RLA NOTES FOR FAULRING REVIEW OF:
[Prepared the latter part of the week of May 22, 1998 and the week following.]

I. CHECKLIST OF GENERAL ISSUES

1. POSITIVES

   a. High level of research, generally good judgment in use of materials, a new and virtually comprehensive collection of data pertaining to JS and introduction of plural marriage. Regularly includes the spiritual experiences of JS wives in their conversions to the principle. Length and quality of research is impressive—all serious students of JS indebted for this massive collection that took serious effort over years to assemble. Imp. to realize the limitations of such a collection--C has done what possible to reconstruct lives, but even then it is mainly outward events, with regular observations that little is known of private lives and inner feelings. For most women, the pattern of biography moves through a family conversion to Mormonism, gathering to Nauvoo, some type of conversion to plural marriage, and the sacrifices of the exodus and pioneer life in Utah. The author stresses tragedy and sorrow, but the overall reality is the remarkable power of faith of most of the wives that are profiled. C has recovered the history of a group of impressive women who gave all for establishing a latter-day dispensation and expanding family kingdoms of the hereafter.

   Important to know viewpoint of author, and he gives it specifically: I recommend quoting his own self-definition in full, p. 629, 2d par. from bottom, found under his heading, “The Supernatural.” C generally states the viewpoint of the parties involved, but his interpretations of the massive materials have high and low points.

2. NEGATIVES

   a. Marred by bias against plural marriage, with major editorializing on subject throughout.

   Ex.: xiii to xv explains the title (Sac. Lone.) is chosen because his “central thesis” is that Mormon polyg. “was a social system that simply did not work in nineteenth century America,” since the “practical result, for the woman, was solitude.” Something is wrong here. The preface argues this point with a few non-JS examples. Is author claiming the book proves this—or he wrote the book because he has this premise? This emotional component crops up in occasional statements that read more like propaganda than history. Agnes did not return to Utah after Pickett deserted here, the author implies, because “polygamy was almost an institutionalized form of marital neglect” (170). Orson Whitney followed his grandfather and father “in accepting the onerous burden of polygamy” (531). (Actually, Orson married his second wife with the consent of the first, living in the normative dual wife pattern in Utah.) However, on many occasions C shows more objectivity when he reports why polygamy was practiced--here I recommend an example, quoting part or all of the 2d full para. on p. 312: “Accepting polygamy was a matter of integrity for both Latter-day Saint men and women, given
... their acceptance of Smith as a direct conduit of revelation.”

Comment: the result is that chapter titles and interpretation foster the “victimized woman” approach. Joseph Smith’s murder brought about adjustments that were not the fault of the system. P. 432 is soapbox oratory, not fair history, as C explains how Emily Partridge suffered. He allowed Emma to force the Partridges out, but it was easy for him because he had some 30 other wives to turn to—but that faults JS when C says he had no choice in the Partridge matter. C says JS “allowed the marriages [of the Partridges] to lapse.” That misses the point that he never said the eternal sealings were invalid. C is anxious to prove that in polygamy, “when practised on a day-to-day basis, the plural wife is not given financial or emotional support.” One of his examples is Emily in the snow with her baby in the Iowa exodus. C essentially faults the system when the exile of a people was superimposed upon it. Perhaps Brigham was later penurious with Emily—I haven’t checked it out—but he did give her a home outright in Salt Lake City (418). Joseph took no responsibility for support (455)? He tried to have a number of women live in the Mansion House, and C acknowledges in the Dulcena (he spells Delcena) Johnson Sherman and Louisa Beaman chapters that JS was contributing to their support. However, generalizing from the large families misses Ivin’s statistics on the average Utah polygamous household: 66% had 2 wives, and 21% had three wives. (Stanley S. Iivins, “Notes on Mormon Polygamy,” Western Humanities Review 10 [Summer 1956]: 299-39.) It is also unfair to imply that polygamy failed because of special tensions that arose in Nauvoo at the time Joseph Smith was required to establish the system in controlled secrecy. A major flaw in the book is studying the JS wives competently, but then using that atypical example to generalize on the system of polygamy. During and at the end of the Presendia chapter, he uses her as some kind of illustration of normative plural marriage: “So her life exemplifies the tragic ambiguity of Mormon polygamy” (144).

b. The author occasionally expresses extreme (and irrelevant) Mormon feminist positions. E.g., p. 706 comments that “the church has become increasingly less tolerant of women’s independent voices,” adding that the unofficial periodicals and organizations are “generally viewed with suspicion, if not hostility by members of the exclusively male Mormon hierarchy.” I fail to see the place of these opinions in a study of Joseph Smith. If we want to debate that issue, the Church is cautious about any alternative voices, not simply female alternative voices. The Mormon women’s movement in the nineteenth century was doctrinally in harmony with church leaders, which is not the trend of some sectors of it today. C also stresses the sacrifices of the Nauvoo wives by downgrading Joseph Smith, which is unnecessary—it seems inaccurate to call him “a nearly infallible figure” ranking higher than Old Testament prophets (455). This is less history than private agenda to use that not so subtle sarcasm, though he quickly explains he is speaking from “our late-twentieth century monogamous and feminist perspectives” (45-56). The rest of this page says essentially that it is too bad later church presidents were too loyal to Joseph Smith to see how polygamy failed and caused grief. If that is the measure of truth, we can also eliminate tithing, fasting, and even getting up early to attend church meetings.
c. **Confusing method of citing information in lump sums.** Scholarship is analysis, with accountability for particularized conclusions. I find myself wasting time searching for a source, when the traditional numbering system would have pinpointed it immediately. As far as space, notes are introduced by a phrase about the issue—so little is gained in compressing material.

d. **Author has some weaknesses in early church history.** E.g., p. 24 and p. 254 are examples of C saying that JS “wrote” in his journal, and p. 24 (after conference of 1841) states that stake officials had more authority than the Twelve. The same Quinn succession view is taken on pp. 539–40, when the Twelve seem not to have authority to direct a high council meeting, even though they had been sustained by the Church as “presidents.” On p. 259 says that most Mormon men were Danites, which adopts one of the weakest of the Quinn contentions in *Mormon Hierarchy* 1—John Corrill, who watched Danites closely as a dissenter, said: “This society increased, as near as I could learn, to the number of three hundred” (*Brief History*, p. 32). There were at least 700 Mormon men in the ranks defending Far West, so those who were official Danites were a minority. Quinn’s list is meaningless, since he adopts no distinctions between the generic term (used of all Mormon defenders by non-Mormons) and formal membership in the organization. P. 607 shows lack of empathy in commenting on baptism for healing of Sarah Peake Noon and Nancy Maria Winchester on July 16, 1845: “Fortunately both women survived this dunking in the waters of the great river.” Since Joseph baptized Emma for health, and many others did also, one would expect reverence instead of sarcasm for a sincere act of faith. Elsewhere, C shows empathy for religious experience but sometimes explains it in naturalistic terms.

e. **Prior studies:** Whether or not we fault C for not making Bachman more visible, I think we should state clearly that Bachman first set a standard for carefully testing evidence and coming up with a historically defensible list. Brodie takes marginal evidence and comes up with an inflated list. Though C acknowledges Bachman, he lists him as one of several general studies (633), whereas Bachman is a book-length, specialized study of the very area C is writing about. Furthermore, Bachman is damned with faint praise and associated with the *Dialogue* article of Van Wagoner as “pioneering treatments” (639). I hope we say Bachman is still very important to consult on the subject of Joseph Smith’s wives.

II. METHOD IN DETERMINING THE NUMBER OF WIVES

**COMMENT:** Type of evidence is a big issue—Brodie lists 48, on the basis of taking any Mormon history mention. Compton brings this down to 33 by requiring historical verification, stating (p. ix) that there is further research now, and that “scholars have faulted her for relying on antagonistic sources that have since proven unreliable.” But Compton unduly relies on “antagonistic sources,” for he says (p. 1) that “certain lists have proved to be reliable.” He thinks Bennett’s list is “adequately substantiated.” This is not critical enough. Bennett names who did the sealing in two out of seven cases, but he may not have personal information on the other five women only named—Bennett tells some very tall tales of Nauvoo with names, and many are unreliable. By itself, Compton does not take the Bennett list at face value, since
“possible wives,” numbers three and four are from the Bennett list. As far as Jenson, a woman on his list is not evidence—but a lead with need for verification. The same is true of women sealed posthumously to Jos. Smith, which Compton admits by his list of “early posthumous marriages” (p. 8), with comment that this by itself is not evidence of living sealings. Compton says “possible wives” are supported by “limited” or late evidence (p. 2). He does not classify a woman as a Joseph wife if she only appears on one of the above marginal listings, but he does so if she appears on two or three. But that is not reliable evaluation—appearance on any one of the above “lists,” or appearance on all three, should be subject to verification by the woman or a friend who knew. By this standard the following four “wives” should be subtracted from those who come up to historical standards.

a. Lucinda Morgan Harris.

C sets up ch. 2 with the report of Lucinda weeping at the viewing, but other women loved Joseph in the gospel and did the same. In fact, the beginning of the B.W. Richmond report has Lucinda treasuring the picture of her former spouse. As far as evidence of a living sealing of Lucinda to Joseph, C gives Andrew Jenson’s list as a “sympathetic attestation” (43). However, Jenson did not begin his historical work until about 1880 (b. 1850, migrated ‘66), and without a Jenson reference to the source of information, his list by itself is non-evidence. The only other source used for Lucinda is the Sarah Pratt report that “Lucinda had admitted a long-standing relationship with Smith” (43). Interesting here that C cleans up the source, giving the impression that it is reasonable, but does not quote the original, which shows the intense bias. This in spite of saying (629, “Recovering Clues”) that primary sources will be given in full. Maybe this is not a primary source, but C uses it as such, without quoting it. In the original “poison-pen” book of Wyl, which is quoted by Brodie, it reads that Sarah Pratt lamented over Joseph’s proposal, only to have Lucinda reply: “I don’t see anything so horrible in it. Why, I am his mistress since four years” (Wyl, Mormon Portraits, p. 60, quoting Sarah Pratt). The footnote (650) then acknowledges that this was labelled “an affair,” and evaluates it as “antagonistic, third-hand, and late.” With that view, C should not have used this single statement as his only proof that Lucinda was sealed to Joseph, fudging a bit by treating Jenson’s list as a source. He tries for a save by quoting the Newell-Avery speculation that Lucinda was a plural wife, but Sarah Pratt’s label of “mistress” was an embellishment by either Sarah Pratt or W. Wyl.” Well, a guess is not evidence, as C admits by some final fishtailing: “Certainly, if Joseph married Lucinda in Far West, it was a typical, poorly documented, pre-Nauvoo marriage” (650). So the discussion ends with the big “if.” Also, the “typical” language gives a false sense of assurance, since outside of Fanny Alger, we are not sure there was another “typical, poorly documented, pre-Nauvoo marriage.”

b. Elizabeth Durfee

At p. 260 C argues the case for Mrs. Durfee. She is absent from Jenson’s list, “but many other sources evidence her marriage” to Joseph. “Evidence” is a strong word, and inappropriate here, since “imply” is what C really means. She is on Bennett’s list, and my reservations on that
are stated in the comment just before the Lucinda Harris discussion. This and a post-martyrdom sealing are the only evidences of marriage. Yes, there are plenty of references to Mrs. Durfee’s prominence, and assistance in contacting wives to be. C cites Joseph Jackson in saying that a “Mrs. Tailor” (why this spelling—Jackson originals have “Tailor” or “Taylor”), and mothers Durfee and Sessions had this function. Since Mrs. Sessions was sealed to the Prophet, C claims the same for the other two. But Mrs. Taylor is a phantom, and Durfee is in question—C should not try to use leverage to make one into three. This means that Bennett plus the Wyl-Sarah Pratt reference are the two items that really support a judgment of marriage here. In the text, C overstates the language attributed to Sarah Pratt, who “mentions that she heard a Mrs. Durfee in Salt Lake City profess to have been one of Smith’s wives” (260). C shows care to give the full quotation in the note (701). Assuming it is accurate may be a problem, since Wyl begins that page by claiming Sarah said Joseph had relations with far more than 80 women. Anyway, Sarah does not think Joseph was sealed in life to Mrs. Durfee, and speculates (correctly) that she may have been sealed to him in the Nauvoo Temple. Sarah continues: “At all events, she boasted here in Salt Lake of having been one of Joseph’s wives.” So what did Mrs. Durfee actually mean? She could have been a Joseph wife either by a living sealing or one after his death. This absolutely does give evidence for a living sealing. C tries a save by saying: “Elizabeth’s own statement that she married Joseph is more valuable that [read than] Sarah’s uncertainty about whether Elizabeth was sealed to Joseph during his lifetime” (260). This is a bootstraps comment, for the ambiguity is in the comment attributed to Elizabeth in the first place. Moreover, the text is in error that Sarah says “she heard” Mrs. Durfee make the statement—Sarah only says Mrs. Durfee “boasted here in Salt Lake City,” not that Sarah heard her personally.

c. Sarah Cleveland

On p. 277 Compton gives two reasons for naming Sarah Cleveland as a Joseph Smith wife. First is the listing by Andrew Jenson—I consider this no evidence, and it is interesting that she is out of supposed chronology by being the last on the list. The other reason given is that she witnessed Eliza Snow’s sealing to the Prophet. This suggests to Compton that she was involved with polygamy at that time. It is also possible that the sealing took place in Mrs. Cleveland’s home, where Eliza was living, without personal involvement of Mrs. C. with plural marriage. This evidence does not tip the scale for the historical judgment that Joseph was sealed to Sarah Cleveland. The notes on this point are bare because the evidence is bare.

d. Nancy Maria Winchester

Her chapter is entitled “Outline of a Shadow,” which also suggests that little is known about a suspected sealing to the Prophet. P. 606 gives 11 lines of indirect information, namely, appearance on Andrew Jenson’s list, plus being named by Orson F. Whitney in a group of women Heber married that were Joseph Smith’s wives. (This is on pp. 418-19 of the 1945 reprint of the 1888 biography of HC Kimball.) However, Whitney’s list also includes Mary Houston and Sarah Scott, both of which C evaluates as only “possible wives” [8]). So he is inconsistent to pick out Nancy Winchester as meeting historical standards but treat Whitney as
secondary in the case of these other women on that list. C claims a difference because Nancy is also on Jenson's list, but in reality none of us know where Jenson or Whitney got their information. Thus two clues may increase curiosity but are not actually stronger than one clue. The "cumulative evidence" argument for such marginal references is not up to historical standards. So C is overconfident: "These two witnesses, taken together, make a good case for Nancy as a plural spouse of Joseph. . . . Nothing more is known of this union" (606).

III. SEXUAL RELATIONS AND POLYANDRY

The above critique applies a consistent method: a plural wife must be substantiated by a personal statement or one of a witness or reliable friend relaying information from the woman sealed or witnesses of the event. All of Compton's wives meet this objective standard, with the exception of the four women subtracted above. This gives a total of 29 known wives of the Prophet, in the following categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status of women sealed to Joseph Smith</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single with no prior marriage</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single and widowed</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married to a husband with good church standing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married to a disaffected or non-member husband</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The overview chapter claims "a great deal of evidence that Joseph Smith had sexual relations with his wives" (13). But the documentation is fully discussed in about a page preceding this remark. It amounts to some sexual contact with eight or nine women sealed to him, usually very limited--and in several cases based on ambiguous statements. But C several times extrapolates with unwarranted confidence, as in the case of Zina Huntington Jacobs: "Nothing specific is known about sexuality in their marriage, though judging from Smith's other marriages, sexuality was probably included" (82). That goes against definite data, for somewhat proven relationships with nine gives a percentage of 31% with sexual contact, which does not come up to "probably." But the analyst cannot ignore the potential difference between Joseph's sealings to single women and to married women. In the latter case, only one woman with a husband left evidence of sexual contact. Dealing distinctively with that category, we find evidence of Joseph's intercourse with one woman with an existing husband, but no such evidence for the other seven. The statistic is 13%, which makes it improbable that sealings to married women involved physical relationships.

This raises the appropriateness of the term polyandry, which C inherited from prior scholars but uses with implication of a married woman's full intimacy with two or more husbands. This is also the connotation of the standard definition (Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 10th ed.): "having more than one husband or male mate at one time." Large
polygamous families could include wives with physical relations and others apparently only sealed for eternity. C shows that some women used “time and eternity” to describe their their sealings to the Prophet (21). However, these women could be reflecting ceremonial language, which meant to them that their eternal relationship began on this earth from the point of sealing, not that they had sexual relations with Joseph during earthly lives. If most of Joseph’s marriages to women with husbands were celestial sealings only, then “polyandry” is a misleading term, implying what is not historically established. Sylvia Sessions Lyon explained to her daughter that she avoided a double sexual relationship: “she having been sealed to the Prophet at the time that her husband, Mr. Lyon, was out of fellowship with the Church” (cited 183). C acknowledges that one fair interpretation is that her child was conceived during Windsor’s four years out of the Church. C thinks it “unlikely” that Sylvia denied her husband cohabitation during this period (183), but that is apparently the meaning of her statement. For C, Sylvia’s pregnancy “is convincing evidence that Smith had sexual relations with his wives, including his polyandrous spouses” (183). C periodically generalizes from one case, but throughout the book, C repeats that ideal evidence is lacking for the women’s lives, their sealings, and their relationships with Joseph after the sealings. The theme of “polyandry” is a major one in the book, and it is the least justified by historical documents.

On the above chart, I have placed Lyon is the “disaffected” category, on the basis of Sylvia’s later statement. Percentages are not much affected either way, but there is no other hint of his inner status at the time of the Joseph Smith sealing. C argues Windsor was a believer, and implies there were no problems in the marriage then. However, his attitudes bringing disfellowship may have started earlier. Compton runs ahead of his evidence: “It is certain that at the time of Smith’s marriage to Sylvia, Windsor was a faithful Latter-day Saint who would have accepted Smith as a prophet (179). The marriage was Feb. 8, 1842, and C indicates Windsor did baptisms for the dead, evidently long before that, and was a juror in a case involving Joseph in the month of the sealing. But being drafted for civil duty says nothing about religious faith, nor does C’s 1844 data. The day before the martyrdom, lawyer Reid visited the jail and drew up a list of witnesses for the treason trial scheduled later in the week (HC 6:576, based on Richards’ journal). C says Lyon’s inclusion “confirms that he was a trusted friend of Joseph Smith” (184). That goes too far, for the witness list was crafted not from close supporters of the Prophet, but from those who would be recognized as honest community leaders and non-Mormons who could vouch for the reasonability of the Mormon decisions. Windsor fit these specifications as a leading Nauvoo merchant who had been out of the Church since the fall of 1842.

In the introductory overview and elsewhere, C contends that “in his polyandry” the Prophet “most often married women whose ‘first husbands’ were faithful Latter-day Saints” (543). But that conclusion is overstated either on C’s list of 33 wives or my more cautious lisit of 29. The above table shows four marriages to women whose husbands were clearly faithful to the Church, and four (including Windsor Lyon) whose husbands were non-members or had problems with the Church near the time of their sealings. A 4/4 split does not justify “most often.” My figure is based on subtracting three sealings from C’s list, where evidence is lacking
(Harris, Durfee, and Cleveland). But the variation in figures shows how tenuous generalization can be. In this “faithful husband” category, there is a current parallel to the women sealed to Joseph Smith who also were married for time to faithful Latter-day Saints. Today there are many successful couples married for time after the death of a spouse with whom there is an eternal sealing. In a different category, C debunks the idea that Joseph was sealed to married women because their partners did not believe or were unworthy of a celestial sealing (overview chapter). This reflects some tendency of the book toward either/or thinking. More than one reason for plurality may be operative in these married cases. These include two non-member husbands, plus Norman Buell, whose bitterness against the Church is evident, even in C’s somewhat apologetic treatment. An “unequally yoked” Mormon woman looks to an eternal sealing in eternity, and the Prophet’s actions in these cases established the precedent that eternal sealings may be available.

Was there a spiritual basis for Joseph Smith’s selection of eight married women? That issue is virtually lost in the historical probings of this long study, though God’s authorization of the Prophet’s actions is stressed throughout the 1843 revelation on the subject (D&C 132). C touches on the spiritual background of polygamy in quoting the Prophet’s conversations with Mary Elizabeth Lightner: “Joseph said I was his before I came here” (212). But instead of exploring doctrinal issues here, C prefers to speculate about an earthly source for the concept of the attraction of two like souls who made preexistent covenants. C notes some correlations in Swedenborg’s views and in a vision of upstate New Yorker, Erasmus Stone, who claimed to see male and female spirits seeking their counterparts. Because this doctrine of kindred spirits appears in the Finger Lakes region, C comes close to saying Joseph Smith borrowed it there: “Perhaps the Mormon doctrine of the pre-existence derived in part from this influence” (212). Yet when C’s sources are examined on this point, Erasmus Stone turns up near Syracuse, some 60 miles east of Joseph Smith’s Palymra, and Stone is involved in a movement in the early 1830s, long after the Prophet left the area. Paternity cases are not solved by mere photographic resemblences, and careful local history supplies the historical equivalent of DNA testing. Mormon history has suffered enough in recent years from claimed connections based on geographical proximity or generic ideas in a period.

IV. INTERPRETING DATA ON SINGLE WIVES

1. Implication that the Helen Mar Kimball marriage involved sexual relations. The juxtaposition of the following sentences creates a most misleading impression:

“Helen Mar Kimball, a non-polyandrous wife,, found her marriage to mean much moe, on an earthly plane, than she had dexpecgted . . . In Nauvoo-period theological terminology, there was some ambiguity in the terms “sealing” and “marrriage,” and it is possible that some men and women did not grasp that “sealing” also meant “marriage” and therefore sexual relations” (22).

This recapitulates one of the central problems of the book. It is discussed above that the
author attempts to achieve by definition what he cannot establish by evidence. From Nauvoo until now, Mormons have applied the phrase “time and eternity” to sealing and temple marriage, and some Joseph Smith wives applied the phrase to their marriages. While the phrase describes the marriage as “now and forever,” it does not define the mortal relationship. Marriages under normal circumstances include the sexual dimension, but the Prophet’s Nauvoo marriages established a new marriage system under unusual circumstances. Wives so sealed had a present connection with Joseph Smith, but whether that included physical intimacy would depend on the woman and her circumstances. As discussed, there is only one document establishing physical intimacy after sealing to a woman already having a husband. And in case of Helen Mar Kimball, she is the youngest person sealed the Prophet. Her age (almost 15) is atypical, for no other proved wife (Nancy Winchester is not proved) was that young. This situation is probably related to another atypical factor--Helen says several times that her father took the initiative to arrange the marriage, and very possibly he did so with a view to committing her to the Prophet before her budding social life produced a choice or a proposal. A percentage of young women were married at 16 in that culture, and possibly Heber C. Kimball moved slightly ahead of that age in order to bring about the desired marriage connection with Joseph Smith.

If Helen’s circumstances were so exceptional, there is every reason not to assume a sexual dimension. C carefully walks the reader through Helen’s crisis of accepting, and then the more difficult crisis of adjusting after the sealing. The question is adjusting to what? By concentrating mainly on Helen’s feelings of shock at the new way of life, C leaves it open to assume this was a sexual adjustment, which he implies on p. 22 and does not discuss in the Helen Mar Kimball chapter. There all we learn is that “she initially had a different perception of the meaning of the marriage than the reality turned out to be” (501). Helen’s prose and her poem made part of her autobiography tell the same story: “Bar’d out from social scenes by this thy destiny” (500). Her cross was not a new relationship with Joseph Smith—but the elimination of laughing and dancing with her peers, who now shut her out from their good times. Since that is her complaint, it seems that Joseph Smith made no demands on her. No evidence shows Joseph spent time with her, except in the presence of Heber and Vilate or seeing her at social gatherings. When Helen’s main problem is understood, the second line of her poem on the sealing becomes clearer: “The step I now am taking’s for eternity alone” (499). In C’s view, she thought she was free to marry another in mortality, but Helen reports that her father had “a great desire to be connected with the Prophet” (498). The blunt Heber would not miscommunicate this goal. Instead, Helen’s point is that she understood nothing would change for the present—she would be free for social life, and “no one need be the wiser” about the sealing (499). The expectation that her present life would not change includes the assumption from what was said that she would not have the burden of a sexual relationship. This is not the only thing she meant by “eternity alone,” but her phrase also connotes that. Thus Stanley B. Kimball read the phrase as saying the marriage was “unconsummated.” (Heber C. Kimball [Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981], p. 98.)

2. The confidential letter of 1842 regarding Sarah Ann Whitney.
What is the purpose of the letter, and why are the Whitneys told to come only if Emma can be avoided? C is careful on why Joseph asks the parents to bring Sarah Ann to see him when he was hiding from unjust arrest. Since the letter spells out ordinances to be given, C avoids the sensational: “This is not just a meeting of husband and plural wife; it is a meeting with Sarah’s family, with a religious aspect (350). But on the issue of keeping the visit secret, C jumps to a conclusion: “Clearly, Emma does not know of the marriage to Sarah Ann, so Joseph must meet Sarah only when there is no risk of his first wife finding out” (350). C followed others in this conclusion, but there are other possibilities. At times Emma was angry when Joseph saw wives she knew about. The letter seeks to avoid a conflict, without giving any definite insight into Emma’s knowledge of Joseph’s recent sealing to Sarah Ann.

3. Oliver Cowdery’s Kirtland Polygamy.

Do we want to register a dissent on C’s negative view of the BY report that OC in trouble with Joseph because he went ahead in polygamy without permission?

4. Undercurrent of Joseph’s intimidation. Sometimes C is fair, that JS told men and women to ask and get their own testimony of polygamy. But sometimes, as p. 407, he is represented as claiming “it was sacrilegious to doubt.” Free agency is very much in play in all of JS relationships with intended wives.