

A note about Andrew Jenson's article on plural marriage in the Historical Record. Wilford Woodruff wrote to Jenson concerning his list of women sealed to Joseph Smith:

"August 6th, 1887

Elder Andrew Jenson,

Dear Brother:

The attention of the Twelve has been called to your number of the "Historical Record" for July [sic], 1887, in which you published a list of the names of women who were sealed to the Prophet [sic] Joseph.

We do not question your good desires in making his name public, but we are lead to question the propriety of giving this publicity to them at the present time. And in accordance with the feelings of the Brethren, we address this letter to you upon the subject.

We do not think it a wise step to give these names to the world, at the present time, in the manner which you have done in this "Historical Record." Advantage may be taken of their publication and, in some instances, to the injury, perhaps, of families or relatives of those whose names are mentioned. There are too many persons living who are interested in these matters, and who may have reasons for not wishing any exposure of this character. We do not see that it will serve any good purpose, either, to make them public, and therefore, we suggest that if it be your intention to give more names, it would be better we think, to refrain from doing so.

With kind regards,

Your brother, W. Woodruff"

(typed copy of letter, Confidential Research File, LDS archives)

The following is from a list prepared by Andrew Jenson of Joseph Smith's spiritual or plural wives. It was published in Historical Record 6 (May 1887):233-34.

This list points out errors that are in his list. Jenson lists eight of eleven known wives who were already married before they were sealed to Joseph Smith. The three not listed are: Elizabeth Davis Durfee, Nancy Hyde and Patty Sessions.

1. Louisa Beman, married to the Prophet April 5, 1841, Joseph B. Noble officiating.
2. Fanny Alger, one of the first plural wives sealed to the Prophet.
3. Lucinda Harris, also one of the first women sealed to the Prophet Joseph. md
4. Zina D. Huntington, afterwards the wife of Pres. Brigham Young, sealed to the Prophet Oct. 27, 1841, Dimick B. Huntington officiating. Her sister Fanny was present as a witness. md
5. Prescindia L. Huntington, afterwards the wife of Heber C. Kimball, sealed to Joseph Dec. 11, 1841, Dimick B. Huntington officiating and Fanny A. Huntington present as a witness. md
6. Eliza Roxey Snow, married to the Prophet June 29, 1842, Pres. Brigham Young officiating.
7. Sarah Ann Whitney, afterwards the wife of Pres. Heber C. Kimball, married to Joseph July 27, 1842, her father Newel K. Whitney officiating.
8. Desdemona W. Fullmer, married in 1842 [1843].
9. Helen Mar Kimball, daughter of Pres. Heber C. Kimball and afterwards the wife of Horace K. Whitney, married to Joseph in May, 1843. [Summer 1843]
10. Eliza M. Partridge, afterwards the wife of Amasa M. Lyman, married to Joseph May 11 [23], 1843, Elder James Adams officiating.
11. Emily D. Partridge, afterwards the wife of Pres. Brigham Young, married to the Prophet May 11 [23], 1843, Elder James Adams officiating.
12. Lucy Walker, afterwards the wife of Pres. Heber C. Kimball, married to the Prophet May 1, 1843, Elder Wm. Clayton officiating.
13. Almera W. Johnson, married to the Prophet in August, 1843 [Spring 1843].

14. Malissa Lott, afterwards the wife of Ira Jones Willes, married to Joseph Sept. 20, 1843.
15. Fanny Young, a sister of Pres. Brigham Young, married to Joseph Nov. 2, 1843. Brigham Young officiating.
16. Maria Lawrence, a sister of Henry W. Lawrence, of Salt Lake City, married in 1843.
17. Sarah Lawrence, a sister of Henry W. Lawrence, of Salt Lake City, married to Joseph in 1843.

no dates

18. Hannah Ells, sister of Dr. Josiah Ells, of Nauvoo.
19. Flora Ann Woodworth, daughter of Lucien Woodworth.
20. Ruth D. Vose, known as the wife of Edward Sayers [she was the wife of Edward Sayers]. md
21. Mary Elizabeth Rollins, now living in Minersville, Beaver Co., Utah. md
22. Olive Frost, afterwards the wife of Pres. Brigham Young.
23. Rhoda Richards, daughter of Joseph and Rhoda Richards.
24. Sylvia Sessions, daughter of David and Patty Sessions. md [had been married to Eindsor Lyon by Joseph Smith]
25. Maria Winchester, daughter [sister] of Benjamin Winchester, sen. [daughter of Stephen Winchester]
26. Elvira A. Cowles, afterwards [not afterwards] the wife of Jonathan H. Holmes [was the wife of Jonathan Holmes]. md [had been married by Joseph Smith]
27. Sarah M. Cleveland. md

Andrew Jeson implies that these marriages commenced in 1841. In the Historical Record 8 (Dec. 1889):946 he wrote:

"BEMAN. (LOUISA,) ... Sister Louisa was the first women in this dispensation who was married according to the revealed order of celestial or plural marriage."

"Alger, Fanny, a wife of Joseph the Prophet, who since his death married again in Indiana, and became the mother of a large family, 233." [not correct, married before Joseph Smith's death]
(8 [Dec. 1889]:942)

"Haris, Lucinda, ... was one of the first plural wives sealed to the Prophet Joseph. She was afterwards married to George W. Harris, at Nauvoo." [not correct, she was married to George Harris]