John Taylor and Almon W. Babbitt, and soon after removed to Nauvoo. On January 24, 1841, he was called to fill the office mentioned, which had been made vacant by the appointment of Hyrum Smith to the Patriarchate. Law continued as Smith's Second Counselor until after the latter had brought out his "Revelation on Celestial Marriage," when he apostatized and led a party of dissenters in opposing Smith and his practices. After the death of the Prophet, he removed to Rock Island, Illinois, but during the latter part of his life, he made his home at Shullsburg, La Fayette County, Wisconsin.

In July, 1885, he made an affidavit in which he declared that polygamy, and other corrupt practices, existed in the Mormon Church at Nauvoo during the Prophet's lifetime, and with his knowledge and sanction. This affidavit is now in the possession of Mr. Zenas H. Gurley, of Canton, Missouri, son of one of the founders of the Reorganized Church, and himself an Apostle in that church at the time of his apostasy in 1886. Mr. Gurley informs me that Law "during his life objected to publication in newspapers, but directed to publish in book," and that this is the reason why it has never been given to the public before. The following is an exact copy, carefully prepared by myself with the full consent of the owner of the original, and properly attested to put it above reasonable question or doubt. This document, coming as it does from one of the original leaders of the Mormon Church, is one of the most damning pieces of evidence that has ever been put before the public on the character of Joseph Smith and his confederates.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

I, the undersigned, being aware that many contradictory reports are in circulation as to the origin of Polygamy in the

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1 Since deceased.
Mormon Church, make the following statements concerning polygamy and some other matters. In 1843 Hyrum Smith handed to me a writing to read, and to be returned to him. I took it home and upon reading found that it purported to be a revelation to Joseph Smith, authorizing polygamy in the Church. After reading it I went directly to Joseph Smith and showed him the document. He looked at it, and said it was all right. Said it was a great privilege granted to the High Priesthood. He spoke strongly in its favor. I remarked that it was in contradiction to the "Doctrine and Covenants." He said they were given when the Church was in its infancy, when they were babes, and had to be fed on milk, but now they were strong and must have meat. He seemed much disappointed in my not receiving the revelation. He was very anxious that I would accept the doctrine and sustain him in it. He used many arguments at various times afterwards in its favor. I suppose he dreaded my official influence in opposing and utterly rejecting the so-called revelation as I was at that time a member of the First Presidency. Joseph told me that he had several wives sealed to him, and that they afforded him a great deal of pleasure. He kept some of them in his own house. He said his wife Emma had annoyed him very much about it, but he thought the revelation would cause her to submit peaceably, as it threatened her removal if she did not. Mrs. Smith complained to me about Joseph keeping his young wives in her house and elsewhere, and his neglect of her. She spoke freely about the revelation and its threat against her life, etc. She seemed to have no faith in it whatever. From what she said to me and from what I learned from other sources I have good reason to believe that Joseph and Hyrum Smith and others in the Church had been practicing polygamy for a long time before the revelation came forth, although it was vehemently denied from the public stand, and those who spoke of its existence were denounced as slanderers of the Church. But after the revelation came out, polygamy was rampant and the man who dared to speak against it was considered an apostate. Joseph Smith required every man and woman to believe in him, believe in all his revelations, believe in all his teachings, and uphold and sustain him in everything right or wrong, without any regard for the teachings of Christ and His Apostles, as recorded in the Scriptures. Smith was opposed to the use of the Scriptures for I heard him say that "the time would come when it would be a curse to any family to have a Bible in their house." The teaching of Christ was in direct opposition to the teachings of the Smiths, they taught polygamy, spoiling (robbing) the Gentiles, murder, swindling, lying and many other evils. I do not say that Joseph Smith murdered any one with his own hand, but I say this, that Joseph told me that he sent a man to kill Governor Boggs of Missouri. The fellow shot the Governor in his own house, shot him through a window, wounding him severely, but failed to kill him. In looking over the whole field at that time, the past and the then present of the Church, I could see no God in it, but a great deal of Satan. Consequently I withdrew from it forever. And now after more than forty years, I am thoroughly convinced that I was right, that it never was a Church of Christ, but a most wicked blasphemous humbug, gotten up for the purpose of making money. Had it been the Church of Christ, its ministers would have taught the Doctrine of Christ, would have taught the Gospel of Christ, which is the Gospel of Salvation, to them that believe. If the Gospel was Salvation to believers in the days of the Apostles, it is Salvation to believers now, and always will be. And if so, what more do we want. Paul said, "Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel, let him be accursed." The Mormon Church has been running for more than fifty years and what has it done for the Cause of Christianity or Morality? Nothing that I know of but a great deal against both. It must be a bad tree to bear such evil fruit, evil all the way from the Kirtland Bank Swindle down to the present time, and yet I have no doubt thousands of honest virtuous people joined the Church not knowing (at the time) anything of the wicked workings of the leaders, and thousands (probably in ignorance) still cling to the delusion.

After I withdrew from the Mormons, I held several public meetings in the City, told the people many things that I thought they ought to know. I warned them of the ruin they would bring upon themselves by obeying the unchristian teachings of the Smiths and others. I called on the Smithites to come forward and defend their cause, and have an open discussion of the questions at issue between us. But there was not a man to open his mouth in their defense. The fact was they had no ground
to stand on. I next went to my friends and talked over the propriety of purchasing a Printing Press and publishing a Paper to be called the Nauvoo Expositor. We concluded to do so. We bought a Press, paper and issued No. 1 of the Expositor. No. 2 we had printed on one side when the City Council and Joseph Smith, Mayor, ordered the destruction of the Press, which was done immediately by the breaking the press into pieces with sledges, throwing the type into the street and burning up the furniture, printing paper, etc.

This unlawful destruction of private property and infringement on the Sacred Freedom of the Press sealed their doom. It was more than the people would bear. What followed is already well known to the Public.

After the Press was destroyed, my friends came to me and urged me to leave Nauvoo immediately for my personal safety. So on the second day after the destruction of the Press I with my family and some friends, left for Burlington, Iowa. This was in June, 1844.

More than forty years have pass'd since the foregoing events transpired, therefore I may not have been able to give the precise words used in the conversations referred to, but the substance of what I have stated is positively true. I speak from actual knowledge.

I hope my testimony may be of use to those who are seeking after the truth, for truth's sake. It is much safer to trust in God, than in man. The wisdom of man may perish but the wisdom and goodness of God endureth forever.

July 17th, 1885.

WM. LAW.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 17th day of July, A.D. 1885.

C. T. DOUGLAS,
Notary Public.

This is to certify that Charles A. Shook, being duly sworn according to law, deposeth and saith that the foregoing is a verbatim copy of an affidavit bearing the signature of a certain William Law and also the official seal of Charles T. Douglas, Notary Public, LaFayette Co., Wis., which affidavit is now the property of Mr. Zenas H. Gurley, of Canton, Missouri, and which was loaned to the deponent by the said Zenas H. Gurley that he might make the foregoing copy.

CHARLES A. SHOOK.

MORMON POLYGAMY

Subscribed and sworn to before me at Palmer, Illinois, this 27th day of December, 1909.

R. E. BEER,
Notary Public.

This is to certify that A. L. Shrou, being duly sworn according to law, deposeth and saith that he has compared the foregoing copy with an affidavit bearing the signature of a certain William Law and also the official seal of Charles T. Douglas, Notary Public, LaFayette Co., Wisconsin, and that he has found said copy to be a correct transcription of the original.

A. L. SHROU.

Subscribed and sworn to before me at Palmer, Illinois, this 27th day of December, 1909.

R. E. BEER,
Notary Public.

THE STATEMENT OF SARAH M. PRATT.

Mrs. Pratt was the wife of Orson Pratt and shared with him the privations and hardships incident to his office of Apostle in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, until he became a polygamist, when she renounced both him and the church. She resided in Salt Lake City from the year 1847 up to the close of her life, and died respected for her virtues. The following statement will show the esteem in which she was held:

SALT LAKE CITY, May, 1886.

We, the undersigned, cordially bear witness to the excellent reputation of Mrs. Sarah M. Pratt. We feel well assured that Mrs. Pratt is a lady whose statements are absolutely to be depended upon. Entire frankness and a high sense of honor and truth are regarded in this community, where she has dwelt since 1847, as her ruling characteristics.

CHARLES S. ZANE,
Chief Justice Utah Territory.

ARTHUR L. THOMAS,
Secretary Utah Territory.

REV. J. W. JACKSON,
U. S. A. Chaplain, Fort Douglas.

Mrs. Pratt had exceptional opportunities, while living at Nauvoo, to see what was going on behind the
Get a Revelation that polygamy is right, and all your troubles will be at an end."

The only "wives" of Joseph that lived in the Mansion House were the Partridge girls. This is explained by the fact that they were the servants in the hotel kept by the prophet. But when Emma found out that Joseph went to their room, they had to leave the house.

I remember Emma's trip to St. Louis. I begged her to buy for me a piece of black silk there.

You should bear in mind that Joseph did not think of a marriage or sealing ceremony for many years. He used to state to his intended victims, as he did to me: "God does not care if we have a good time, if only other people do not know it." He only introduced a marriage ceremony when he had found out that he could not get certain women without it. I think Louisa Beaman was the first of this kind. If any woman, like me, opposed his wishes, he used to say: "Be silent, or I shall ruin your character. Your character must be sustained in the interest of the church." When he had assaulted me and saw that he could not seal my lips, he sent word to me that he would work my salvation, if I kept silent. I sent back that I would talk as much as I pleased and as much as I knew to be the truth, and as to my salvation, I would try and take care of that myself.

In his endeavors to ruin my character Joseph went so far as to publish an extra-sheet containing affidavits against my reputation. When this sheet was brought to me I discovered to my astonishment the names of two people on it, man and wife, with whom I had boarded for a certain time. I never thought much of the man, but the woman was an honest person and I knew that she must have been forced to do such a thing against me. So I went to their house; the man left the house hurriedly when he saw me coming. I found the wife and said to her rather excitedly: "What does it all mean?" She began to sob. "It is not my fault," said she; "Hyrum Smith came to our house, with the affidavits all written out, and forced us to sign them. Joseph and the church must be saved," said he. We saw that resistance was useless, they would have ruined us; so we signed the papers."—Mormon Portraits, pp. 60-63.

**AFFIDAVIT OF LORENZO SNOW.**

In the month of April, 1843, I returned from my European mission. A few days after my arrival at Nauvoo, when at President Joseph Smith's house, he said he wished to have some private talk with me, and requested me to walk out with him. It was toward evening. We walked a little distance and sat down on a large log that lay near the bank of the river. He there and then explained to me the doctrine of plurality of wives; he said that the Lord had revealed it unto him, and commanded him to have women sealed to him as wives; that he foresaw the trouble that would follow, and sought to turn away from the commandment; that an angel from heaven then appeared before him with a drawn sword, threatening him with destruction unless he went forward and obeyed the commandment.

He further said that my sister Eliza R. Snow had been sealed to him as his wife for time and eternity. He told me that the Lord would open the way, and I should have women sealed to me as wives. This conversation was prolonged, I think one hour or more, in which he told me many important things.

I solemnly declare before God and holy angels, and as I hope to come forth in the morning of the resurrection, that the above statement is true.

Lorenzo Snow.

Territory of Utah, 1849.

Box Elder County.

Personally came before me, J. C. Wright, Clerk of the County and Probate Courts in and for the County and Territory aforesaid, Lorenzo Snow, and who being duly sworn deposes and says that the foregoing statement by him subscribed is true to his own certain knowledge.

Witness my hand and seal of Court, at my office in Brigham City, Box Elder County, Utah Territory, this 25th day of August, A. D. 1869.

J. C. Wright, Clerk.

(Seal.)

**AFFIDAVIT OF ORSON HYDE.**

Orson Hyde was born in the village of Oxford, New Haven County, Connecticut, January 8, 1805. He united with the Mormon Church in Ohio on the 31st of October,
1831, being baptized by Sidney Rigdon. In 1835 he was ordained an Apostle. In October, 1838, he and Thomas B. Marsh apostatized and made affidavits incriminating Joseph Smith and others. He was suspended from fellowship, May 4, 1839, but on June 27 of the same year, having made confession, he was restored both to fellowship in the church and to his former standing in the Quorum of Apostles. He went to Utah with Brigham Young, where he died November 28, 1878. His affidavit follows:

SPRINGTOWN, Sept. 15, 1869.

I, Orson Hyde, do hereby certify and declare according to my best recollection that on the fourth day of September I was married to Miss Marinda N. Johnson, in Kirland, Ohio, in the year of our Lord, 1834, and in the month of February or March, 1843, 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., and in the month of April of the same year, 1843, I was married by the same person to Mrs. Mary Ann Price, and by him she was sealed to me for time and for all eternity, in Nauvoo, Ill., 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 ceremonies.

Orson Hyde.

Sworn to and subscribed to before me this 15th day of September, 1869, at Springtown, Sanpete County, U. T.

George Brough, Justice of the Peace.

AFFIDAVIT OF JOSEPH B. NOBLE.

TERRITORY OF UTAH, \| SS.
County of Salt Lake. \|

Be it remembered that on the 26th day of June, A.D. 1859, personally appeared before me, James Jack, a notary public in and for said county, Joseph Bates Noble, who was by me sworn in due form of law, and upon his oath saith, 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 Latter Day Saints, according to the order of celestial marriage revealed to the said Joseph Smith.

Joseph B. Noble.

Subscribed and sworn to by the said Joseph Bates Noble, the day and year first above written.

James Jack,
(Seal).

Notary Public.

AFFIDAVIT OF HOWARD CORAY.

TERRITORY OF UTAH, \| SS.
County of Salt Lake. \|

As many false statements have been made in relation to the authorship of the revelation on celestial marriage, I deem it but justice to all lovers of truth for me to express what I know concerning this very important matter.

On the 22nd day of July, A.D. 1843, Hyrum Smith, the martyred Patriarch, came in a carriage to my house in Nauvoo; he invited me and my wife to take a ride with him; accordingly, as soon as we could make ourselves ready, we got into his carriage and he set off in the direction of Carthage. Having gone a short distance, he observed to us that his brother, Joseph Smith, the Prophet, had received a revelation on marriage, that was not for the public yet, which he would rehearse to us, as he had taken pains to commit it to memory. He then commenced rehearsing the revelation on celestial marriage, not stopping till he had gone quite through with the matter. After which he reviewed that part pertaining to plurality of wives, dwelling at some length upon the same, in order that we might clearly understand the principle. And on the same day (July 22, 1843) he sealed my wife, formerly Martha Jane Knowlton, to me; and when I heard the revelation on celestial marriage read on the stand in Salt Lake City, in 1852, I recognized it as the same as that repeated to me by Brother Hyrum Smith. Not long after this I was present when Brother David Fullmer and wife were sealed by Brother Hyrum Smith, the martyred Patriarch, according to the law of celestial marriage. And, besides the foregoing, there was quite enough came within the compass of my observation to have fully satisfied my mind that plural marriage was practiced in the city of Nauvoo.

Howard Coray.

Subscribed and sworn to before me, this 18th day of June, A.D. 1882.

James Jack, Notary Public.

(Seal.)
AFFIDAVIT OF JOSEPH KELTING.

For some time previous to the death of Joseph Smith, the Mormon prophet, I lived at Nauvoo, Hancock County, Illinois. I acted for some years as agent for Bishop George Miller, and was also a deputy sheriff in Hancock County. I heard rumors to the effect that Joseph Smith was practicing polygamy, the matter frequently being repeated, especially by Wm. and Wilson Law, and the Biggees. Calling at the house 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 upstairs 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 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—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.

On the occasion of Alexander H. Smith, son of the prophet, visiting me in this country some few years ago, I related to him the above circumstances. . . .

Joseph A. Kelting.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA,

County of San Bernardino.

Subscribed and sworn to before me, a notary public, this first day of March, A.D. 1894. D. Johnston.

(Seal.) Notary Public in and for San Bernardino County, State of California.

MORMON POLYGAMY

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

State of Utah,

County of Salt Lake.

Lucy Walker Smith Kimball, being first duly sworn, says: I was a plural wife of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and was married for time and eternity in Nauvoo, State of Illinois, on the first day of May, 1843, by Elder William Clayton. I see his affidavit, Chapter IV.1. The Prophet was then living with his first wife, Emma Smith, and I know that she gave her consent to the marriage of at least four women to her husband as plural wives, and she was well aware that he associated and cohabited with them as wives. The names of these women are Eliza and Emily Partridge, and Maria and Sarah Lawrence, all of whom knew that I too was his wife.

When the Prophet Joseph Smith mentioned the principle of plural marriage to me I felt indignant, and so expressed myself to him, because my feelings and education were averse to anything of that nature. But he assured me that this doctrine had been revealed to him of the Lord, and that I was entitled to receive a testimony of its divine origin for myself. He counseled me to pray to the Lord, which I did, and thereupon received from Him a powerful and irresistible testimony of the truthfulness and divinity of plural marriage, which testimony has abided with me ever since.

On the 8th day of February, 1845, I was married for time to President Heber C. Kimball, and bore to him nine children. And in this connection allow me to say to his everlasting credit that during the whole of my married life with him he never failed to regard me as the wife for eternity of his devoted friend, the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Lucy Walker Smith Kimball.

Subscribed and sworn to before me, this 17th day of December, 1902. James Jack, Notary Public.

(Seal.)
as early as 1837, in which year he was chosen a member of the High Council at Kirtland. In July, 1838, he and N. K. Whitney were commanded to remove to Missouri, where he lived until the Mormons were driven from that State, when he went to Illinois. He was chosen President of the High Council at Nauvoo on October 3, 1839, and held that position until after the Prophet’s death, although part of the time he was without the latter’s favor. After the assassination of Smith, he supported the claims of Rigdon for a time, but finally dropped him and threw in his fortunes with the polygamous Twelve, as the following will show:

Notice!!!

After mature and candid reflection I am fully and satisfactorily convinced that Mr. Sidney Rigdon’s claims to the Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, are not founded in Truth. I have been deceived by his specious pretenses, and now feel to warn every one over whom I have any influence to beware of him and his pretended visions and revelations. The Twelve are the proper persons to lead The Church.

William Marks.

Nauvoo, Dec. 9, 1844.

After this, however, he left the Twelve and became a member of the Strangite faction, but, becoming dissatisfied, he subsequently renounced Strang and threw in his fortunes, for a time, with the Baneemites under Charles B. Thompson. He next, with others, started an independent faction, but this soon went to pieces. As a last resort, he united with the Reorganized Church on June 11, 1859, and the year following assisted at the ordination of Joseph Smith to the First Presidency, to whom he later became First Counselor.

Having had ample opportunity to know what was going on in the inner circles at Nauvoo, his testimony is of very great importance. In a letter, dated at Shabbona, DeKalb County, Illinois, October 23, 1859, and addressed to Isaac Sheen, he says:

About the first of June, 1844 (situated as I was at that time, being the Presiding Elder of the Stake at Nauvoo, and by appointment the Presiding Officer of the High Council, I had a very good opportunity to know the affairs of the Church, and my convictions at that time were, that the Church in a great measure had departed from the pure principles and doctrines of Jesus Christ. I felt much troubled in mind about the condition of the Church. I prayed earnestly to my Heavenly Father to show me something in regard to it, when I was wrapt in vision, and it was shown to me by the Spirit, that the top or branches had overcome the root, in sin and wickedness, and the only way to cleanse and purify it was, to disorganize it, and in due time, the Lord would reorganize it again. There were many things suggested to my mind, but the lapse of time has erased them from my memory. A few days after this occurrence, I met with Brother Joseph. He said that he wanted to converse with me on the affairs of the Church, and we retired by ourselves. I will give his words verbatim, for they are indelibly stamped upon my mind. He said he had desired for a long time to have a talk with me on the subject of polygamy. He said it eventually would prove the overthrow of the Church, and we should soon be obliged to leave the United States, unless it could be speedily put down. He was satisfied that it was a cursed doctrine, and that there must be every exertion made to put it down. He said that he would go before the congregation and proclaim against it, and I must go into the High Council, and he would prefer charges against those in transgression, and I must sever them from the Church, unless they made ample satisfaction. There was much more said, but this was the substance. The mob commenced to gather about Carthage in a few days after, therefore there was nothing done pertaining it. After the Prophet’s death, I made mention of this conversation to several, hoping and believing that it would have a good effect, but to my great disappointment, it was soon rumored about that Brother Marks was about to apostatize, and that all that he said about the conversation with the Prophet was a tissue of lies.
selor, but, subsequently, left them and afterwards, in 1863, joined the Reorganization, in which he was ordained a High Priest in April, 1866. Sometime later, he and his wife made the following affidavits:

To Whom It May Concern:

We, Ebenezer Robinson and Angeline Robinson, husband and wife, hereby certify that in the fall of 1843 Hyrum Smith, brother of Joseph Smith, came to our house in Nauvoo, Illinois, and taught us the doctrine of polygamy. And I, the said Ebenezer Robinson, hereby further state that he gave me special instructions how I could manage the matter so as not to have it known to the public. He also told us that while he had heretofore opposed the doctrine, he was wrong and his brother Joseph was right; referring to his teaching it. Ebenezer Robinson.

Angelina E. Robinson.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 29th day of December, 1872.

J. M. Sallee, Notary Public.

(L. S.)

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to certify that in the latter part of November, or in December, 1843, Hyrum Smith (brother of Joseph Smith, President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints) came to my house in Nauvoo, Illinois, and taught me the doctrine of spiritual wives or polygamy.

He said he heard the voice of the Lord give the revelation on spiritual wives (polygamy) to his brother Joseph, and that while he had heretofore opposed the doctrine, he was wrong, and his brother Joseph was right all the time.

He told me to make a selection of some young woman and he would send her to me, and take her to my home, and if she should have an heir, to give out the word that she had a husband who had gone on a mission to a foreign country. He seemed disappointed when I declined to do so.

E. Robinson.

Davis City, Iowa, October 23, 1885.

Subscribed and sworn to before me, a Notary Public in and for Decatur County, Iowa, this 24th day of October, A.D. 1885.

Z. H. Gurley, Notary Public.

(L. S.)

D. H. Bays introduces these affidavits in his “Doctrines and Dogmas of Mormonism,” and says, further, that Robinson assured him in 1865 that he knew more about the early days of the church than he cared at that time to disclose. In his reply to Bays, “The Truth Defended,” pages 190, 191, Apostle Heman C. Smith tries to overthrow this testimony.

He says, in the first place, that “these statements, if true, implicate no one but Hyrum Smith.” While it is true that they implicate no one directly but Hyrum Smith, it is also true that indirectly they implicate Joseph. Robinson tells us what Hyrum said, that much is established by the testimony, and as Hyrum was the brother of Joseph and was one of his most confidential advisers, one of two things is true: either he lied about Joseph or else the latter did advocate polygamy. Let the Josephites fall on either horn of the dilemma that they may choose.

The second objection that Mr. Smith urges against the foregoing statements, is that Robinson and his wife “were associated with the Reorganization for many years, right at the time when representatives of the church from pulpit and press were demanding evidence that polygamy was taught by Joseph and Hyrum Smith, and they were as silent as the tomb, until they became disaffected, and in various ways tried to destroy the fair fame of the church and its founders.” But, according to the statement of Bays, Robinson was not “as silent as the tomb” in 1865 when he told him that “he knew more about those early days than he then wished to disclose, but that he intended at some future time to make a statement of facts as he knew them to exist,” and if I am not misinformed it was the very claim that he makes in his
the high council, and I will have charges preferred against all who practice this doctrine; and I want you to try them by the laws of the Church, and cut them off, if they will not repent, and cease the practice of this doctrine; and," he said, "I will go into the stand and preach against it, with all my might, and in this way, we may rid the Church of this damnable heresy."

If polygamy was introduced into the church "as a principle of exaltation," who introduced it? There can be but one answer—Joseph Smith.

From the two letters of William Marks, we draw the following deductions:

1. The "top or branches," having "overcome the root in sin and wickedness," polygamy was introduced "as a principle of exaltation" and was both "taught and practiced."

2. This principle, on June 1, 1844, had been in the church "for a long time."

3. Joseph on that date had become convinced "that he had done wrong" and had been "deceived."

4. He stated that it was a "cursed doctrine" and a "damnable heresy" that would have to be put down or the church would have to leave the United States. And

5. He said that he would go into the stand and preach against it, and he ordered Marks to sever from the church those who would not repent.

The evident import of these two letters is, that Joseph Smith, being influenced by certain wicked and designing men, introduced into the Mormon Church the doctrine and practice of polygamy; that, after a long time, the opposition which was caused by the introduction of this principle became so bitter that it threatened to disrupt and destroy the church; that the Prophet, foreseeing the impending storm, became alarmed, repented of his connection with it and acknowledged his mistake.

and that, having done this, he began laying plans to cleanse his church by casting out of it those who would not follow his example and give up their sinful practices. It may be charitable to say that, had the Prophet lived and had the opportunity, the latter might have been the program.

ADMISSIONS OF JASON W. BRIGGS.

Jason W. Briggs, while on the stand in the Temple-lot Suit, admitted that he had heard of a revelation on polygamy, or plural marriage, before the death of the Mormon Prophet. He says:

I heard something about a revelation on polygamy, or plural marriage, when I was in Nauvoo, in 1842. I heard there was one; there was talk going on about it at that time, and continued to be; but it was not called plural marriage; it was called sealing.

I was asked in my direct examination if I did not hear of the doctrine of polygamy, etc., and I answered that I talked with members with reference to sealing, and I understood that the doctrine of sealing, was for eternity; it was sealing a man's wife to him for eternity, or wives either.—Record, pp. 349, 395.

On February 13, 1888, Mr. Briggs, writing from Wheeler, Iowa, addressed a letter to Mr. J. T. Clark, part of which, relating to the origin of the "Revelation on Celestial Marriage," is as follows:

BRO. J. T. CLARK,—Yours of late date duly received. The excessive cold weather and some ill health has prevented my writing sooner. The experiences at Nauvoo and Independence were characteristic of the times and places named. I was at Nauvoo

1 In his "Diary," Joseph says of marriage, or sealing, for eternity: "Except a man and his wife enter into an everlasting covenant and be married for eternity, while in this probation, by the power and authority of the Priesthood, they will cease to increase when they die; that is, they will not have any children after the resurrection. But those who are married by the power and authority of the Priesthood in this life, and continue without committing the sin against the Holy Ghost, will continue to increase and have children in celestial glory."—Millennial Star, Vol. XXI, p. 168.
affidavits which was one of the reasons why he was not in harmony with the Reorganization. 1

Lastly, Mr. Smith objects to the testimony of the Robinsons on the score that it conflicts with other testimony given by Mr. Bays.

It will be observed that these witnesses claim that this interview with Hyrum Smith took place in the fall of 1843—November or December—and that he then said "he had heretofore opposed the doctrine;" while three of Bays' witnesses; viz.: Mrs. Thompson (p. 171), Leonard Soby (p. 174), and David Fullmer (p. 175), declare that Hyrum Smith read the revelation and indorsed the doctrine on the 12th of August before. Bays should notice that his witnesses condemn each other.

Now, I may be blind, but I can not see the force of this argument. These witnesses do not contradict one another, but are in perfect agreement. In his affidavit, Robinson says that Hyrum said "he heard the voice of the Lord give the revelation on spiritual wifery (polygamy) to his brother Joseph, and that while he had heretofore (before July 12, 1843) opposed the doctrine, he was wrong, and his brother Joseph was right all the time." Mr. Smith makes his mistake by supposing that "heretofore" means before "the latter part of November, or in December, 1843," whereas it means before July 12, 1843, the date on which the "Revelation on Celestial Marriage" is said to have been received. And this explanation agrees with the facts as we know them. When Utney Jacobs' pamphlet was published in the fall of 1842, Hyrum Smith, according to John D. Lee, was very much opposed to it and denounced polygamy as "from beneath;" on the 12th of July following, he was very favorable to it, according to William Clayton, and said that he could convince any reasonable man or woman of the truthfulness of the "Revelation," and this agrees with what Hyrum told Robinson that he had, on that date, heard the voice of the Lord and had been converted to the doctrine of polygamy; on the 12th of August he read the "Revelation" to the High Council, as claimed by Mrs. Thompson, Fullmer and Soby, and again expressed himself as favorable to it; and later he had the conversation with the Robinsons given in their affidavits, at which time he also favored it. Where do these "witnesses condemn each other"?

ADMISSION OF JUSTUS MORSE.

The original of the following affidavit was for a number of years in the possession of Mr. Zenas H. Gurley, of Canton, Missouri, but has recently been turned over by him to R. B. Neal, of Pikeville, Kentucky. While Mr. Morse was not a leader among the Josephites, he was a member of their church, which makes his testimony most important. It plainly shows that polygamy was strongly intrenched at Nauvoo as early as 1842, which never could have been had Joseph Smith been opposed to it. Although this affidavit covers more ground than we have been considering, as it plainly shows that Joseph Smith was guilty of a number of things denied by the Josephites, I give it in full.
sealed to me for eternity in Macedonia, by father John Smith, uncle to the Prophet. This woman was the wife of another man, but was to be mine in eternity—and the said father John Smith, also taught me that if an unmarried woman was sealed to me that she was mine for time as well as eternity and that I was not limited as to number.

In the years 1843-4, at Macedonia, Illinois, father John Smith aforesaid, instructed me in the things of the kingdom, and stated that Joseph fearing he would be killed before the mysteries of the Endowment were given, had given Endowment to twenty-four of the priesthood, with their wives at Nauvoo, Ill. And having been shown the Endowment Garment, and Robe, by father John Smith, at the time aforesaid, and subsequently at Nauvoo, and in Utah having seen their Endowment Garments and Robes—I testify and say that to all appearance of style they are identical with those shown me by the said father John Smith.

In the years 1843 and 4, Elder Amasa Lyman and father John Smith again taught me the doctrine of spiritual wifey or polygamy, and in the years 1845 and 6 Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball taught me the doctrine also, and this doctrine was commonly talked, discussed and argued among the Saints during these years, especially was this the practice among those who were able to stand strong meat.

In May, 1844, was sent by the Prophet Joseph Smith, to Ohio, and instructed by him and councillors to electeer and work for Joseph's election to the Presidency of the United States, was thoroughly provided with papers and documents showing the Prophet's views on Government, etc. Just before getting on board the boat in Nauvoo, Ill, was blessed by the Prophet at the water's edge and promised great blessings on my mission, and especially instructed to maintain his character against all calumnies, which thing I was bound to do under any and all circumstances and to sustain him, because of my oath as a Danite.

I am now just turning seventy-eight years. And after fifty-four years of experience in the Church as aforesaid, and seeing now the errors and wrongs of the past committed in the name of the Lord by the Prophet and his people, and while I still believe that Joseph Smith was called of God, I feel it my duty to give

and make this statement that whoever reads these lines that they may be benefited by them, and take heed and be wise, and never follow any man, excepting those who follow Christ, accepting no man as an exemplar no, none but the Lord Jesus Christ, for, I do not know as I testify, that men who are recognized and noticed in the revelations of Joseph Smith in the Doctrine and Covenants as men of God, were Danites and practiced the obligations of their oaths at the selfsame time.

JUSTUS MORSE.

PLEASANTON, IOWA, March 23, 1887.

Witness:—S. Beach.

Subscribed and sworn to before me a Notary Public in and for Decatur County, Iowa, this 24th day of March, 1887.

(Sum)  
ROYAL RICHARDSON, Notary Public.

STATE OF KENTUCKY, }  
County of Pike.  

I, W. B. Taylor, Clerk of the Pike County Court for the County and State aforesaid, certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of an original affidavit produced to me by Rev. B. B. Neal, of Pikeville, Pike County, Kentucky, of Justus Morse, an Elder and High Priest of The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Given under my hand and seal of office this 22nd day of December, 1909.

(Sum)  
W. B. TAYLOR, Clerk Pike County Court.
The connection of Lyman Wight and his faction with polygamy is brought out in the following interview between Elder Brigham H. Roberts and Mr. Gideon Carter, who was formerly a member of Wight's faction. The statements herein given were sworn to by Mr. Carter before J. C. Christy, a notary public in and for San Bernardino County, California, on the 27th of February, 1874:

**Question by B. H. Roberts:** Did Lyman Wight teach and practice plural marriage?

**Answer:** He did. I remember that while he 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 through some misunderstanding. I understand 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 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.

That revelation was made known to some of the Twelve before Joseph Smith's death; and after it was read in one of the council meetings with some of the Twelve, Joseph bore testimony that it was of God, and that it was a principle wherein there was wisdom, truth and virtue, and capable of bringing great good to the world; but owing to the sinfulness of men, and their weakness, it would damn more men than it would save. This is the explanation that Lyman Wight gave for the existence of polygamy in that branch of the church over which he held jurisdiction; the explanation given to the younger members of his following who found no warrant for the practice in the Book of Mormon or in the Doctrine and Covenants.

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. Mr. Wight, to meet the inquiries of some of his followers, in a pamphlet that was gotten out published what purported to be a copy of the revelation received by Joseph Smith, but in connection with it there were many rules to be observed by those entering into those plural marriage relations which I do not find in the revelation published by the Mormons in Utah. There were things in that revelation that caused some dissatisfaction, and the pamphlets were withdrawn from circulation and soon afterwards the practice of plural marriage in what may be called his branch of the Church was discontinued. Mr. Wight gave as a reason for this step the prejudice of the world against it; and said the people were not pure enough to live up to that order of marriage. After this there were no more plural marriages among his followers, though those who had already entered into that order maintained the wives they had taken.

**Question by B. H. Roberts:** Did Orange L. Wight marry your sister Rizilla as his third wife?
Answer: He did, in Galispa County, Texas, in 1849.

Question by B. H. Roberts: What relation do you sustain to the Mormon Church in Utah, Mr. Carter?

Answer: No relation whatever. I am not a member of that Church.¹

The connection of William Smith and his faction with polygamy has been conclusively proved. Three of his wives, Priscilla, Sarah and Hannah, went to Utah with the Brighamites, and one of them was still living a few years ago.² We also have evidence to show that he advocated the doctrine from the stand at Nauvoo shortly after his brother’s death and that he introduced it into his own faction as a tenet of faith at a conference held at Palestine, Lee County, Illinois, in October, 1851.³ It was the latter that caused Jason W. Briggs to leave his faction.

That he publicly taught polygamy, soon after the death of Joseph, is proved by the testimony of Cyrus H. Wheelock given during the course of the Temple-lot Suit.

I never heard Joseph Smith teach the practice of polygamy from the stand; never heard any elder of the church preach it publicly from the stand in Nauvoo, until after the death of Joseph Smith. After Joseph Smith was dead I heard polygamy preached from the pulpit publicly in Nauvoo, by William Smith.


²“Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage,” p. 88. In the celebrated Temple-lot Suit, Mary Ann West testified: “I was married to William Smith by Brigham Young; there was nobody but William Smith and myself present at the time of the marriage. I witnessed one other plural marriage to William Smith; her name was Mary Jones. Brigham Young performed that ceremony; nobody was present that I remember of.”—Abstract, pp. 379, 380. Again: “He married me first, then married Mary Jones, and then a young girl by the name of Priscilla Morgan. I did not consent to either one of the marriages.”—Ibid, p. 382.

³J. W. Briggs says of the introduction of polygamy at this conference: “October 6th of that year (1851) they threw off the mask, in a council called at Priests’ Lodge, and confessed to the belief in and practice of polygamy in the name of the Lord.”—Veil Lifted, p. 9.
He stated a great many things; undertook to prove that polygamy was right, and that that order of marriage would be restored, and he preached so many strange things there to the people that Elder John Taylor got up and corrected him. . . . Yes, sir, it was forbidden, and William Smith was cut off from the church because he preached that. That was in the winter of 1844.—Abstract, p. 384.

The faction under James J. Strang, judging by their official utterances, did not take up polygamy until 1848. Prior to that time, their prophet vehemently denounced it as a doctrine and practice of the devil and pronounced a curse upon the heads of those who advocated it. In August, 1846, at a conference held at Kirtland, Ohio, the following resolution was adopted:

Resolved unanimously. That we utterly disclaim the whole system of polygamy known as the spiritual wife system lately set up in Nauvoo, by the apostates (Brighamites) who claim the authority there, and will neither practice such things nor hold any fellowship with those that teach or practice such things.

This was followed in July, 1847, by an article from the pen of Strang, entitled “Polygamy Not Possible in a Free Government,” which appeared in the Strangite paper, Zion’s Reveille, and during the same year a number of his most influential followers were cut off for holding this doctrine.

But, in 1848, Strang’s views underwent a change and he became a polygamist, claiming to have received a revelation in which the practice was enjoined upon him. The report goes that when Strang adopted plural marriage his wife left him, taking with her their three children, and that he traveled over the country on his proselyting tours with one of his plural wives, to whom he gave the name of “Charles Douglas,” dressed in the apparel of a man. Strang often boasted that “Charlie” was the
best missionary he had. However, when Strang was shot and it was told him that he must die, he pleaded to be carried home to his first wife, "Mary." This was done, and it is said she forgave him all and that he died peacefully in her arms.

As for the rest of the factions, I have not the data at hand from which to speak, but, as we have seen, it is admitted by the President of the Josephite Church that "nearly all" of them had plural marriage in some form. Now, as all of the original Apostles and a majority of the factions, independent of, and antagonistic to, one another as they were, taught and practiced polygamy, is it not natural to infer that they obtained this doctrine from the same fountain-head—the teachings of the Mormon Prophet himself?

THE LEGAL BATTLE OVER POLYGAMY.

Polygamy was first publicly announced as a doctrine of the Mormon faith on the 29th day of August, 1852, at a meeting held in the tabernacle at Salt Lake City, Utah. At the morning service, Apostle Orson Pratt delivered a lengthy discourse in defense of the doctrine, during the course of which he said:

It is quite unexpected to me, brethren and sisters, to be called upon to address you this forenoon; and still more so, to address you upon the principle which has been named, namely, a plurality of wives. It is rather new ground for me; that is, I have not been in the habit of publicly speaking upon this subject, and it is rather new ground to the inhabitants of the United States, and not only to them, but to a portion of the inhabitants of Europe; a portion of them have not been in the habit of preaching a doctrine of this description; consequently, we shall have to break up new ground. It is well known, however, to the congregation before me, that the Latter Day Saints have embraced the doctrine of a plurality of wives, as a part of their religious faith.—Journal of Discourses, Vol. I., p. 54.

At the afternoon session, Brigham Young said:

You heard Brother Pratt state, this morning, that a Revelation would be read this afternoon which was given previous to Joseph's death. It contains a doctrine, a small portion of the world is opposed to; but I can deliver a prophecy upon it. Though that doctrine has not been preached by the Elders, this people have believed in it for many years. The original copy of this Revelation was burnt up. William Clayton was the man who wrote it from the mouth of the Prophet. In the meantime, it was in Bishop Whitney's possession. He wished the privilege to copy it, which Brother Joseph granted. Sister Emma burnt the original. The reason why I mention this, is, because that the people who did know of the Revelation suppose it is not now in existence.

The revelation will be read by you. The principle spoken upon by Brother Pratt, this morning, we believe in. And I tell you—for I know it—it will sail over, and ride triumphantly above all the prejudice and priest-craft of the day; it will be fostered and believed in by the more intelligent portions of the world, as one of the best doctrines ever proclaimed to any people.... This Revelation has been in my possession many years; and who has known it? None but those who should know it. I keep a patent lock on my desk, and there does not anything leak out that should not.—Deseret News, Sept. 14, 1852.

How dismally this prediction has failed, is well known to all who are familiar with the history of the Mormon Church in Utah.

With the public promulgation of the doctrine, polygamy in all its glory was ushered in, and for the thirty years following was practiced without much effective opposition from the Federal Government.

The first enactment against polygamy was in the passage of the Morrill bill through Congress in 1862, which became a law by the signature of President Lincoln in July of that year. This, however, was ignored

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