

1886 on Trial

**A Response to the Anti-Momon-Fundamentalist
Writings of J. Max Anderson & Brian C. Hales**

By

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Preface

While the Anderson/Hales duo places great emphasis on the lack of evidence that the 1886 meetings happened, fundamentalists counter all of these circumstantial evidences with the comment that there is more evidence available to historically prove the existence of the 8 hour meeting than there is to substantiate Joseph's claim of the first vision. While fundamentalists point out the sterling reputation of Lorin C. Woolley and John Woolley, the Anderson/Hales duo does everything it can to point out possible associations held by the Woolley's with undesirable characters, all the while ignoring the fact that reputable historians have accused Joseph of being a treasure seeker, adulterer, murderer, and of committing a variety of sexual improprieties. The reader should not delude himself/herself into believing that these accusations have not been without substantial historical supports – there is much evidence to substantiate these accusations. That said, even substantiated accusations are not necessarily true. This illustrates only one example of many problems with circumstantial evidences. I have therefore been fairly selective in the circumstantial evidences that I have provided in this study.

While Anderson and Hales have contributed significant and worthwhile historical research into this field of study, the conclusions that they draw are so fundamentally flawed from an academic perspective that it is embarrassing to note that these two authors remain a significant resource for members of the LDS Church who are looking to investigate and/or understand the origins of Mormon fundamentalism. It is a disheartening commentary on the analytic ability of many modern readers to note that many people have read over the Anderson/Hales materials and have not noted that the analysis of these two authors is outrageously flawed. These two authors consistently abuse the rhetorical strategy of couching conclusions founded upon logical fallacies underneath a veritable flood of biased verbal decorations that plague their prose. No serious historian could give significant credence to their conclusions; no logician of integrity could pronounce their conclusions either valid or sound; and no lover of truth could comfortably swallow the trail of faulty reasoning scattered throughout their writings. Nevertheless, as their influence remains, I have taken some opportunity to respond to their more significant criticisms of the evidentiary support surrounding the 1886 revelation. I have only tangentially addressed their doctrinal refutations of fundamentalist claims to priesthood authority.

Although it may be rather nauseating for the reader to read multiple criticisms that are fundamentally flawed in the same fashion, I have continued to include their criticisms and my responses to those criticisms to drive home the point that these critics have little academic credibility; their work is driven by a bias and their conclusions, based on selective factual premises, are not academically trustworthy. That is not to say that I do not have a contrary bias. However, I have made every attempt to temper that bias by keeping to historical methodologies that are universally accepted. This at times has been challenging. When reading the scathing rhetoric of the critics, one is tempted to retaliate in kind. While an attack on scholarship is necessarily ad hominem and while I have admittedly made some effort to expose the critics' blatant lack of objective academic methodology, I have made every attempt to not extend those attacks to the personal motive or integrity of the critics.

As a side note, it is interesting to note that the critics generously cite fundamentalist authors whose scholarship is questionable to many fundamentalists. Thus, the critics quote Rhea Kunz and Lynn Bishop as if these authors reliably represent the authoritative stance of all Mormon fundamentalists. While I have not met either of these authors and have no basis to form an opinion about their personal integrity, I do not find it unreasonable to note that this methodology is objectively unfair to those fundamentalists who do not give credence to works produced by these authors. If many fundamentalists are not comfortable with being bound by what these authors have produced inside their own, personal sphere of study, why should critics of Mormon fundamentalism freely use the work of these authors to attack the much broader sphere of discombobulated Mormon fundamentalism? Though I haven't met them, I'm confident that Rhea Kunz did not presume to authoritatively represent Warren Jeffs' doctrinal understanding of the 1886 events and similarly, Lynn Bishop did not presume to represent Ogden Kraut's historical understanding of the 1886 events. Similarly, the critics occasionally refer to "typical fundamentalist" responses. This seems to suggest that a "typical Mormon fundamentalist" position exists. If fundamentalists unabashedly admit that the phrase "typical Mormon fundamentalist" may well represent the very epitome of an oxymoron, why should fundamentalists, in an academic setting, be presented to uninitiated readers as being somehow uniform in their understandings of the eight-hour meeting. Perhaps it would be fair to approach each "group" in this fashion but it is certainly methodologically unfair to attack all fundamentalists in this fashion.

While I understand that ultimately the veracity of the events

discussed in this study must be proven and obtained by the Spirit, I also believe that it is of great benefit for fundamentalists to know the facts surrounding these events and to know what their critics think about the evidences that have been preserved by various fundamentalist supporters. I also believe that it is of great benefit for non-fundamentalists to have a resource where they can find an objective presentation of the facts.

It is the author's hope that this study will be a useful resource for those readers interested in learning about the events surrounding the 1886 revelation.

CRITICISM AND RESPONSES

The Sunday Meetings

Criticism: Available journals fail to support the idea that a special meeting was held on Sunday, September 26, 1886 to discuss a manifesto or anything similar to it. Samuel Bateman records for that date [cited above]: This entry describes a typical Sunday [that] is very similar to the others reported on in Bateman's journal.

Response: The journal accounts above have highlighted words that strongly suggest that there were two meetings on that Sunday. The first one appears to have been a meeting about business (see below). The second meeting appears to have been a “very good” and “very interesting” sacrament meeting where the manifesto may or may not have been addressed. In Woolley’s 1929 account, he mentions that Bateman awakened him sometime between one and two o’clock so that he could attend a meeting where the manifesto would be discussed. This would be just in time for the 2:30 sacrament meeting.¹ The critics, being quick to conclude that no evidence proves the contrary, certainly assume that the manifesto was not discussed at that sacrament meeting – or after the sacrament meeting. However, these accounts taken as a whole say nothing that necessarily excludes a discussion of the manifesto. Contrarily, George Q. Cannon says “among other things” they discussed Arizona business in the morning; this could have been when the manifesto was presented to President Taylor. Even if the journals specifically stated that there were no other meetings that day, sacrament meetings were extemporaneously conducted and were more flexible in form than sacrament meetings are in the LDS Church today, so extrapolating the supposition that the meeting may have revolved around a proposed manifesto is not historically infeasible.

The Sacrament Meeting:

According to the records reviewed, neither the father John Woolley nor his son Lorin Woolley were present at this meeting.

John W. Woolley was a member of the Davis Stake high council and traditionally attended his ward and stake meetings. (Stake minutes show that he attended a high council trial on the evening of Saturday, September 25.) His son Lorin Woolley was married, and in

¹ As a side note, Woolley would not have had access in 1929 to the journal recording this 2:30 sacrament time.

1886 he lived at his own home in Centerville with his wife, Sarah Ann, and two small children. Ward records show that he typically attended his meetings and took an active part. There are no ward records extant for the latter half of 1886, but we may safely assume that John and Lorin Woolley were engaged elsewhere since they were not listed as being present at the sacrament meeting held by President Taylor's party on Sunday afternoon, September 26, 1886.

Response:

George Q. Cannon records John Woolley, *Jr.* as present; the Nuttall's account only mention John Woolley – no mention of Jr. or Sr. The critic has inserted “Jr.” into his version of the accounts because it serves his purposes to argue that John Woolley was not there. It is true that Lorin Woolley is not mentioned in any of the journals. The three accounts from that day list persons present in a different fashion. It is both historically arguable to say that these accounts *do concur* with each other and that they *do not concur* with each other – it depends on how you read the data.

The Confiscation of Private Property:

The political milieu represented in this statement is not authentic, as a study of contemporary records evidences. None of the legislation enacted against plural marriage *stipulated the confiscation of individual members' private property*. The legislation was aimed instead of destroying the Church as a political and economic power through the disfranchisement of its members. It prohibited the Church from owning more than \$50,000 worth of property in excess of that used directly and exclusively for devotional purposes. In fact, the virtual reverse of Lorin Woolley's claim was the case. In anticipation of passage of the Edmunds-Tucker Act, legislation *being considered by Congress in 1886*, the Church in a move of administrative strategy, placed its property in the hands of private members to hold in trust, thus attempting to circumvent the confiscation of its own real and personal property. An economic history of the Church explains: In anticipation of the passage of the Edmunds-Tucker Act, therefore, President Taylor and other general church authorities secretly decided to place church properties in the hands of individuals and local congregations and thus help, Taylor said, "to protect us in our personal and proprietary rights so far as our legal status will entitle us to protection." Thus, he concluded, "any plans instituted against us," would be "against the people in their individual capacity . . . and in direct interference with their proprietary rights which this nation and all

other civilized nations professed always to respect.”

...

Thus, with the transferral of Church property by trust assignment to private individuals to secure it against confiscation, it is fallacious to suggest that leading brethren in the Church were petitioning President Taylor to do something to protect their private property from confiscation.

Response:

Here, Anderson has done some good historical research that helps us understand the setting that Woolley and others describe in the accounts above. However, it does not dismiss the claims as Anderson supposes. The government did begin confiscating Church property after the Edmunds-Tucker Act was passed; in fact, the government confiscated Temple Square and made the Church “rent” the temple from the government. Further, the government continued to issue threats to continue. Although some church property was in the name of individuals and other corporations, it is inaccurate and patently fallacious to state that *all* Church property was disposed of as described above by the critics. The critics also fail to note that members of united orders at that time held their property under the Church’s various corporate wings. This would have displaced many families and would have been a great cause of concern for those involved in united orders that may have fallen under foreseeable government attacks.

Indeed, John Taylor would have been very cautious in his issuance of Church properties to other individuals and/or corporations. When Brigham Young died, the ownership of much Church property was held by relatives of Brigham Young who thereafter felt that they had a personal claim to the property as heirs of Brigham Young. This resulted in a large, messy lawsuit that created much confusion and heartache for John Taylor at that time. Further, the same problem was coming around in 1890 as any person who has bothered to study the 1890 Manifesto is well aware. If John Taylor had definitively taken care of all of these property issues, Wilford Woodruff would not have defended his issuance of the 1890 Manifesto based upon the government’s threats to take possession of the temple and other Church properties.

Criticisms on the Letters:

[Lorin C. Woolley] contends that (1) the Saints were *more concerned with their property than with obeying the Lord* and (2) the Saints *wanted John Taylor to single-handedly "do something" about the*

problem as if the Lord played no part in it. These notions really do not represent the feelings of the Latter-day Saints in the 1880s. It is true that some letters may have been sent by Church members explaining their concerns about governmental action, but such letters should not imply even a small minority of Latter-day Saints were ready to cast aside the Lord's instruction in the interest of "property." It is also *inaccurate to believe that the Saints were demanding* a manifesto, even an uninspired one.

Response:

First of all, the position that these “notions really do not represent the feelings of the Latter-day Saints in the 1880’s” is too broad. As noted above, Wilford Woodruff himself was concerned enough about the potential confiscation of Church property that he issued the 1890 Manifesto. This concern began in the 1880s. As to the remainder of the criticism, the accounts above, written by John Taylor and George Q. Cannon amply demonstrate that there was at least a minority of saints who wanted to do away with plural marriage. Further, Joseph F. Smith stated at the dedication of the Salt Lake City temple that plural marriage was abandoned “because the saints rejected it.”² Given the criticism aimed at these members, it is not unfounded to believe that some of these members were concerned about their property – Wilford Woodruff was worried about this in 1890.

The Demands:

The allegation that "the contents of that document, and the requests and demands constantly coming in from other sources, were the subjects under almost constant consideration" is open to question. There is not a single mention of this subject in the journals or correspondence of those said to have been involved. President Taylor's daily journal makes no mention of such agitation. President Cannon's journal is devoid of any mention of the alleged demands. President Taylor's correspondence file for 1886 does not yield any such mention. The Journal History of the Church is likewise lacking in such a sentiment. Surely, if such a subject were "under almost constant consideration," it *would have been* mentioned somewhere in the voluminous records of the time.

Response:

Even though this is addressed briefly above and even though this is

² John Mills Whitaker Journal, April 1893, W.H. Smar Diary, 1901-02 book, p. 94; 28 July 1901.

another attempt to prove a contrary due to lack of evidence, this assertion is worth addressing because it affirmatively exposes the fact that the critics have utterly failed to study this period of time very thoroughly. This issue (if not a specific document) had been placed before President Taylor and his councilors many times. As recorded above, John Taylor, in 1884,³ specifically noted that persons, both within and without the Church, had been asking him to do something to give up plural marriage. Anyone who has bothered to read volumes 25 and 26 of the Journal of Discourses knows that this issue was constantly in front of the brethren and that they were constantly addressing the issue in front of the saints.

The Committee:

Here Woolley suggests that George Q. Cannon, "on his own initiative selected a committee" to devise a plan to appease the gentiles. Lorin implies that Cannon was willing to use his own wisdom and that of a hand-picked committee *to direct God's Church*. Woolley also *intimates that Cannon had little confidence* in President John Taylor's ability to deal with the challenges they faced. This proposed behavior seems inconsistent with a righteous leader like George Q. Cannon. He was an apostle who testified on one occasion: "I know that God lives. I know that Jesus lives; for I have seen Him."

Response:

First, fundamentalists like to point out that this latter statement of George Q. Cannon could be referring to the events surrounding September 27, 1886. It appears that neither critics nor fundamentalists have done any historical research to verify this assertion. The critics' position that Lorin C. Woolley is "intimating that Cannon had little confidence in President John Taylor's ability to deal with the challenges they faced" manifests a significant deficit in a historical understanding of the 1890 Manifesto. They would do well to read Quinn's works on the same (not to mention B. Carmon Hardy and other historians who have done significant research on the political pressures behind the 1890 Manifesto). The fundamentalist perspective here is that Cannon, being the diligent councilor that he was, took it upon himself to see what he could do to appease the government with respect to plural marriage. The fundamentalist position is that Cannon's efforts were

³ Granted, this is two years previous to the date in question but it goes to the point of this issue being under *constant* consideration – if constant refers to the more reasonable contextual interpretation of regular consideration rather than 24/7 consideration.

political in their nature (to be “used in Congress”) and in no way betrayed a lack of confidence in John Taylor. That Cannon presented his collaborative efforts to John Taylor in the afternoon meeting to obtain the word of the Lord on the issue demonstrates that he respected John Taylor as his priesthood leader.

The Leaf in Review Account #1:

Comparing Leaf in Review, p. 183-84 with the 1929 Musser version of Woolley’s account, the critics state:

The Allred version does not agree with the 1929 Musser version on several important points. Musser lists by name those who were purportedly at the meeting, and it does not include the names of "two other apostles." The claim that the manifesto allegedly presented to President Taylor was "very similar" and "in similar form" to the Woodruff Manifesto of four years later is dubious. The Woodruff Manifesto is a rebuttal to the Utah Commission report of 1890: it denies the charges contained in that report. It mentions the Endowment House being taken down because of these charges. It refers to antipolygamy laws that had been passed and pronounced constitutional since 1886. It denies that polygamy was either being taught or contracted, and so on. None of these statements and claims would have been either true or pertinent in 1886.

Response:

The critics here assume that Allred is alleging that the two manifestos were “very similar” in detail, rather than in content. From a fundamentalist perspective, these documents were very similar – even given the critics’ distinctions – because they both sought to pacify the government, to abolish the Church’s involvement with plural marriage, and were both written/presented by someone to the prophet for consideration.⁴ “Similar in form” could be treated in an analogous fashion. Even if this perspective were not accurate, this critique is not treated in the fashion that a trained historian would treat it – the reader must remember that Allred admitted that he “obtained the information as above given from two eye and ear witnesses of the event.” One cannot fairly assume that Allred therefore accurately portrayed all of the details. There is no statement by Allred alleging that the two eye and

⁴ The critics allege that Wilford Woodruff wrote the 1890 Manifesto as President Woodruff claimed. However, these critics are irresponsibly ignoring much historical evidence to the contrary. Even if this were not a fact, from the fundamentalist perspective, it is entirely reasonable to attribute this belief to Allred who was writing this account.

ear witnesses approved of all of the details in any form.

The Leaf in Review Account #2:

Musser lists George Q. Cannon, Hyrum B. Clawson, Franklin S. Richards, John T. Caine, and James Jack as members of the committee "to get up a statement or manifesto," whereas Allred claims that the purported document was "prepared by some of the most bitter opponents of this doctrine, members and nonmembers of the Church, with slight assistance from two of the faithful brethren." It would seem that Allred got this manifesto mixed up with the Woodruff Manifesto of 1890 and used that fundamentalist argument here by mistake. There is no mention of such a manifesto in any of the journals of those supposedly involved, nor is the alleged manifesto filed in the Church Archives. Surely such an important document as this one, a document that supposedly elicited a revelation, would have been preserved in President John Taylor's or President George Q. Cannon's document files.

Response:

Again, the critics illogically assume that since a manifesto was not mentioned in the journals they have read, this must prove that no manifesto existed. We do have John W. Taylor's testimony on more than one occasion instructing us that the 1886 revelation was received in connection with John Taylor's question as to whether or not plural marriage could be "suspended." Although this is circumstantial evidence to the question at hand, it does suggest that there was some impetus that moved President Taylor to request this revelation from the Lord. The fundamentalist claim that it was a document in addition to an oral request is not an unreasonable claim based upon the evidence available.

The critics' allegation that "[s]urely such an important document ... would have been preserved in President John Taylor's or President George Q. Cannon's document files" reflects a gross overconfidence in the record keeping practices of the LDS Church. Given the LDS Church's history of suppressing and hiding documents that deal with this time period, the critics' assertion that these documents would have been preserved in any document files (and, by implication, the critics suggest that these would be readily available) is weak at best. There are a few journal accounts missing from this period (see The 1886 Revelation section below); the 1886 revelation, donated to the Church in 1933 was not accessible to any historians until approximately 1974 when Reed Durham admitted that the revelation

existed; and the existence of the revelation itself was denied by the Church officially in 1933 (which statement was not retracted until 1974). Given these facts, why should anyone assume that a manifesto proving the motivation and question behind a revelation would be readily produced by the LDS Church? That said, it is reasonably possible that Byron Harvey Allred confused the two manifestos. However, even if this is the case, the critics are committing a gross historical and logical error by imputing Byron Harvey Allred's factual error to Lorin C. Woolley's credibility.

The Three-Day Trip:

According to the 1929 Musser account, Lorin Woolley "had just got back from a three days' trip" on September 26, 1886, whereas Allred reports it as being either a one or two-day junket. The Musser version does not state what the nature of this trip was, but Allred reported that its purpose was "to convey and guard Apostle Brigham Young [Jr.] to a place of concealment in the mountain valleys north and east of Salt Lake." A recent pseudohistorical work on the life of John Taylor confirms this, claiming that deputies had surrounded the house of Brigham Young, Jr. . . . Lorin's job was to get Young Briggie out of the house, past the deputies, and on the underground rail way to a safe retreat in the canyons. . . . Three days later he returned home, mission accomplished.⁵

Brigham Young, Jr.'s daily journal does not report him being in Salt Lake City at this time, but rather shows that he was traveling in Arizona and New Mexico. Relevant journal entries are as follows:

Taylor [Arizona], Friday Sept. 24th 1886. Have not been well for several days. Diarrhea and pain through my hips.

Taylor [Arizona], Saturday Sept. 25th 1886. Remained quiet. Received a letter from A. S. McDonald directed to Sunset P.M., redirected to Taylor. How did he know?

Taylor [Arizona], Sept. 26, 1886. Still keep quiet. Many enemies among our people who would delight to give me

Taylor [Arizona], Monday, Sept. 27th 1886. In company with Bishop Hunt, Bros. Freeman Minirly and Smith Rogers journeyed up beyond Ellsworth's place three miles. 25 miles from Snowflake. Camped. Weather pleasant, grass good. Brother [indecipherable] called. I requested him to furnish a driver and team to take me to Ramah. Start next Monday, which he agreed to.

The distance from Salt Lake City to Taylor, Arizona, and back

⁵ Samuel W. Taylor, *The Kingdom or Nothing*, 365.

would have been far too great to travel on horseback in three days, even if Brigham Young, Jr., had returned with Lorin Woolley, which his journal does not report to be the case. This aspect of the Woolley story thus has no basis in fact.

Response:

Perhaps Byron Harvey Allred made a mistake on this point of fact. However, *Allred's* account does not specifically state that Woolley brought Brigham Young, Jr. back to Salt Lake. It is *Taylor's* account (which was probably based, in part, upon Allred's account) that states that the mission was accomplished within the three days. Rather than look to Taylor's sources and critique *Taylor's* conclusions, the critic attacks the combined story – which cannot be accurate – and then imputes the error onto *Lorin C. Woolley* himself. This methodological error is high in rhetorical value but fails to have any significant historical basis to attack Woolley's story. It is possible that Woolley was sent to help the young apostle but was not able to accomplish this task given the apostle's health. Lastly, this particular factual discrepancy is of little significance – these accounts are recounting events that happened nearly thirty years previously; certainly therefore, one may expect that little details will be inaccurate.

Arriving in the Late Afternoon:

The 1925 Allred account reports Lorin Woolley returning from his trip "in the late afternoon of September 26," and going to bed "in the early evening, that he might be prepared for his watch as guard of President Taylor at midnight." The 1929 Musser account has Lorin Woolley back from his trip, asleep, wakened "between one and two o'clock p.m.," and attending a meeting where the purported manifesto was discussed before he took his position on the evening watch to guard President Taylor. It would seem that the meeting of Sunday, September 26, where an alleged manifesto was discussed, is a late addition to the story; hence the discrepancies between the two accounts.

Response:

An unbiased historian could also conclude that Allred's account is in error because he was writing an unverified hearsay account. His account was neither substantiated nor endorsed by Woolley so his account has no historical credibility beyond the recounting of events that are corroborated elsewhere. The critic's conclusion is simply based upon a pattern of poor reasoning founded upon a presentation of biased facts. Most fundamentalists would have no trouble admitting that

Allred likely made an error on this detail. However, this does not impeach Lorin C. Woolley's account, which should be the focus of any objective critic's attention.

Hyrum B. Clawson's Visit:

Bishop Hyrum B. Clawson was visiting President Taylor on this particular weekend, but not for the reason alleged in the Lorin Woolley story. Bishop Clawson was managing the Beck, Bullion, and Champion Mine in Eureka: it seems that with his absence in Arizona during the summer, the mineworkers had not been paid for some time, and they demanded their back wages before continuing work. With the aid of attorneys from Provo, the men had attached liens against the mine.

In view of the situation, Bishop Clawson made a partial payment of wages with available funds to those who agreed to withdraw their liens in return for a promise of the remainder. This proved unsatisfactory to some, who formed a grievance committee. With their lawyers, the dissatisfied mineworkers went to Salt Lake City and presented their full demands to James Jack, financial clerk of the Church. In order to satisfy the demands Jack was obliged to mortgage some Church securities and to take some other measures to raise money quickly.

On September 27, 1886, Jack wrote a letter to President Taylor explaining what he had done, since he had not had time to consult with the First Presidency in the matter. In his letter he stated: "Brother Clawson will no doubt explain the situation to you fully." In this letter he also included the legal agreement he had entered into with the Beck Mine on behalf of President Taylor.

Bishop Clawson apparently had returned to Salt Lake City and communicated his visit with President Taylor to James Jack before the letter was sent, and the following postscript was added: "Since the foregoing I have seen Brother Clawson, and he informs me that you approved of my action."

The next day James Jack received the following confirmation of his action from President Taylor:

Your letter of the 27th explaining the course which you deemed proper to make in furnishing the amount necessary to make up the deficiency in the workmen's wages of the B. B. & C. M Co.'s property, is quite satisfactory. We are glad that you obtained such good security for the amount.

Thus, Bishop Clawson had been requested "to come out on important business that required immediate attention" concerning the Beck Mine, not as part of a committee to induce President Taylor to

relinquish plural marriage in the Church.

In President Cannon's journal he indicates that he, Bishop Clawson, and President Taylor discussed "the political condition of affairs of our people in Arizona." This reinforces the fact that Bishop Clawson had been in Arizona during the summer and was, therefore, not meeting with President Cannon's purported committee, as reviewed earlier.

...

[Clawson] kept no journal that is extant, but during this period he wrote several letters from Arizona to James Jack, the financial clerk of the Church, which are on file in the Church Historical Department. He, therefore, could not have been meeting with President Cannon's alleged committee during the summer of 1886.

Response:

First, the Woolley account does not say that Clawson came for the express purpose of delivering the manifesto – it merely claims that he was part of the committee that wrote the manifesto and that he met with President Taylor regarding the manifesto. Even if other accounts alleged that Clawson came for the express purpose of delivering the manifesto, it is reasonable to infer that Bishop Clawson could have arrived to discuss the business affairs in Arizona *and* to present the manifesto or that he arrived to discuss business in Arizona and subsequently ended up discussing his involvement with the manifesto as well. Besides, given the journals, it appears likely that there were two meetings on this day and that Clawson's business was taken care of in the forenoon. The manifesto would have been discussed in the other meeting.

Clawson presided at the meeting so he must have been in Utah during some of the month of September and would have had some time to meet with others regarding this manifesto – even if that period of time were very brief. The 1929 account merely states that they met “from time to time.” Anyone who has ever been a part of a committee knows that 100% attendance is rare so why should we assume that Woolley –or anyone else – presumed that all members of the committee must have been present at the majority of these meetings; obviously, given the political background of the time, this expectation is more than unreasonable.

Franklin S. Richards #1:

Franklin S. Richards, another of the alleged participants in the special

meeting, was purportedly taken back to Salt Lake City that evening with Bishop Clawson. That he did not attend the above-noted meeting is indicated by the fact that he was not mentioned in any of the three journals cited above [Lack of evidence does not prove the contrary ...].

This is corroborated on the basis that, as the attorney for the Church, he was busy in Salt Lake City defending convicted polygamists in court, and generally communicated his activities to President Taylor by mail.

Thus, of the purported committee consisting of George Q. Cannon, John T. Caine, James Jack, Hyrum B. Clawson, and Franklin S. Richards, only President Cannon and Bishop Clawson were at the John Woolley home at the time specified. Why weren't Caine and Jack there as part of the alleged committee?

Both were in Salt Lake City on that date, so certainly distance was not a problem. Caine was mentioned in the 1912 version as being present, but was omitted from the 1929 account. If they were the "others," why not mention them by name? After all, they had *supposedly worked all summer to write* the manifesto that was to be presented at the meeting. Why not have the entire committee there for reinforcement? If they were not the "others" referred to, who would Lorin Woolley claim the "others" were, and why not mention them by name?

It is apparent that the committee allegedly formed to draft the "Cannon Manifesto" was in fact nonexistent, and the meeting Woolley claims was held to review the alleged documents is likewise without foundation in light of contemporary records.

Response:

The critic's conclusion here is a classic case of nonsequitur diarrhea. Although the questions here are historically reasonable to ask, the conclusion does not follow from the premises he presents in the form of rhetorical questions. That aside, why would the entire committee be needed when President Cannon was more than able to push his weight around by this time (some of the apostles felt that he was more qualified to become the next President in lieu of Wilford Woodruff)? Additionally, why does Cannon need reinforcement from the others when he asks President Taylor to obtain the word of the Lord on the matter anyway? All of the convincing in the world would not affect the answer that John Taylor would obtain when he received the word of the Lord on the matter. Lastly, where does the critic come to the conclusion that the committee had been *drafting* the document over the entire summer? One person could have drafted the document after having

received suggestions from the other committee members. The document could have then been presented to John Taylor. The critics should note that it only takes one meeting of a group of people to establish a committee. As the critics are so keen on “proving” something did not happen because of a lack of evidence, one may wonder if this committee must have met at least one time as a whole because the critics have not produced any evidence that they did not meet at least once.

Franklin S. Richards #2:

Franklin S. Richards was the legal counsel for the Church during this stormy period of Church history. He was laboring "incessantly" in the courts to defend the Saints in connection with unlawful cohabitation cases: polygamists were being arraigned almost daily during the summer of 1886. An examination of his correspondence with the First Presidency indicates his arduous labors and strong convictions. It is unlikely in view of his labors and his stated convictions that he would try to influence President Taylor to concede plural marriage. Neither does his correspondence contain any material that would suggest his involvement with a committee like the one alleged by Woolley.

Response:

John Taylor had strong convictions as well and yet John W. Taylor says that he approached the Lord to see if plural marriage could be “suspended” (not “conceded” or abolished). George Q. Cannon was also stalwart. This is irrelevant to a historian who has studied the political activities of the Church leaders during this period of time. The critics’ use of the word “influence” is nothing more than a perpetual misunderstanding of fundamentalist claims. If any of the faithful committee members were trying to influence John Taylor, that influence would have been to obtain the word of the Lord on the matter. Allred’s account states that Cannon “importuned President Taylor to obtain the will of the Lord on the matter.” The 1929 account merely states that he “suggested that President Taylor take the matter up with the Lord.”

John T. Caine

John T. Caine was Utah's delegate to Congress in the 1880s. He was in Washington, D. C., during June, July, and August of 1886, so he could not have been meeting with the alleged committee. Congress adjourned on August 5, 1886; Caine arrived in Salt Lake City on August 29, and he reported his arrival to President Taylor in a letter dated September 1, 1886. He also sent a letter to President Taylor dated September 18

asking for a personal interview, but it was actually President Cannon who met with him. A letter from John Taylor to James Jack dated September 20, 1886, reveals an interview between James Jack, George Q. Cannon, and Caine: "Will you please arrange for Hon. J. T. Caine and yourself to meet at 9 o'clock tuesday evening *at the place where you and he, on different occasions, have met?*"

Samuel Bateman recorded in his journal the consummation of this meeting: "Bro. G. Q. Cannon went with me. Went to Frank Armstrong's. Met Abram Cannon, James Jack, and John T. Caine." This reference is the only mention of Caine in extant journals prior to September 26.

Response:

John T. Caine "was President of the convention and strongly urged the adoption of the clause in the proposed constitution prohibiting polygamy, believing this to be the true solution of the 'Mormon' problem, and the only course that would satisfy the government and people of the United States."⁶ Again, that he may not have been able to regularly "meet" with other members of the committee is irrelevant. Apparently he was able to meet with George Q. Cannon at least twice and with James Jack a few times.

The critics have leveled a few other minor accusations against the existence of the Sunday meeting and the events surrounding the committee, etc. However, it appears that all of their criticisms revolve around the lack of evidence supporting the claim. As argued above, and as is accepted historical methodology, an absence of fact proves nothing. If the absence of fact was overwhelming, one might be justified in coming to a tentative conclusion. However, the critics' position is anything but tentative as a cursory reading of their materials shows. The author deems further response to their accusations on this issue valueless.

Body Guard

Woolley's claim to have served as a "body guard" of Church leaders who were in hiding during the late 1880s was also included in his "1912 Account." However, the statement is *completely* unsubstantiated. Earlier we reviewed all of the journal excerpts which mentioned Lorin's name *as recorded by a genuine body guard*, Samuel Bateman. Bateman not only recorded Woolley's contributions as a mail carrier, but also specifically named the men who were left on guard duty at night.

⁶ John T. Caine, LDS Biographical Encyclopedia 1:733.

While several different men are mentioned, Lorin Woolley is never listed, not even once. George Q. Cannon's journal for the same period also fails to mention any significant involvement of Lorin Woolley, as a body guard, or anything else. *It appears that Lorin was even privileged to interact with Church leaders on a more personal basis occasionally.* Nonetheless, nothing exists to support Lorin's claims that he served as a body guard or was considered a valiant personal acquaintance of the brethren during those days of the "underground."

Response:

"Completely unsubstantiated" is rather strong language for someone who misses a lot of details. He also fails to mention that there were several body guards guarding several men in hiding; there were dozens of leaders who Lorin C. Woolley could have guarded and the critics have not bothered to read their journals. Further, Lorin Woolley was a logical choice for the first watch of the night – it was his father's home. The fact that a "genuine bodyguard" did not record this fact is rather unimpressive – he states no qualifications as to Samuel Bateman's skills as a thorough record-keeper. The fact that he did not record LCW's duty as a guard in no way substantiates the critic's contention that this could not have been the truth. The critic treats this issue as if it was a great honor to be a guard; LCW treats this as if it was not a big deal.

1885 Visitation

There is a possibility that John Taylor could have received a visitation from Joseph Smith **and** the Savior, *though it appears unlikely.* (Woolley's 1912 account only mentioned Joseph Smith.) Regardless, prophets receive heavenly visitations from time to time and President Taylor was certainly worthy of such. However, there is *nothing to support the claim of a visitation for the night of September 26, 1886.* Research into the period reveals that some Church members were aware of stories that President Taylor had been visited by Joseph Smith while on the "underground" in the *mid 1880s.* However, the visitation(s?) mentioned clearly occurred prior to President Taylor's stay at the Woolley home in the Autumn of 1886. The journal of John Moon Clements records for July 31, 1886:

Went to the High Priests meeting held in the Font house. Philo Dibble spoke of this being the resurrection day. And that Joseph Smith had been to Prest John Taylor and conversed in his body with him about this crusade against us... (Journal of John Moon Clements, CHD)

This visit to President Taylor may have occurred in the home of John Carlisle where he concealed himself several times in 1885 and early

1886. It is believed by many in the Carlisle family that Joseph Smith appeared to John Taylor in the Carlisle Home while Alfred Carlisle, a son of John Carlisle, was standing guard. Alfred Carlisle's niece recorded the story:

One night he [Alfred Carlisle] was asked by President Taylor to stand guard at the upstairs bedroom where he was going to spend the night. He entered the room alone and bolted the door from the inside. It had a heavy bolt lock that was on the door many years later while I lived in the home. During the night it sounded as if two people were talking in the room and when President Taylor came out alone the next morning my uncle told him about hearing voices. He told him he had been conversing with the Prophet Joseph Smith. He also showed my uncle the ugly scar on his body where he was wounded while in Carthage jail with the prophet. My uncle felt these experience were given to him for a purpose so he could testify of what he had seen and heard. It is quite possible that Woolley was just confused in his recollections as he incorporated true elements of a story involving Joseph Smith and John Taylor which he heard in the mid-1880s into his 1920 reminiscences. Also, Charles Birrell lived long enough to hear about Lorin's assertions including those which described his (Charles) own participation. *Birrell denied knowledge* of any such incredible events which, if they had actually occurred as Woolley described them, would be very difficult to forget.

Response:

The critic's contention that "it appears unlikely" that the Savior would have visited John Taylor on this night is odd for a few reasons: first, what was preventing the Lord from visiting his prophet – even if He had visited him the year before? The whole section arguing that the Savior visited John Taylor sometime in the mid-1880s in no way excludes the possibility that the Savior visited John Taylor on that night. Collier's research here actually shows more accurately that this other visitation was in 1885. Collier agrees that Musser's compilation of these events was a little jumbled and that there were incorrect details given of these meetings. Second, Joseph Smith's accounts of the first vision differ in several details so why is it so significant that Lorin Woolley's 1912 account does not mention the detail about John Taylor's conversation with the Lord? Even if the critics finds it odd that the later account mentions the Savior but the earlier account does not, why would they favor the absence of the Savior appearing to John Taylor? The revelation, that we know exists, gives us legitimate proof that it is not unlikely that the Savior appeared to John Taylor on that same night

– especially given the fact that John W. Taylor testified that John Taylor received the revelation from the Lord.

Authenticity:

The authenticity of this alleged revelation is in question. At best it is a personal revelation to John Taylor for his own private enlightenment. At worst, it is a forgery. Regardless, it is not a revelation about "the question of plural marriage."

Response:

The critics ruin their credibility here by keeping this historical trash on their website⁷ – not only do we have photocopies of the original and photocopies of John W. Taylor’s handwritten copy, but we have Reed Durham, a BYU professor, admitting the authenticity of this revelation – in John Taylor’s own handwriting, and a lengthy dialogue among apostles at John W. Taylor’s trial where they discuss this revelation – and Joseph F. Smith admits to obtaining a personal copy for himself.

The opening words to this revelation clearly go against the interpretation that this was for John Taylor’s own personal edification. His last statement here demonstrates his inability to separate personal opinion from historical fact. The critics later contend that the 1886 revelation never mentions plural marriage. While the critics accurately note that D&C 22 clearly defines the New and Everlasting Covenant as *all* of the gospel covenants, the context of the revelation – even if we disregard the committee material – clearly is referring to a specific commandment. The following notes illustrate the problems with the critics interpretation that this revelation is about all of the commandments:

“how far it is binding upon my people”

Why would John Taylor ask how binding all of the commandments were upon the people? Further, this shows that the revelation was not for John Taylor’s personal edification.

“my covenants cannot be abrogated nor done away with”

What other covenants would John Taylor have been asking to remove? None of the other commandments at this time were particularly controversial (apart from the United Order). Further, if plural marriage was considered as one of these covenants, then the revelation still says what the fundamentalists purport that it says – plural marriage cannot be abrogated.

⁷ It appears that this material was placed on the website *after* Anderson acknowledged that Musser had found the original.

“*my law*” and “*this law*” refers to one law – not several laws of the gospel; as this language surrounds “*the works of Abraham*” passage refers to D&C 132 and specifically to plural marriage; the critics admit this elsewhere in their writings. It seems more than highly suggestive that these are referring to plural marriage.

Lastly, John W. Taylor’s trial certainly suggests that all of the apostles involved read this as a revelation concerning plural marriage and contemporary uses of the term “New and Everlasting Covenant” clearly indicate that the typical usage of this terminology was in conjunction with plural marriage.

Interpretation:

In response to this assessment polygamists will quickly attest that "the New and Everlasting Covenant" mentioned in this purported revelation is a direct reference to plural marriage. They would also affirm that the statement "all those who would enter into my glory must and shall obey my law" is a command to practice polygamy. Nevertheless, both of these interpretations are incorrect.

The New and Everlasting Covenant itself is comprised of all gospel covenants restored in this dispensation. The New and Everlasting Covenant of Marriage is eternal marriage. It includes plural marriage, but is not limited to it. All mortals who are taught by God's servants about eternal marriage and concomitantly have sealing authority restored among them must marry with that authority while in mortality or lose their chance for eternal marriage altogether. To illustrate why this is so, we know that people who understand and reject baptism during mortality will, in the Spirit World, be incapable of benefiting from baptisms for the dead on their behalf because there are *no "second chances" in the gospel*. Equally, people who reject eternal marriage and sealing authority here will be ineligible to receive sealings for the dead (performed in temples on earth) on their behalf after they die for the very same reason. In other words, they are damned (D&C 132:4). The *authority* to seal a marriage is eternal as are the *covenants* involved. Naturally, they cannot be *revoked*.

Response:

First of all, the entire gospel is about second chances – what else is the atonement besides the opportunity for second chances? Besides, the Church still rebaptizes excommunicated members so they seem to believe in second chances. However, there is some support for his contention in D&C 76:74; authority to seal a marriage is revocable; covenants are revocable when the other side breaches their portion of

the covenant – otherwise, the Lord would be forced to bless us for obeying a commandment even if we disobeyed it. The critic clearly hasn't thought through this issue in a logically cohesive fashion – he concludes his assertions based upon his personal exegetical bias.

Copies

Not one of these "copies" has been found or even referred to. There is significant evidence to support the idea that even Woolley himself was unaware of the alleged revelation in 1912. We would naturally expect a person to hold such a document in high regard and not allow it to become lost. However, all "copies" have been unaccounted for since their purported creation.

Response:

Some of L. John Nuttall's handwritten copies have been referred to in fundamentalist literature. The critics simply haven't done their homework. Further, even if these copies were not found – so what? The evidence supporting the authenticity (and existence of) the revelation is simply overwhelming. What does it matter if these men did not produce even one copy? They were alleging that they had copies before historians could even verify the existence of the original. They were the persons alleging that the revelation existed in the first place. No one would have even known to look for the original without their allegations. Therefore, production of these original copies is mostly a moot issue.

As a last note, Samuel W. Taylor, in *The Last Pioneer*, states that Raymond W. Taylor found eleven copies of the alleged revelation on April 21, 1972 in a room adjacent to the Church archives and points out that the Church's 1933 declaration that the revelation was not in the Church archives was therefore technically accurate (see page 369-70). This may be a correct reading of the Church's declaration; however, it remains possible that the Church made its declaration before the revelation was given to it by the John W. Taylor family later that year. In either event, the credibility of the Church on this particular issue is not sterling because the declaration refers to the common recollection of all of the then current apostles – at least a few of whom were participants in John W. Taylor's trial and who were therefore acquainted with the revelation and its contents because the revelation was read at his trial.

Prophecies Fulfilled?

$\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{4} = ?$

Modern Polygamists will affirm that in fact this has come true and that the Latter-day Saints are just unaware of their state of apostasy. However, the prophecy also indicates that at least one-fourth, if not one-half, of the Saints would not apostatize and continue supporting plural marriage. Clearly this has not occurred.

Response:

First, the critics group all “modern polygamists” into one group – as if there exists some standard claim among the fundamentalist groups. Second, the critics need to take a refresher course in math. The numbers do not equal $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$ of the Church membership ($\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{4} = \frac{3}{4}$). Clearly, the critics have not read this prophecy from a non-biased perspective. From their opponent’s standpoint, John Taylor is prophesying that up to 75% of the Church membership will abandon the principle of plural marriage. His assertion that this prophecy has not occurred has good rhetorical value but is not substantiated as presented.

Perhaps it is worth noting that, apart from the 1890 Manifeston, the Deseret News, on August 30, 1890, pointed out that 95% of all Mormon voters in the territory of Utah voted for the ratification of a convention that made plural marriage a crime “with a severe penalty.”

Whoredoms:

While few would assert that apostasy and whoredom have ever been “rampant in the Church,” it is quite probable that such problems affect modern polygamists as much as Church members.

Response:

Any argument founded upon ad hominem is suspect. He ignores the fact that this prophecy has arguably occurred in the Church. Anyone in a BYU bishopric for any significant period of time will tell you that fornication continues to be a large concern. Heber C. Kimball and Matthias Cowley made a similar predictions.⁸ Perhaps more importantly, Harold B. Lee lamented that “the sin of adultery is running rampant through the Church” in an Ensign article (4:7:101).

One Mighty and Strong:

⁸ Conference Report, October 1901, 32; Deseret News, August 9, 1902.

The doctrine of the "One Mighty and Strong" mentioned in D&C 85:7 is very popular among modern polygamists. They claim the Church is "out of order" because it does not allow plural marriage and that "One Mighty and Strong" will come and vindicate modern polygamists by restoring them to the Church (and making them leaders in it). Obviously this did not happen during the tenure of the seventh Church President, Heber J. Grant. He died in 1945.

Response:

The critics produce great rhetorical value with this interpretation. However, it betrays the fact that they have not read this carefully. The prophesy that the One Mighty and Strong would come does not necessarily mean that he will set things in order at that time – it only means that he will come and visit his priesthood on earth (which would not require a visit to the Church from his opponent's perspective). Further, the fact that the setting in order did not happen in Heber J. Grant's tenure in no way diminishes the prophecy – "in that day" can fairly be read to refer to the day of bondage, not the day of the seventh president.

Conferral of Priesthood

This prophecy refers to the variety of words which have been used to confer priesthood authority upon individuals in the past. From the beginning of the restoration, terms such as confer, ordain, set-apart, consecrate etc. have been used in different combinations to transfer priesthood authority to men. During the Presidency of David O. McKay, definitions were provided to eliminate confusion: priesthood is conferred, offices are ordained and callings are set-apart.

Modern polygamists presently believe that only certain words can be used and that any variation from them constitutes an "improper" and defective ordination. If this were correct, most of the priesthood ordinations performed during the 19th century would be invalid.

Response:

Basically, he admits that the fundamentalist perspective would be true if their beliefs about ordinations are true.

Ordinations

Of all the interesting details included in this account, none is more important than this claim to "authority" to "carry this work on." Generally this has been interpreted as the conferral of sealing authority.

...

Several problems exist with these alleged ordinations. First, the Lord has plainly stated in D&C 42:11 that there should be no "secret" ordinations to presiding positions. Also, according to the law of witnesses (D&C 6:28), only Lorin C. Woolley has left his testimony concerning this incredibly important priesthood line of authority.

Response:

Obviously the critic has not done much study on Nauvoo ordinations or on the story of Heber C. Kimball noting that thirty people had more priesthood than Sidney Rigdon after Joseph's martyrdom. From Hales' perspective, Sidney was an apostle and member of the first presidency – there is no higher priesthood apart from having “all of the keys” mentioned in D&C 132 and only one man can have those.

Sam Bateman et al.:

There is *no evidence to suggest that Samuel Bateman* ever sealed any kind of marriage. He remained active in the Church and obeyed the 1890 Manifesto. His son, Daniel Bateman, was an avid supporter of Lorin Woolley during the 1920s and 1930s. But even he (Daniel) admitted that he never learned about his father's purported priesthood ordination during his father's lifetime. Nothing has been found to support the idea that Samuel ever even mentioned an 1886 ordination or special priesthood authority to his son Daniel. Neither did his actions suggest that he had received such. Daniel and his father were very close, living only a short distance from each other for many years after 1886. If the elder Bateman held some kind of lofty priesthood power, by his son's own admission, he was very successful in hiding it from his own family.

John W. Woolley is the only one of the five men, besides Lorin, who was alive during the 1920s when the younger Woolley made his extraordinary claims. John was in his nineties at the time and was quite hard of hearing. As we have reviewed, he was excommunicated in 1914 for performing plural marriages. ... We also noted that John tried later to regain his Church membership. These activities are surprising for a man who purportedly held independent priesthood authority.

Response:

Apart from quoting himself in the footnotes, Hales exaggerates the statements of Daniel Bateman – see Musser's relevant journal entries above. Further, Daniel Bateman was at the 8 hour meeting and testified that Woolley's statement about this meeting were accurate in every detail. Further, why would secret sealings be broadcast to the world? If

lack of evidence ever proved *nothing at all*, this is the time.

Response:

Again, this shows that Hales does not understand fundamentalist claims. Further, if he understood fundamentalist claims, he would understand that Woolley's desire to have fellowship in the Church had nothing to do with the priesthood. Further, the fact that some of these individuals may not have stood by their testimonies is not dispositive proof (in a religious setting) that the events did not happen (consider Judas, William Smith, William Marks, etc.); further, Lorin C. Woolley only stated that "so far as I know all five of the brethren remained true and faithful." He did not claim that he knew that they were faithful.

Who Was Where When?

Person	Sunday Meeting	8-Hour Meeting	Ordinations	Position in the Church
John Taylor	X	X	X	President
George Q. Cannon	X	X	X	Presidency
John Woolley	X	X	X	
Lorin C. Woolley	X	X	X	Guard
Samuel Bateman	X	X	X	
Charles H. Wilkins	X	X	X	Guard
L. John Nuttall	X	X	Making Copies	Secretary
H. Charles Birrell	X	X		Guard
Daniel Bateman		X		
H.B. Clawson	X			Bishop
F.S. Richards	X			Apostle / Attorney
Others ⁹	X			
Sedden		X		Bishop
George Earl		X		Young Boy
Julia Woolley		X		
Amy Woolley		X		

⁹ Journal accounts from that Sunday tell us that Sister Woolley, her daughter, and Sister Taylor were at the meeting. Critics dispute the feasibility that some of these individuals were present – see criticisms under The Sunday Meeting section of this work.

Committee Members				
George Q. Cannon	X	X	X	Presidency
Hyrum B. Clawson	X			Bishop
F.S. Richards	X			Attorney
John T. Caine				Congressional Delegate
James Jack				Financial Clerk