May 3, 1903; Sunday

We arrived at Kansas a little after eight. We went with the street cars to Independence. There we viewed the old historic places. The Temple ground was very interesting. From there we had a fine view of the surrounding country. It is most beautiful.

We visited Mrs. Mary Judd Page Eaton. She was married to John E. Page, who was once an apostle but had apostatized and fallen in Transgression. She told us his visions and she seemed to believe in them implicitly. She said to Pres. Smith: “I hope you will return to Zion when you quite your impure practices.” He smiled and said: “We have not come to argue with you. Then we went to the meeting house on the Temple grounds and heard a brother Hill speak on the folly of lineal succession. He did well. Next we went over to the Josephine Church and heard H.A. Smith speak on the laws of the Gospel. He was a good speaker but his manners seemed to say “I am the speaker.” We went out when he closed. We took the cars to Kansas and had a meeting with the Elders there.

—Anthon H. Lund, Diary, under date.
Meeting of 7 May 1903 of the First Presidency and Council of the Twelve:

"Elder Jno. [John] H. Smith said that Pres. Smith, Pres. Lund, Elders Smoot and himself and wives and others visited Independence while East recently. The spot where the printing office stood was pointed out, and they also visited the temple lot; called upon the widow of Jno. [John] E. Page, who expressed a wish that the Mormons would repent of their sins and return to Zion. Attended a Hedrickite meeting and the services of the Reorganized Church."

(Stan Larson, ed., A Ministry of Meetings: The Apostolic Diaries of Rudger Clawson [Salt Lake City: Signature Books in association with Smith Research Associates, 1993], 591. They were in Independence on 5 May 1903)
J. W. Brackenberry was the bishop who introduced me to the widow of John E. Page, who had been an Apostle in early days of the Church, as I desired to become acquainted with her, and talk with her on the days of Nauvoo. I thanked the Bishop for his kindness and bade him goodbye. In our conversation on our ride he displayed an intense hatred for the Mormons in Utah. I informed Mrs. Page that I desired to make some inquiries in regard to some things that were said to be practiced in Nauvoo, and as she was a wife of one of the twelve, she was in a position to learn the truth about these things. It was asserted and also denied that Joseph Smith taught the doctrine of plural marriage and that it was practiced by him and others. She said, "Mr. Black, this is my opinion," handing me an article which she had written and published in a newspaper. I scanned it over and saw that she had utterly denied such doctrine and practice. I said to her, "This is very strange, as there is much evidence to prove that such doctrine was both taught and practiced. Can you not recall anything that might give color to the rumor?" "Well," she said, "it might have grown out of an incident that took place wherein Brigham Young and George C. Adams took a couple of young girls to live with them and Joseph did not denounced it." I said, probably there were other incidents that might refresh her memory, and I [p. 287] named over several. She became very talkative and said, "Well, Mr. Black, I will tell you the cause of my husband leaving the Church. He became alienated toward Joseph, lost the spirit, became bewildered and strayed away, and assisted in after years to organize the Hedrickites Society." She introduced me to her son, Jerome E. Page, who treated me very kindly, and after thanking the lady for her courtesy I bid her goodbye and left for the R R. Station, accompanied by her son, who appeared to take much interest in the Utah Saints. We accepted an invitation to preach in the Hedrickite meetinghouse next evening. We returned to Kansas City and next morning went onto the Big Blue, where the Coalville Branch of the Church was formerly located.
that Nauvoo was a congenial place for them, and illustrates the saying, that,

"Birds of a feather
Will flock together."

The Mormons never publicly advocated the Spiritual Wife System until a short time before they left Nauvoo. I heard Elder Page, one of the twelve Apostles, preach on the subject one evening in a private house, near my school. He tried to argue: First, from the Bible—describing in a very cunning manner the concubinage of Abraham, David, Solomon, and others, and claimed from these precedents the divine sanction of his doctrine. Secondly, from supposed benefits to be derived in the development of the human species. Said he, "Now we wisely follow the more excellent way in our efforts to improve the brute species, and by obeying the law of selection great improvements are made; but of all the animals, man, who was originally the glory of creation, has become the most degenerate." Finally, said he, "I appeal to the good sense of the women. Look at this wretched world, see how it is filled up with poor, miserable, degenerated specimens of humanity. The greater part of them are not men; they are but mere apes of the human kind. Now, had not six or seven of you in company, rather all have one good man—a large, handsome, intelligent, noble, genteel man for a husband, than for each one of you to tie to a poor, scrubby, scabby, ugly, hair-brained, snotty-nosed baboon? To be sure, any sensible woman would."
AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A PIONEER:  
OR,  
THE NATIVITY, EXPERIENCE, TRAVELS, AND MINISTERIAL LABORS  
OF  
REV. SAMUEL PICKARD, 

The "Converted Quaker,"  

CONTAINING  
STIRRING INCIDENTS AND PRACTICAL THOUGHTS; WITH SERMONS BY  
THE AUTHOR, AND SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LABORS OF  

ELDER JACOB KNAPP.  

"The love of Christ doth me constrain,  
To seek the wand'ring souls of men."  

EDITED BY O. T. CONGER.  

[ILLUSTRATED.]  

CHICAGO:  
CHURCH & GOODMAN, PUBLISHERS,  
51 LA SALLE STREET.  
1896.
...visited Judd, who reported that "she gave her husband, John E. Page, other wives." In a fuller statement, Smith reported that Page evidently marriedpolygamously during Joseph Smith's lifetime.

In 1904 I went to the World's Fair in St. Louis. James G. Duffin was presiding over the Central States Mission at that time, and I went with him to see Mary Page Eaton, wife of John E. Page. She was an aged woman, and I was introduced to her. The two of us sat there and talked and I questioned her about plural marriage. I asked her, "Did John E. Page have wives other than you?" She replied, "Yes," I said, "How did he get them?" She said, "I gave them to him." I said, "How come you did that?" She said, "Well, he wanted them and I gave them to him." She said, "Well, that was in the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith." She said, "Yes, it was." 46

According to D. Michael Quinn, Page may have married Nancy Bliss as a plural wife in 1844, but they separated in 1845. 49

Both of Parley P. Pratt's early wives left statements of their marriages to him. Though she divorced him in the spring of 1853, Pratt's civil wife, Mary Ann Frost Stearns, reported on September 3, 1869. 40 The twenty-fourth day of July A.D. 1843, at the City of Nauvoo County of

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47. Smith, Blood Attestation and the Origin of Plural Marriage, 49-50; emphasis Smith's.

48. Quoted in Minutes of the Meeting of the Council of the Twelve, the Patriarch to the Church, the Assistants to the Twelve, the First Council of the Seventy, and the Presiding Bishopric, May 5, 1954, photocopy of typescript in my possession. It should be noted that, in 1842, Judd had denied knowing about plural marriage.

49. Quinn, Origins of Power, 567. See also the entry in Christian Catherwood's journal which reports a visit ca. 1836 to "Brother Page" near Quincy, Illinois, "who had two wives given him by Joseph Smith in Nauvoo who lived with him without anyone's speaking to him about it." Quoted in Davis Bitton, Guide to Mormon Diaries and Autobiographies (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1977), 66; courtesy H. Michael Marquardt. Todd Compton believes that the second of Page's Nauvoo wives was probably Mary's sister, Rachel Judd. Compton, quoted in Levi Peterson, email to Gary Berger, November 4, 2004.

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44. Vilate Murray Kimball, Letter to Heber C. Kimball, June 29, 1843, holograph, LDS Church Archives.
45. Smith, Intimate Chronicle, 103.
John E. Page married Mary Judd on 26 December 1838 and after his death (14 October 1867) Mary married William Eaton.

Joseph F. Smith, Jr. [Joseph Fielding Smith] wrote:

"That John E. Page practiced 'polygamy' I have the testimony of his wife, Mrs. Mary Eaton of Independence, who told me and others, in August 1904, that she gave her husband, John E. Page, other wives."

(Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, nd.), 49-50
John E. Page

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(Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, nd.), 49-50

"Saw skeletons Joseph Smith bought from Egypt, supposed to be pharaoh and daughter. A woman presided among the Mormons in Quincy, Illinois. Visited Brother Page near Quincy, 'who had two wives given him by Joseph Smith in Nauvoo who lived with him without anyone's speaking to him about it."

Christian Christiansen second counselor to stake president of St. Louis Stake, 1856; #1 Milo Andrus (1854-55); #2 James H. Hart (1855-57)


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check:
1. Journal History of the Church
3. Life of Joseph F. Smith

Letter of Justin E. Page to M. Wilford Page, Oct. 1, 1934

P.S. - "I think the enclosed picture of Father could be retouched and so improved by an artist, but it is the best that could be from the old painting of October 20, 1870. Father's right hand is on the Bible and the left hand holds the Nephite Record." J.E.P.
John E. Page was born February 25, 1799, in Trenton, Oneida County, New York. When at the age of eighteen he united with the Methodist Church. He was married July 1, 1831, to Mrs. Betsy Thomson.

He was baptized in Ohio, August 18, 1833, by Enos Harris, brother of Martin Harris; was ordained an elder by Nelson Higgins in September of the same year. His wife died October 1, 1833, leaving one small child, who died May 1, 1835. He married Lorain Stevens December 20, 1835, by whom he had four sons; viz., Jonathan, Manasseh, Ephraim, and George.

In the fall of 1835 he removed to Kirtland, Ohio. In 1836 went on a mission to Canada, and was gone about seven months, when he returned to Kirtland for his family, and again began missionary work in Canada.

In 1838 he left Canada for Missouri with a company of saints.

During his two years service in Canada he baptized over six hundred persons.

With his company he arrived at De Witt, Carroll County, Missouri, in October, 1838. At the time the place was attacked by the mob he shared in the expulsion from that place and the sufferings incident thereto. As a result of suffering and privations he lost his wife sometime this year. He sought refuge in Far West, Missouri, only to share in the suffering which soon followed in that place.

He had previously, on July 8, 1838, been called to the apostleship, and on December 19 he was ordained an apostle at Far West, by Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball.

On December 20, 1838, he was married to Mary Judd, who still lives and resides at Independence, Missouri. She is now Mrs. Eaton. By her he had eight children; viz.: Exceesia, Celesta Eliza, Orson Eli, Justice Enoch, Celina Ermina, Mary Emilie, Justin Eber, and Jerome E.

Early in 1839 he started with his family for Illinois, but on the way he met some members of his quorum returning to Far West to hold a meeting on the Temple Lot on April 20. He returned with them and participated in the meeting, then proceeded to Illinois, and located at Warsaw, Hancock County.

In April, 1840, he was appointed to accompany Elder Orson Hyde to Jerusalem, and started to do so; but for some reason he did not leave America. He and Elder Hyde had some misunderstanding. Just what the nature of it was we are not informed.

Because he failed to go in confidence in him was to some extent impaired, and he was not considered in full fellowship. At the April conference of 1842 Elder Page made a detailed explanation and was restored to full fellowship. He afterwards did considerable missionary work in the Eastern States, and his labors were well received, especially in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

In 1841, after the death of President Smith, Elder Page was one of the three members of his quorum who protested against the action of the majority of the Twelve and refused to countenance their proceedings. Of this and the subsequent events of his life his widow, now Mrs. William Eaton, writes under date of September 25, 1866, as follows:

"In 1845 the Twelve called him from Pittsburgh to Nauvoo. In 1846 J. Strang's claims in pamphlet were spread among the people; he accepted them - started for Wisconsin and proved by divine books their works were evil.

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two years to sustain his family, and earn money enough to get away from Voree, Strang’s town.

“In 1851 he lived in De Kalb, Illinois, preaching the gospel on Sunday, laboring with his hands for life’s necessities through the week. He said there seventeen years.

“In 1853 Granville Hedrick came to see him; . . . he went [to Bloomington], stayed four months. He had the asthma when he went to Bloomington, but Hedrick’s papers state he preached for him [Hedrick] and ordained him a prophet. Elder Page came home afflicted with a terrible asthma which had grown worse, and he continued to fail until he died in his own house, eight miles north of Sycamore, De Kalb County, Illinois, October 14, 1867. . . .

“Seven days before his death he selected his place of burial under a big ash tree on a beautiful hill on the north bank of the Kishwaukee River, which ran through his farm. His name was with the Hedrickites as an apostle. He said of them in his last sickness: ‘I am disappointed. The Hedrickites are not doing as I expected when I joined them.’

“I always read the Saints’ Herald to him. He said [to] get Elder John Landers [of the Reorganization] to preach his funeral sermon, which was done. His knowledge of the truth of the gospel never failed. He died believing in the gathering of Israel, the restitution of all things spoken of by the prophets, and that he should come forth in the first resurrection.

"*MRS. MARY PAGE EATON, “77 years old: Independence, Jackson County, Missouri."

WILFORD WOODRUFF.

He was the son of Asbeck Woodruff. He was born at Farmington (now Avon), Hartford County, Connecticut, March 1, 1807. He assisted his father in the milling business in his youth, and at the age of twenty took charge of a flouring mill belonging to his aunt; this mill he operated for five years.

In 1832 he went with his eldest brother, Azmon, to Richland, Oswego County, New York, where they purchased a farm and sawmill and entered into business.

On December 31, 1833, he was baptized by Elder Zera Pulsipher. On January 2, 1834, he was ordained a teacher, by Elder Pulsipher. In the spring of 1834 he went to Kirtland, and accompanied Zion’s camp to Missouri.

In the fall of the same year he was ordained a priest in Clay County, Missouri, and sent on a mission to Arkansas and Tennessee in company with an elder. In 1835 while on this mission he was joined by Elder Warren Parrish, who ordained Mr. Woodruff an elder, and left him in charge of the churches. He continued in that mission laboring mostly in Tennessee, having for companions D. W. Patton, Warren Parrish, A. J. Smith, and others; and on May 31, 1836, he was ordained a seventy by Elders Patton and Parrish. In the fall of the same year he returned to Ohio.

April 16, 1837, he was married to Miss Phoebe Whitmore Carter, daughter of Ezra Carter. Soon after he departed on a mission to the East, especially to Fox Island, where he accomplished a good work. He continued in this mission, preaching sometimes on the island and sometimes on the mainland, until October, 1838, when on the 9th he started for Missouri with a company of saints numbering fifty-three. Hearing of the unsettled condition of affairs in Missouri he stopped for the winter at Rochester, Illinois.

In the spring of 1839 he removed his family to Quincy, Illinois, and from there accompanied the Twelve to Far West, to hold the memorable meeting of April 26, 1839. At this meeting he was ordained an apostle, to which office he had been called on July 8, 1838. Returning to Illinois he removed his family to Montrose, Iowa, where he left them and accompanied his quorum on their mission to England. From this mission he returned to Nauvoo in October, 1841. In February, 1842, he took charge of the business department of the Times and Seasons.

Elder Woodruff was an active man, and was busily engaged in church interests the remainder of the Prophet’s life. In 1844 he supported the action of the majority of the Twelve. He was present at the reorganization under Brigham Young, at Council Bluffs, in December, 1847, and was an active participant. Since then he has shared the fortunes of the Utah people.
John E. Page - wives

Nancy Bliss 1844 (no ch.), separated 1845
Rachel Judd (Henderson) 1845 (no ch.), separated 1846
Lois Judd 1845 (1 ch.), separated 1846

Typical marriages, 1831-1833 (2)
and Mary Judd (1838-1846)
Letter of Joseph F. Smith, Jr. to Mary Eaton, 8 May 1903, RLDS archives

"For some time past the Historian, President Anthon H. Lund, has been trying to obtain a list of the names of the authors of the hymns appearing in the L.D.S. Hymn Book to which no name appears and no credit is given. I have heard that you have perhaps written some of them and therefore have taken the liberty to write you and inquire of you if you can throw any light on the matter. If you will kindly look over the enclosed list and see if there are any of the hymns, the authors of which you may know, and forward to me the information. I will be greatly obliged; or, if any of your friends can add any information it will be very much appreciated. The authors of these hymns should all be given proper credit for their work, and we would like to see the list complete."

Letter of Mary Page Eaton to Joseph F. Smith [Jr.], May 1903, RLDS archives

"Yours of May 8th received in due time, and contents noted. Examining the list of hymns you sent I noticed the one entitled --- --- is of my composition. I do not know the authors of the others. I have however several hymns in the old edition of the Harp, with no name signed.

"Now Bro Smith regarding credit for the hymn in the list refer[r]ed to, or any others of my composition. I will be frank with you in stating that as a firm believer in the Book of Mormon, I am so thoroughly opposed to polygamy [polygamy] and its kindred institutions as inaugurated and promulgated by Brigham Young and the church he represented, that I certainly have no ambition to be present even in name in assisting such a work, but my Brother listen -- 'with charity for all and malice toward none'. I have great confidence in the God of your Father Hiram and your Uncle Joseph Smith. Since your pleasant call on me, I have been thinking much of you, and the people you represent, and I am also confident that the God of our fathers will shake out the false doctrines and practices from among you until very many shall be able to return to and embrace the restored gospel in it purity. The Lord can reach the honest in heart, even though in error, and this is my hope and prayer for the Utah church."
L.D.S. HISTORIAN’S OFFICE.

Salt Lake City, Utah, May 8, 1903

Mrs. Mary Eaton,
Independence Mo.,

Dear Madam:-

For some time past the Historian, President Anthon H. Lund, has been trying to obtain a list of the names of the authors of the hymns appearing in the L.D.S. Hymn Book to which no name appears and no credit is given. I have heard that you have perhaps written some of them and therefore have taken the liberty to write you and inquire of you if you can throw any light on the matter. If you will kindly look over the enclosed list and see if there are any of the hymns, the authors of which you may know, and forward to me the information, I will be greatly obliged; or, if any of your friends can add any information it will be very much appreciated.

The authors of these hymns should all be given proper credit for their work, and we would like to see the list complete.

Very respectfully I remain,

Jos. F. Smith Jr.
Mr Joseph F. Smith
Salt Lake City, Utah

Dear Brother

Yours of May 6th received in due time, and contents noted. Examining the list of hymns you sent I notice that the one entitled ------ is of my composition. I do not know the authors of the others. I have however several hymns in the old edition of the Harp, with no name signed.

Now Bro Joseph, regarding credit for the hymn [page 2] in the list referred [sic] [referred] to, or any others of my composition. I will be frank with you in stating that as a firm believer in the Book of Mormon, I am so thoroughly opposed to polygamy [sic] and its kindred institutions as inaugurated and promulgated by Brigham Young and the church he represented, that I certainly have no ambition to be present even in name in assisting such a work, but my Brother listen -- 'with charity for all and malice toward none'. I have great confidence in the [page 3] God of your Father Hiram and your Uncle Joseph Smith.

Since your pleasant call on me, I have been thinking much of you, and the people you represent, and I am also confident that the God of our fathers will shake out the false doctrines and practices from among you until very many shall be able to return to and embrace the restored gospel in it purity. The Lord can reach the honest in heart, even though in error, and this is my [page 4] hope and prayer for the Utah church.

Sincerely Yours
Mary Page Eaton.