ELDER GROVER'S TESTIMONY

-----
HE HEARD THE REVELATION ON CELESTIAL MARRIAGE READ BEFORE
THE HIGH COUNCIL IN NAUVOO
-----
SALT LAKE CITY, U. T.,
January 11th, 1886.

Editor Deseret News:
On noting the brief article lately copied by the NEWS from the
Ogden Herald of January 5th, concerning Leonard Sobey's testimony
as to the revelation on Celestial Marriage having being read before
the High Council in Nauvoo, I sent it to Elder Hosea Stout and
asked him if he was present at the High Council referred to, and
requested him, if so, to give me the names and addresses of the
others present and still living, so far as he knew them. In his
answer he says he was not present, but believed that Elder Thomas
Grover of Farmington was. At once I wrote to Elder Grover for the
information sought from Brother Stout, and the inclosed is his
reply.
As an interesting item of history, I think that Brother
Grover's letter ought to be published in the NEWS.
I will add that I have repeatedly heard the late Bishop Aaron
Johnson and the late Apostle Charles C. Rich say that they were
present at the memorable meeting of the High Council of Nauvoo,
referred to, and have heard them [illegible] upon the consequent
apostasy of its president, William Marks, and others because of
their rejection of this grand and glorious principle.
Your brother in the Gospel,
A. MILTON MUSSER.
-----
ELDER GROVER'S LETTER.

FARMINGTON, Jan. 10, 1885. [sic; 1886]

A. M. Musser:
Your note is before me, and I answer with pleasure.
Now, concerning the matter about which you ask information, I
don't know of any member of that High Council living except myself.
Leonard Sobey may still be living. He apostatized on the strength
of that revelation.
The High Council of Nauvoo was called together by the Prophet
Joseph Smith, to know whether they would accept the revelation on
celestial marriage or not.
The Presidency of the Stake, Wm. Marks, Father Coles, and the
late Apostle Charles C. Rich were there present. The following are
the names of the High Council that were present, in their order,
viz: Samuel Bent, William Huntington, Alpheus Cutler, Thomas
Grover, Lewis D. Wilson, David Fullmer, Aaron Johnson, Newel
Knight, Leonard Sobey, Isaac Allred, Henry G. Sherwood and, I
think, Samuel Smith.
Brother Hyrum Smith was called upon to read the revelation. He
did so, and after the reading said "Now, you that believe this
revelation and go forth and obey the same shall be saved, and you
that reject it shall be damned."
We saw this prediction verified in less than one week. Of the Presidency of the Stake, Wm. Marks and Father Coles rejected the revelation; of the Council that were present Leonard Sobey rejected it. From that time forward there was a very strong division in the High Council. These three men greatly diminished in spirit day after day, so that there was a great difference in the line of their conduct, which was perceivable to every member that kept the faith.

From that time forward we often received instructions from the Prophet as to what was the will of the Lord and how to proceed. After this the Prophet’s life was constantly in danger. Being one of his life guard, I watched his interest and safety up to the time of his death.


THOMAS GROVER.

Thomas Grover

Comments: Grover, Thomas (Male) Thomas was one of the original pioneers of Utah. Born in Whitehall, Washington, New York, July 22, 1807, the son of Thomas Grover and Polly Spalding. As the father, Thomas, had died during the previous February, the rearing and teaching of the infant, as well as that of his brothers and sisters was left to his widowed mother. When the boy was twelve years old he entered a boat on the Erie Canal as a cabin boy and twelve years later he became captain of the boat "Shamrock." In 1828 he married Caroline Whiting, the daughter of Nathaniel Whiting and Mercy Young, and while they were still living at Whitehall, their oldest daughter Jane was born. A little later he moved to Freedom, New York, where three other daughters were born. It was at this point that he first heard the Gospel and became a member of the L.D.S. Church in 1834. From a letter written March 2, 1886 by Caroline Nickerson Hubbard to her daughter Persia Grover Bunnell, the following is taken: "It was in Freedom, Cattaraugus County, New York, where he and his wife first heard and embraced the Gospel. In 1834 the Prophet Joseph and Sidney Rigdon were the ones that bore the message to them and baptized Brother Grover and some others. He removed to Kirtland and helped to build the Temple there. Shortly after his arrival in Kirtland, Brother Grover called on the Prophet. As he knocked at the door the Prophet opened it and said, putting out his hand: 'How do you do, Brother Grover. If God ever sent a man he sent you. I want to borrow every dollar you can spare for immediate use. Brother Grover entered the house and conversed with the Prophet about the situation, offering to let Joseph have what money he needed. Brother Joseph accepted the offer and told Brother Grover to look around and find a location that suited him for a home and then return, when the money he had advanced would be returned to him. In a short time the place was selected, but Brother Grover refused to receive back his money, saying, 'I have sufficient for my needs without it.' From that day the devotion of Thomas Grover to Joseph Smith never wavered." On February 4, 1841, when the Nauvoo Legion was organized with Joseph Smith as lieutenant-general, Thomas Grover was chosen as an aide-de-camp on the general's staff and on January 28, 1842, he was appointed one of his body guards. When Joseph was kidnapped by Wilson and Reynolds, Brother Grover was one of the number who rescued him, also when Joseph was imprisoned at Rock Island his release was effected by Thomas Grover and Stephen Markham. During his lifetime the Prophet gave him a sword which has been a precious heirloom in the family and which is now in the hall of relics at the State Capital of Utah. During the years from 1840 to June, 1844, Brother Grover was sent on three missions through the states of Michigan, New York and southern Canada. In June, 1844, while doing missionary service near Kalamazoo, Michigan, he was warned in a dream to return to Nauvoo. He hesitated about the matter until the warning was repeated the third time. Then he awoke his companion, a Brother Wilson, and they got up, made it a matter of prayer and were told to go at once to Nauvoo. They did so, taking the shortest route possible, and arrived at Carthage just after the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph and his brother Hyrum. Hurrying forward, they overtook the company with the bodies and accompanied them to Nauvoo, where Brother Thomas was requested to assist in the preparation of the bodies for burial. During that service, at the request of Emma Smith, he cut a lock from the Prophet's hair which she divided with him. In October, 1840, Brother Grover's wife, Caroline Whiting, died, leaving six little girls, Jane, Emmeline, Mary, Adeline, Caroline and Eliza Ann; the baby, Emma, died. On February 20, he married Caroline Eliza Nickerson Hubbard, widow of Marshall Hubbard. She was the mother of Persia Grover, born December 27, 1841, and Marshall Grover, born September 27, 1846. This wife Caroline wrote in her journal "that the principle of plural marriage was taught by the Prophet.

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Endnotes

1 (Popup)
LDS Biographical Encyclopedia. Jenson, Andrew. 1951
Volume: 4   Page: 137-139

2 (Popup)
Page: 259

3 (Popup)
Doctrine & Covenants 124

4 (Popup)
Civil Marriages in Nauvoo 1839-45. Cook, Lyndon
Times & Season, March 15, 1841

5 (Popup)
Utah Federal Census; Year: 1870
Thomas Grover  
b. 22 July 1809  
d. 19 Feb 1886

1) Caroline Whiting in 1828, died 17 Nov. 1840?

2) Mrs. Caroline Eliza Nickerson (Hubbard) widow of Marshall Hubbard  
20 Feb 1841, divorced about 1848

3) Hannah Tupper in 1854 - 17 Dec 1844

Thomas Grover - Caroline Whiting - Children

Mary Elizabeth Grover b. 13 April 1833, d. Fredonia, Chautauqua, NY.
Adeline Grover b. 10 Feb 1835

Thomas Grover married Betsy Foot
Hannah Tupper 4 Apr 1844

Thomas Grover His Ancestors and Descendants  
Compiled by Stephen E. Grover and Dean R. Grover  
(Phoenix, AZ: W.A. Krueger Company, 1966)
Territory of Utah

County of Salt Lake

Be it remembered that on this sixth day of July A.D. 1869 personally appeared before me James Jack, a Notary Public in and for Said County Thomas Grover of Davis County, Utah Territory, who was by me sworn in due form of law, and upon his oath saith, that on the [blank] day of August A.D. 1843 Hyrum Smith, Patriarch, Sealed or married to him, by order of President Joseph Smith, two wives, viz. Caroline Whiting and Caroline E. Hubbard, according to the principle and commandment contained in the Revelation on Celestial marriage given "written" July 12 A.D. 1843. Subscribed and Sworn to by the said Thomas Grover the day and year first above written

James Jack
[seal]
Notary Public

[Note: Also found in second record book entitled "40 Affidavits on Celestial Marriage," p. 44.]
[Affidavit of Thomas Grover]

Territory of Utah  
County of Salt Lake S.S.

Be it remembered that on this sixth day of July A. D. 1869 personally appeared before me James Jack, a Notary Public in and for said County Thomas Grover of Davis County, Utah Territory, who was by me sworn in due form of law, and upon his oath saith, that on the [blank space] day of August A. D. 1843 Hyrum Smith, Patriarch, Sealed or married to him, by order of President Joseph Smith, two wives, viz. Caroline Whiting and Caroline E. Hubbard, according to the principle and commandment contained in the Revelation on Celestial marriage given July 12 A. D. 1843.

Subscribed and sworn to by the said Thomas Grover the day and year first above written

Thomas Grover
James Jack
Notary Public

seal

(Joseph F. Smith Collection, Affidavit Book 1:44, LDS archives; typed copy)

[Affidavit of Thomas Grover]

Territory of Utah  
County of Salt Lake S.S.

Be it remembered that on this sixth day of July A. D. 1869 personally appeared before me James Jack, a Notary Public in and for said county Thos. Grover who was by me sworn in due form of law and upon his oath saith that the affidavit of David Fullmer, before me James Jack, on the fifteenth day of June A. D. 1869 is true and correct. And the said Thomas Grover further saith that Hyrum Smith reasoned upon said Revelation for about an hour, clearly explaining the same, and then enjoined it upon said Council, to receive and acknowledge the same, or they would be damned, and further, that from the day that William Marks, A. A. Cowles and L. Soby refused to receive said Revelation as from God they continued to dwindle until they apostatized [apostatized]

Subscribed and sworn to by the said Thomas Grover the day & year above written

Thomas Grover
James Jack
[Notary Public]

(Joseph F. Smith Collection, Affidavit Book 1:42, LDS archives; typed copy)
Sunday, June 10th, 1883--At a mtg. in Centerville, several Apostles and all of the First Council of 70 were present and the discussion of plural marriage came up. "Bro. Thomas Grover testified to having heard the revelation on celestial marriage read by Hyrum Smith in the high council previous to the death of the Prophet. All of the council present excepting three accepted the doctrine, and those three soon afterwards apostatized. Bro. Nobles testified to having performed the first ceremony in celestial marriage in this generation, he sealing his wife's sister to the Prophet Joseph."
He apostatized on the strength of that revelation.

"The High Council of Nauvoo was called together by the Prophet Joseph Smith, to know day, or they would accept the revelation on celestial marriage or not.

"The Presidency of the Stake, Wm. Marks, Father Cowles and the late Apostle Charles C. Rich were there present. The following are the names of the High Council of the Stake present, in their order, viz: Samuel Bent, William Huntington, Alpheus Cutler, Thos. Grover, Lewis D. Wilson, David Fuller and, Aaron Johnson, Newel Knight, Leonard Soby, James Alfred, Henry G. Sherwood and, I think, Samuel H. Smith.

"Brother Hyrum was called upon to read the revelation. He did so, and after the reading said, "Now, you that believe this revelation go forth and obey the same shall be saved, and you that reject it shall be damned.

"We saw this prediction verified in less than one week. Of the Presidency of the Stake, Wm. Marks and Father Cowles rejected the revelation; of the Council that were present Leonard Soby rejected it. From that time forward there was a very strong division in the High Council. Those three men greatly diminished in spirit day after day, so that there was a great difference in the line of their conduct, which was perceivable to every member that kept the faith.

"From that time forward we often received instructions from the Prophet as to what was the will of the Lord and how to proceed.

"After this the Prophet's life was constantly in danger. Being one, of his bodyguard, I watched his interests and safety up to the time of his death.


THOMAS GROVER.

DAVID FULLER'S TESTIMONY.

"Territory" of Utah, County of Salt Lake.

"Be it remembered that on this fifteenth day of June, A. D. 1846, personally appeared before me, James Jack, a notary public in and for said county, David Fuller, who was by me sworn in due form of law, and upon his oath swor, that on about the twelfth day of Aug., A. D. 1843, while in meeting with the High Council (he being a member thereof), in Hyrum Smith's brick office, in the city of Nauvoo, County of Hancock, State of Illinois, Dunbar Wilson made inquiry in relation to the subject of a plurality of wives, as there were rumors about respecting it, and he was satisfied there was something in those remarks, and he wanted to know what it was, upon which Hyrum Smith stepped across the road to his residence, and soon returned bringing with him a copy of the revelation on celestial marriage, given to Joseph Smith, July 23d, A. D. 1843, and read the same to the High Council, and here testimony to its truth. The said David Fuller further said that, to the best of his memory and belief, the following named persons were present: Wm. Marks, Austin A. Cowles, Samuel Bent, Geo. W. Harris, Dunbar Wilson, Wm. Huntington, Levi Jackson, Aaron Johnson, Thos. Grover, David Fuller, Phinehas Richards, James Alfred and Leonard Soby. And the said David Fuller further said that Wm. Marks, Austin A. Cowles and Leonard Soby were the only persons present who did not receive the testimony of Hyrum Smith, and that all the others did receive it from the teaching said, (with any of the said Hyrum Smith.) And further, that the copy of said revelation on celestial marriage, published in the Deseret News extra of September 16th, A. D. 1845, is a true copy of the same.

(Signed) DAVID FULLER.

"Subscribed and sworn to by said David Fuller the day and year above written.

JAMES JACK,
Notary Public.

LEONARD SOBY'S TESTIMONY.

The following was published in the Ogden Herald, in January, 1866:

"Our readers will remember, that in the correspondence which passed between Elder Littlefield and Joseph Smith, Jr., of the reorganized church, some time since, Mr. Smith challenged Elder Littlefield to give the names of parties who were present and heard the revelation on celestial marriage.
a man having more wives than one,' I replied. She looked with amaze-
ment and said, 'What does that mean?' (We were raised Quakers.)
'I mean,' said I, 'that I stood right
there pointing to the place) when
Brother Hyrum read that revelation
the other day.' 'What revelation?'
said she (seeming very incredulous).
'Why, the one on plural marriage.'
I answered. My brother Edwin D.
tested in a public meeting in Manti,
Sanpete Co., a number of years ago,
that the revelation was read by Bro.
Hyrum just as I said, but he (Edwin
D.) did not see me there, and he
could not relate it as accurately as I
have done. Were I to go back on
every other principle of what the
world call 'Mormonism,' I would
have to acknowledge that the prin-
ciple of plural marriage is of God.
I, like Paul of old, whether in the
body or out, saw and heard things
which were unlawful to utter at that
time, for I understood that I was not
to tell anyone, or to talk to anyone
about it, except those who already
knew about it.'

APOTHECARY S. SMITH'S TESTIMONY:
'The Prophet Joseph Smith first
taught me the doctrine of celestial
marriage, including a plurality of
wives, in Nauvoo, III., in April, 1843.
I also saw my first plural wife,
my wife's sister, Louisa Beman, was
hers first plural wife, she being sealed to
him by my brother-in-law, Joseph B.
Noble, April 5, 1841. She was the
daughter of Alva and Sarah Burt
Beman. The Prophet Joseph also
gave me the privilege of taking an-
other wife, which I did in March,
1844, the Patriarch Hyrum Smith
officiating under the Prophet's direc-
tion.'

SARAH M. KEMBLE'S TESTIMONY.
'Early in the year 1842, Joseph
Smith taught me the principle of
marriage for eternity, and the doc-
trine of plural marriage. He said
that in teaching this he realized that
he jeopardized his life; but God had
revealed it to him many years before
as a privilege with blessings, now
God had revealed it again and in-
structed him to teach it with com-
mandment, as the Church could
teach (progress) no further without
the introduction of this principle. I
asked him to teach it to some one
else. He looked at me reprovingly,
and said, 'Will you tell me who to
teach it to' God required me to
teach it to you, and leave you with
the responsibility of believing or dis-
believing.' He said, 'I will not
cease to pray for you, and if you
will seek God in prayer, you will
not be led into temptation.'

ADDITIONAL TESTIMONY.
'At a quarterly Stake conference
hold at Centreville, Davis Co., Utah,
June 11, 1843, Elder Arthur Stavner
read an affidavit made by Elder
Thomas Grover. The substance of
the document was that the affiant
was a member of the High Council
of the Church, that in 1838 Hyrum
Smith, the Patriarch, appeared at
the meeting of that body and pre-
sented the revelation on celestial
marriage, at the same time declaring
it to be from God.

After the reading of this paper
Elder Grover made a statement to
the effect that Hyrum Smith and then
assured them that received the revelation should
be
blessed and preserved, while those
who rejected it would go down. Nine
members of the Council accepted and
three took a stand against it. Those
three subsequently apostatized, were
excommunicated from the Church
and are all now dead (except one).

Elder Joseph B. Noble next ad-
ressed the conference. He stated
that the Prophet told him that
the doctrine of celestial mar-
rriage was revealed to him while he
was engaged on the work of trans-
lation of the Scriptures, but when
the communication was first made
the Lord stated that the time for the
practice of that principle had not
arrived. Subsequently, he stated,
the angel of the Lord appeared to