THE PURSUED LETTER OF JOSEPH SMITH TO NANCY RIGDON: SUPPLEMENT — By Van Hale

THE NANCY RIGDON INCIDENT
A CONSERVATIVE RECONSTRUCTION

1. Nancy Hyde arranged a private conference at her residence at the printing office between Joseph Smith and Nancy Rigdon. (JCB, GW, JWR)

2. Nancy claimed that Mrs. Hyde made some comments and explanations to her concerning plural marriage. (JCB, GW, JWR)

3. She met with Smith. (JCB, GW, JWR, ON)

4. Following the interview, she was insulted and angry. (JCB, GW, JWR, ON, SR T.I. 3:012)

5. She told some family members that Smith had proposed marriage to her. (JCB, GW, JWR, ON)

6. Her family believed her. (JCB, GW, JWR)

7. Smith met with the Rigdon family concerning the matter. (JCB, GW, JWR, ON)

   a. The date was June 28, 1842, and Smith was accompanied by Bishop George Miller. (JCB, HC 5:46)

   b. Joseph Smith was confronted.

   c. He denied making the proposal.

   d. Nancy firmly insisted he had called him a curved liar.

   e. Smith finally acknowledged the proposal. (JCB, GW, JWR)

8. Considerable friction existed between Smith and the Rigdon family for at least several months. (HC 5:6, 8, 46, 121, 122, 139, 270, SR T.I. 3)

9. Following the confrontation, Smith and Rigdon attempted, with some temporary success, to reconcile their differences. (SR letter to JS, GW, HC 5:170)

10. Bennett acquired a letter which had been in the possession of Nancy Rigdon. (HC 5:46)

11. Bennett alleged that the letter was Smith's explanation and justification of his marriage proposal to Miss Rigdon; that Smith had married her sister; and that Richards delivered it to her. (JCB, GW, JWR)

12. In a certificate, Sidney Rigdon, claiming authorization by her, states that the letter was not in Smith's handwriting, but someone else's. He also reported that Smith denied authorship of the letter. It is not, however, denied the alleged proposal of Smith to his daughter, or that this was an explanation of plural marriage. (Wasp Aug. 31, 1842)

13. Concerning this certificate, William Smith, editor of the Wasp, announced his brother Joseph's satisfaction. (Wasp Sep. 3, 1842) On another occasion William Smith declared that his brother was not the author of the letter. (Wasp Aug. 27, 1842)

CERTIFICATE OF SIDNEY RIGDON
WASP, AUGUST 31, 1842

Editor of the Wasp.

Dear Sir: I am fully authorized by my daughter, Nancy, to say to the public through this paper, that the letter which has appeared in the Sangamo Journal, making statement of Smith's letters to said paper, purporting to have been written by Mr. Joseph Smith to her, was unauthorized by her, and that all of my letters to any other person, that said letter was written by said Mr. Smith, nor in his hand writing, but by another person, and in another person's handwriting. She further wishes me to say, that she never at any time authorized Ben. Bennett to use her name in the public papers, as he has done, which has been greatly to the wounding of her feelings, and she considers that the prohibiting of her name before the public in the manner in which it has been done, to say the best of it, is a flagrant violation of her property, and cannot avoid to insult her feelings, which she wishes the public to know. I would further state that Mr. Smith denied to me the authorship of that letter.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

COMMENTS BY WILLARD SMITH
WASP, AUGUST 27, 1842

...The sixth letter is what purported to be a copy of a letter from Joseph Smith to Miss Nancy Rigdon. The letter is dated, name or proof, and if there is, i.e., upon the whole, more moral than Bennett ever was or will be of himself—but we hope the community are not yet quite so far from a common course of Justice and propriety as to take Bennett's word for the truth or fallacy of the curious thing. Joseph Smith is not the author...

WASP, SEPTEMBER 3, 1842

We are authorized to say by Gen. Joseph Smith, that the affidavit of Stephen Markham, relative to Miss Nancy Rigdon, published in the last Wasp was unauthorized by him: the certificate of Elder Rigdon relative to the letter being satisfactory.
Miss Nancy Rigdon, daughter of Sidney Rigdon, Esq. Joe Smith said to me last summer, "If you will assist me in procuring Nancy as one of my spiritual wives, I will give you five hundred dollars, or the best lot on Main Street." I replied, "I cannot agree to it. Elder Rigdon is one of my best friends, and his family are now pure and spotless, and it would be a great pity to approach the truly virtuous."

"But," says Joe, "the Lord has given her to me to wife. I have the blessings of Jacob, and there is no wickedness in it. It would be wicked to approach her unless I had permission of the Lord, but as it is, it is as correct as to have a legal wife in a moral point of view." It may be so, said I, but you must see her yourself. I cannot approach her on a subject of that kind. Then I supposed the matter had ended; but at the funeral of Mr. Ephraim R. Marks, Mrs. Hyde told Miss Rigdon, that Joseph desired to see her at the printing office, where Mrs. Hyde resides, on special business. She said she would go, and accordingly did, but Joe was busily engaged at his store; Dr. Willard Richards, however, one of the holy twelve Mormon apostles, whom I had long suspected as being up to his eyes in the business with Joe, came in and said, "Miss Nancy, Joseph cannot be in to day, please call again on Thursday." This she agreed to do; but she communicated the matter to Colonel Francis M. Higbee, who was addressing her, and asked his advice as to the second visit. I then came to a knowledge of the facts, and went immediately to Joe, and said to him, "Joseph, you are a Master Mason, and Nancy is a Master Mason's daughter, so stay your hand, or you will get into trouble." Joe replied, "you are my enemy, and wish to oppose me."---"No," said I, "I am not your enemy, but you had better stop where you are."

I then went to Col. Higbee and told him Joe's designs, and requested him to go immediately and see Miss Rigdon, and tell her the infernal plot—that Joe would approach her in the name of the Lord, by revelation, &c., and to put her on her guard, but advise her to go and see for herself what Joe would do. He did so, and she went down. Joe was there, and took her into a private room, LOCKED THE DOOR, and commenced by telling her that he had long suspected as being up to his eyes in the business with Joe, came in and said, "Miss Nancy, Joseph cannot be in to day, please call again on Thursday." She agreed to do; but she communicated the matter to Colonel Francis M. Higbee, who was addressing her, and asked his advice as to the second visit. I then came to a knowledge of the facts, and went immediately to Joe, and said to him, "Joseph, you are a Master Mason, and Nancy is a Master Mason's daughter, so stay your hand, or you will get into trouble." Joe replied, "you are my enemy, and wish to oppose me."---"No," said I, "I am not your enemy, but you had better stop where you are.

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Mrs. Hyde told her that these things looked strange to her at first, but she told the facts with such force that he could not withstand the testimony; and he then and there acknowledged every word of Miss Rigdon's testimony was true. Now for his excuse, which he made for such a base attempt, and for using the name of the Lord in vain, on that occasion. He wished to ascertain whether she was virtuous or not, and took that course to learn the facts!-
and the matter was talked
utterly refused and soon left
Nancy Rigdon that she become
Some time in the year of 1843
Mr. Rigdon then went on to
say that in the early part of
the year 1843 Joseph Smith
made a proposition of plural
or spiritual marriage to his
(Rigdon's) sister Nancy, then
a young lady about 21 years
of age. The proposition was
indignantly refused by the
young lady. She at once told
her father, Sidney Rigdon, of
Smith's proposal. The elder
Rigdon was very angry, and
Mr. Rigdon said Smith to account.
Two or three days afterward Smith
called at the Rigdon home and
tried to deny it Nancy was not in
the room at the time and it
was in an adjoining room and
heard what Smith had said her
sister Mrs Geo W Robinson was
in the room at the time and
her mother and an other women
whose name I do not recollect
Nancy was one of those excit-
table women and she went into
the room and said Joseph
Smith you are telling that
which is not true You did
make such a proposition to
me and you know it the woman
who was there said to Nancy
are you not afraid to eat
the bread anointed a cursed
liar no she replied I am not

INTERVIEW WITH
JOHN W. RIGDON
SALT LAKE TRIBUNE
May 20, 1900

Mr. Rigdon then went on to
tell the story that was told to
her at this interview, and remem-
bered the circumstances as
distinctly as though it had
occurred only last week.
After this interview Mr.
Rigdon said Smith acknowledged
9 to his father that he had
proposed plural marriage to
his daughter, and begged for-
giveness. Sidney Rigdon par-
doned the offense, and the
prophet and his first coun-
selor became good friends
again.

NOTE: Numbers in margins
represent parallel ideas

Joseph the Prophet, at the
City of Nauvoo, Illinois, at
some time in the latter part
of the year 1843, or the
first part of the year 1844,
made a proposition to my sis-
ter Nancy Rigdon, to become
her husband and she refused
saying that he was a liar and a
scoundrel if he intimated
that he had not made the pro-
position. Mr. Rigdon said
yesterday that he was present
at this interview, and remem-
bers the circumstances as
distinctly as though it had
occurred only last week.
After this interview Mr.
Rigdon said Smith acknowledged
9 to his father that he had
proposed plural marriage to
his daughter, and begged for-
giveness. Sidney Rigdon par-
doned the offense, and the
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selor became good friends
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1. Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you my servant Joseph, that inasmuch as you have inquired of my hand to know and understand wherein 2. I, James, do administer unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; also unto Moses, David and Solomon, my servants, as touching the principle and doctrine of all things according to the wills and commandments of the Father and your exaltation, and the promise of the fulness of the glory of the kingdom of God; and that all things are given according to the will of God; and I command you to receive this covenant and be permitted to enter into my glory.

4. For all who will have a blessing at my hands shall abide the law without being appointed for that blessing, and the binding and the loosing of all things may be done in my kingdom; and you can receive this covenant and be permitted to enter into my glory.

5. For behold, I reveal unto you a new and everlasting covenant; and if ye abide by it, then are ye permitted to receive all things; for my kingdom is among you, and in me ye may receive all things, saith the Lord your God.

6. Verily, verily, I say unto you, if any man have a wife, that was not joined with him by me, he may take her and give her to him that hath not committed adultery; for I will destroy her, for I will magnify my name.

7. Verily, verily, I say unto you, that whatsoever ye seal on earth shall be sealed in heaven; and whatsoever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

8. Verily, verily, I say unto you, that inasmuch as you have inquired of my hand to know and understand wherein I, James, do administer unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; also unto Moses, David and Solomon, my servants, as touching the principle and doctrine of all things according to the wills and commandments of the Father and your exaltation, and the promise of the fulness of the glory of the kingdom of God; and that all things are given according to the will of God; and I command you to receive this covenant and be permitted to enter into my glory.

9. For all who will have a blessing at my hands shall abide the law without being appointed for that blessing, and the binding and the loosing of all things may be done in my kingdom; and you can receive this covenant and be permitted to enter into my glory.

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