

Joseph Smith III and Elvira Ann Cowles, Plural Wife of Joseph Smith Jr.

--letter of Joseph Smith III, from Canton, to Emma Knight, dated April 14, 1855, at Utah State Historical Society, in part:

"Angeline I am glad to hear is doing well. Is Elvira in Salt Lake City yet or where is she."

--P.S. to above letter: "P.S. Mrs Knight or Holmes please forward if Emma is still at Galesburg."

--Explanatory letter of this document from Ralph Martin McGrath, 1930 Brookhill Drive, Salt Lake City, Utah, dated November 1, 1966, in part:

--"Angeline" is the wife of Ebenezer Robinson

--"Elvira" is Elvira Ann Cowles, the eldest daughter of Austin Cowles and Phebe Wilbur, Miss Knight's aunt. She is also at this time, the wife of Jonathan Harriman Holmes, one of the personal body guards of the Prophet and was living in Farmington at this time. The Mormon branch of the church lists Elvira as one of the plural wives of the Prophet and this is asserted, also, by the Welling family unpublished history here in Utah. My mother stated that the women knew of this marriage and that they understood why neither Joseph or his mother would admit it. This was an understanding and not a difference between the families. I find no verifiable account that states that Austin Cowles knew of it until after he was whittled out of Nauvoo.