 1826-August 31, 1885	March 8, 1843	Heber C. Kimball
		May 11 or 23, 1843	James Adams
		May 1, 1843	William Clayton

Helen Mar Kimball-NM	August 22, 1828-November 13, 1896	May 1843	Not identified
Flora Ann Woodworth-NM	November 14, 1826-ca. 1851	May-June 1843	Not identified
Phebe Watrous Woodworth-M	October 1, 1805-after 1874	May-June 1843	Not identified
Almera W. Johnson-NM	October 12, 1812-March 4, 1896	May-June 1843	Hyrum Smith
Maria Lawrence-NM	December 18, 1823-1847	May-June 1843	Not identified
Sarah Lawrence-NM	May 13, 1826-November 28, 1872	May-June 1843	Not identified
Elvira A. Cowles Holmes-M	November 23, 1813-March 10, 1871	June 1, 1843	Heber C. Kimball
Rhoda Richards-NM	August 8, 1784-January 17, 1879	June 12, 1843	Willard Richards
Desdemona W. Fullmer-NM	October 6, 1809-February 9, 1886	before July 1843	Brigham Young
Hannah S. Ells-NM	1813-45	before July 1843	Not identified
Olive G. Frost-NM	July 24, 1816-October 6, 1845	ca. July 1843	Hyrum Smith?
Mary Ann Frost Sterns Pratt-M	January 14, 1808-August 24, 1891	ca. July 1843	Hyrum Smith?
Melissa Lott-NM	January 9, 1824-July 13, 1898	September 20, 1843	Hyrum Smith
Fanny Young Carr Murray-W	November 8, 1787-June 11, 1859	November 2, 1843	Brigham Young
Ruth Vose Sayers-M	February 26, 1808-August 18, 1884	by February 1844	Hyrum Smith
Nancy M. Winchester-NM	August 10, 1828-March 17, 1876	by 1844	Not identified
Sarah Scott Mulholland-W	October 25, 1816-December 25, 1878	by 1844	Not identified
Mary Houston-NM	September 11, 1818-December 24, 1896	by 1844	Not identified
William Smith	March 13, 1811-November 13, 1894		
Caroline A. Grant	January 22, 1814-May 22, 1845	February 14, 1833	

Mary Jane	January 1835-?		
Caroline	August 1836-?		
Mary Ann Covington Sheffield-S	May 31, 1815-October 5, 1908	April-May 1844?	Brigham Young
Mary Jones (?) -NM	?-?	April-May 1844?	Brigham Young
Erastus Snow	November 9, 1818-May 27, 1888		
Artimesia Beaman	March 3, 1819-December 21, 1882	December 13, 1838	
Sarah	January 21, 1841-April 11, 1928		
James	April 28, 1842-February 25, 1850		
Charles	March 15, 1844-September 7, 1847		
Mahonri	January 4, 1847-January 28, 1918		
Artimesia	February 8, 1849-April 21, 1925		
Erastus	May 10, 1853-September 20, 1900		
Franklin	September 21, 1854-April 22, 1942		
Mary	July 29, 1856-July 29, 1856		
Moroni	May 13, 1858-January 18, 1935		
Orson	March 28, 1860-February 11, 1929		
George	October 31, 1863-December 15, 1939		
Minerva White-NM	March 22, 1822-April 1, 1896	March 1844	Hyrum Smith
Nephi	June 15, 1845-June 16, 1845		
Mary	October 1, 1846-August 1, 1847		

Erastus Willard	January 27, 1849–March 20, 1888	
Susan Hyrum	November 16, 1853–September 2, 1936	
Levi	July 9, 1856–January 23, 1917	
Louisa Adlen	January 23, 1859–March 15, 1860	
	March 10, 1861–February 26, 1933	
	July 6, 1863–August 10, 1864	
	May 26, 1866–July 8, 1867	
John Taylor		
Leonora Cannon	November 1, 1808–July 25, 1887	January 28, 1833
George	October 5, 1796–December 9, 1868	
Mary	January 31, 1834–December 15, 1914	
Joseph	January 23, 1836–December 9, 1890	
Leonora	June 8, 1838–January 31, 1908	
Elizabeth Kaighan–NM	June 1, 1842–September 10, 1843	
Josephine	September 11, 1811–August 31, 1895	December 12, 1843
Thomas	March 15, 1846–July 5, 1921	
Arthur	November 7, 1849–December 11, 1915	
Jane Ballantyne–NM	October 9, 1853–after 1930	
Richard	April 11, 1813–December 26, 1900	
Anna	February 4, 1848–March 17, 1905	February 25, 1844
	October 21, 1849–November 9, 1890	
		Hyrum Smith?
		Hyrum Smith?

David	August 8, 1853–September 6, 1881	
Theodore Turley	April 10, 1801–August 12, 1871	
Frances A. Kimberly	June 22, 1800–August 30, 1847	November 26, 1821
Theodore	September 2, 1822–November 26, 1822	
Frances	January 1, 1825–November 1, 1846	
Mary Ann	July 13, 1827–December 24, 1904	
Priscilla	June 1, 1829–September 21, 1904	
Frederick	May 23, 1832–February 24, 1875	
Obia	July 5–July 29, 1834	
Sarah	September 24, 1835–March 24, 1914	
Isaac	November 22, 1837–December 3, 1908	
Charlotte	April 15, 1840–November 1, 1899	
Jonathan	September 13, 1842–May 12, 1846	
Eliza Clift–NM	July 2, 1813–?	March 6, 1844
Mary Clift–NM	June 16, 1815–March 30, 1850	March–April 1844
Jason	October 20, 1842–October 26, 1843	
Ephraim	February 11, 1845–July 6, 1845	
Sarah Clift–NM	May 3, 1817–May 4, 1847	April 26, 1844
Lyman Wight	May 9, 1796–March 21, 1858	
Harriet Benton	March 19, 1801–February 26, 1889	January 5, 1823
		Not identified
		Not identified
		Not identified

Orange	November 29, 1823-June 20, 1907	
Anna	September 30, 1825-September 24, 1906	
Rosina	November 16, 1825-March 26, 1850	
Lyman	December 27, 1833-September 8, 1895	
Levi	March 1, 1836-May 18, 1918	
Loami	November 2, 1838-February 5, 1887	
Jane M. Ballantyne-NM	March 1819-August 31, 1884	by June 27, 1844
Amos	early 1845-?	Not identified
Carmalony	August 3, 1852-July 26, 1912	
Sonomony	August 3, 1852-?	
John	August 8, 1856-May 14, 1921	
Mary Hawley-NM	September 1, 1823-late 1851/early 1852	by June 27, 1844
Menamento	June 18, 1848-?	Not identified
Romanan	January 13, 1851-August 3, 1852	
Mary Ann Hobart-NM	October 16, 1828-February 17, 1897	by June 27, 1844
Rollonda	early 1850s-?	Not identified
Infant	?-?	
Carrima	March 8, 1853-?	
Edwin D. Woolley	June 28, 1807-October 14, 1881	
Mary Wickersham	November 4, 1808-March 29, 1859	March 24, 1831

John	December 30, 1831–December 13, 1928	
Franklin	June 11, 1834–March 21, 1869	
Rachel	August 7, 1836–November 30, 1926	
Samuel	April 2, 1840–January 28, 1908	
Henrietta	January 5, 1843–January 13, 1911	
Edwin	April 20, 1845–July 20, 1920	
Mary	July 5, 1848–February 10, 1938	
Marcellus	August 27, 1854–July 21, 1921	
Louisa C. Gordon Rising-S	February 28, 1820–April 29, 1847	by December 28, 1843 Not identified
Edwin	July 30, 1845–January 12, 1930	
Ellen Wilding-NM	April 8, 1820–October 5, 1913	December 28, 1843 Not identified
Sarah	December 27, 1847–March 28, 1902	
Joseph	April 4, 1850–May 10, 1877	
Hyrum	July 16, 1852–October 27, 1936	
Edwin	November 4, 1854–April 29, 1924	
Mary Ellen	December 1, 1858–January 10, 1908	
Brigham Young ^d	June 1, 1801–August 29, 1877	
Miriam Works	June 6 or 7, 1806–September 8, 1832	October 5 or 8, 1824

^dYoung's first two marriages were monogamous.

Elizabeth	September 26, 1825–February 2, 1903	
Vilate	June 1, 1830–November 18, 1902	
Mary Ann Angell	June 8, 1808–June 27, 1882	February 10, 1834
Joseph	October 14, 1834–August 5, 1875	
Brigham	December 18, 1836–April 11, 1903	
Mary Ann	December 18, 1836–August 1843	
Alice Emma	September 4, 1839–November 2, 1874	
Eunice	August 20, 1842–November 17, 1922	
John	October 1, 1844–February 11, 1924	
Lucy Ann Decker Seeley-S	May 17, 1822–January 24, 1890	June 14, 1842
Brigham	June 19, 1845–June 3, 1928	Joseph Smith
Fanny	January 26, 1849–January 20, 1892	
Ernest	April 30, 1851–October 8, 1879	
Shamira	January 21, 1853–August 24, 1915	
Arta	April 16, 1855–April 7, 1916	
Feramorz	September 16, 1858–September 27, 1881	
Clarissa	July 23, 1860–August 21, 1939	
Augusta Adams Cobb-S	December 7, 1802–February 3, 1886	November 2, 1843
Harriet E. Cook-NM	November 7, 1824–November 5, 1898	November 2, 1843
Oscar	February 10, 1846–August 4, 1910	
Clarissa Decker-NM	July 22, 1828–January 5, 1889	May 8, 1844
Jeanette	October 14, 1849–March 8, 1930	Willard Richards

Nabbie	March 22, 1852–March 15, 1894	
Jedediah	January 21, 1855–January 11, 1856	
Albert	January 4, 1858–December 16, 1864	
Charlotte	March 4, 1861–January 20, 1892	Not identified
Lorenzo Dow Young	October 19, 1807–November 21, 1895	
Persis Goodall	March 15, 1806–September 16, 1894	June 6, 1826
William	February 21, 1827–April 15, 1894	
Joseph	January 12, 1828–June 7, 1873	
Lucy	November 27, 1832–August 27, 1836	
Harriet	July 21, 1834–February 16, 1928	
John	April 30, 1837–September 15, 1931	
Franklin	February 17, 1839–January 22, 1911	
Lorenzo	March 9, 1841–March 28, 1924	
Lucius	July 12, 1843–August 9, 1844	
Lucia	July 12–August 14, 1843	
Brigham	September 1844–September 1844	
Frances	June 27–July 15, 1845	
Harriet P. Wheeler Decker–S	September 7, 1803–December 23, 1871	March 9, 1843
John	September 5, 1844–September 5, 1844	
Lorenzo	September 20, 1847–March 22, 1848	Brigham Young?