during the twenty four hours after my father introduced to me this principle & asked me if I would be sealed to Joseph who came next morning & with my parents I heard him teach & explain the principle of Celestial marriage—after which he said to me, "If you will take this step, it will ensure your eternal salvation & exaltation and that of your father's household & all your kindred. This promise was so great that I willingly gave myself to purchase so glorious a reward. None but God & his angels could see my mother's bleeding heart. When Joseph asked her if she was willing she replied "If Heber is willing I have nothing more to say." She had witnessed the sufferings of others, who were older & who better understood the step they were taking, & to see her child, who had scarcely seen her fifteenth summer following in the same thorny path, in her mind she saw the misery which was as sure to come as the sun was to rise and set, but it was all hidden from me.

I thought through this life my time will be my own
The step I now am taking's for eternity alone,
No one need be the wiser, through time I shall be free,
And as the past hath been the future still will be.
To my guileless heart all free from worldly care
And full of blissful hope and youthful visions rare
The world seemed bright the threatening clouds were kept
From sight and all looked fair but pitying angels wept
They saw my youthful friends grow shy and cold
And poisonous darts from slander'd tongues were hurled,

Pure and exalted was thy father's aim. He saw
a glory in obeying this high celestial law
For to thousands who've died without the light
I will bring eternal joy & make thy crown more bright.
I'd been taught to revere the Prophet of God
And receive every word as the word of the Lord,
But had this not come through my dear father's mouth,
I should ne'er have received it as God's sacred truth.
(Whitney, Helen Mar Kimball, ms a)

8 June 1844

In June of 1844 Heber C. Kimball (ms h) wrote to his daughter concerning issues evidently associated with the matrimonial sealing that had linked her to Joseph Smith:

I hold you as a blessing that we have received from our Father which is in heaven, so be obedient to the council you have given to you from your dear Father and mother who seek your welfare both for time and eternity . . . If you should have feelings in your heart keep them to yourself and tell them to no creature on earth but your father and mother, if you do you will be betrayed and exposed to your hurt. Remember my dear child what I tell you, for you will find I tell you the truth in Christ and lie not. You are blest but you know it not. You have done that which will be for your everlasting good for this world and that which is to come. I
will admit there is not much pleasure in this world. . . . You must not show this letter to any but our family. Be wise and you shall prosper in all things and you shall lack for nothing that is good and be true to your covenant that you have made.

Available data thus indicates that prior to the death of Joseph Smith, the Heber C. Kimball family had become involved in three matrimonial sealings: the first sealed Heber and Vilate eternally as husband and wife; the second resulted in Heber taking Sarah Noon as a second wife, and the third linked Heber C. Kimball’s household to Joseph Smith through the marriage of daughter Helen Mar. This began what was to become one of the most extensive family kingdoms in Mormon history. The sealing ties upon which it was thus far established, however, had apparently brought considerable turmoil to the parties involved.

Organizational aspects of the Holy Order

As already indicated, the Holy Order was organized on 4 May 1842 with Heber C. Kimball as one of its charter members. On 1 November 1843 his wife, Vilate, was initiated into the order and on 8 January 1844 they jointly received the public portion of the second anointing (see Ehat 1982:102). Comment has already been made both on the nature of the rituals associated with the Holy Order and on possible reasons why it was organized at the time it was. In this section an overview will be presented of its organizational aspects.

Membership qualifications

By the time of Joseph Smith’s death the Holy Order had developed various features in terms of which it had considerable affinity to the consecration community of the 1830s as well as some formal similarity to the Puritan church covenant group. First, like both the consecration community and the church covenant group, it consisted of a select group of individuals who had been drawn from the more general body of the Church. It’s membership was highly restricted; by the time of the martyrdom only sixty-five individuals had joined its ranks. According to Elizabeth Ann Whitney, a member of
Monongohela seventy-two miles, then took coach to this place—were twelve days and a half coming. We put up at the National Hotel—the best house in the city. This is where the Prophet stopped when here. Elder Wite and myself went one mile east of the Capitol, to one Mr. Linsly's, one of the richest men in Washington. His wife is a member of our church, and also one of his servants. The old gentleman took us through his vineyard and garden—has all kinds of grapes and fruit trees. He has between two and three millions of silk worms; it was a great sight. He is a friend to us and likes our doctrine. When we left, they invited us to come and make our home with them while in the city. Judge Douglas came in last evening and had a long chat with us; says he will do anything for us that we wish—will give us an introduction to several of the congressmen today. Says there is no prejudice towards us in this place of any account; all there is, is among the ignorant class. Elder Pratt left here one week ago, Elder Hyde has been gone some time. We feel well in mind. We went to see Judge Douglas this morning; he was not well, so we returned. The only time to get an interview with these men is in the evening.

"Now, my dear son, be tender with your mother, for she is a kind mother; be patient and mild, and use soft words. Also be kind to Helen and the little boys; be a father to them, and keep them out of the wet, and take good care of your own health. Tell Mary to do the same. I esteem her as my own daughter. Do not go hungry, nor in want, for I intend that my family shall have what they need for their comfort while I live. As we have only one life here, so let us do good and serve the Lord with pure hearts, and speak evil of no man. I have no fears but you will take good care of things. I want you and Helen to write me; tell her I shall write to her when I get time; I think much about her. It is now twelve o'clock, and we are going up to the Capitol."

The following is from another letter, dated June 4th. Father says: "We went this morning to see Judge Sample—he is from Alton, Illinois. He appeared friendly while with him. There was another judge came in; said he, 'Joe Smith has sent out fifty of his smartest men to preach his doctrine, and to elect one for him.' Said he had heard some of them preach, and they were smart men. Judge Sample asked him if he had ever seen Joseph Smith. He answered he never had. 'Judge, he is a smart man,' said Sample; 'I have one of his views, which is very good.' Said he, 'These men are some of his (Smith's) society.' "Ah, indeed, are they? Will Smith get any votes in Illinois?" Said Judge Sample, 'They go strong in the West for him,' It is all politics in the East, congress has spent three days on it; but it seems all stuff to me. I cannot take any pleasure in these things any more than I can in the religion of the sects.

"I feel humble and to cleave unto the Lord. I can bear testimony that He is good to me all the day long. I suffer less from fear than I have hitherto done. I feel different, and as though I had authority given me from God to speak as though I had been sent of God, and not as the scribes. After all, I suffer some before these great men; still they know nothing of God, all they know is about the politics of this world, and what is that? Why, it is like the sectarian religion, part true and part untrue; but a little more not true than true."

Woman's Exponent, vol. 11, no. 13, 1 December 1882, p. 99

The following is from a letter written by me to my father in fulfillment of promise:

"WASHINGTON, June 9, 1844.

"MY DEARDAUHTER—I told you of the blessings that we have received from our Father which is in heaven, so be obedient to the counsel you have given to you from your dear father and mother, who seek your welfare both for time and eternity. There is no one that feels as we do for you. Prove yourself approved of God and man, as a true, undeviating friend through evil report as well as good, through poverty as well as riches. This has been the spirit I have endeavored to maintain since I have been a member in the Church of Christ. I want my children to be true and faithful in all things, and never swerve from the truth in any case. If you should be tempted, or have feelings in your heart, tell them to no one but your father and mother; if you do, you will be betrayed and exposed to your hurt. Remember, my dear child, what I tell you, for you will find that I tell you the truth in Christ and lie not. You are blessed, but you know it not. You have done that which will be for your everlasting good for this world and that which is to come. I will admit there is not much pleasure in this world. Our circumstances are such that I see no way for it at present. Congress will not do anything for us, no nothing; neither do I care
whether they do or not; but we will tease them all the day long. They think they have got a great deal of power, and all of this world is theirs to give or retain. The devil thought he had all at his command when he wanted to hire Jesus to worship him. He had violated all rights or claims—so has Congress. We will go where we can find a home, and worship God in His own way, and enjoy our rights as free citizens, and this will not be long. Now, my daughter, I have spoken plainly to you, more so than I ever did before. Be wise, and you shall prosper in all things, and you shall lack for nothing that is good. Be true to the covenants that you have made, keep the company of those who are wise and keep close mouths. Solomon says, 'A wise head keeps a close mouth.' * * * Do not slight your friends, be kind, be merciful, be gentle, be sober, and show yourself approved of God and of your friends. Be kind to your dear mother, take burdens off from her shoulders; be mild and pleasant to all. This is the way to get the good will even of a dog, for every spirit will beget its own likeness.

"Now, Helen, let me tell you one thing that I want you to do: take one of my large blank books and commence your life back as far as you can, and when I write my general history I can put yours in with it. I want William to do the same. Do not forget this—then you can put all the letters that I write you in their proper places, to be handed down to our children for them to read. * * *

"It will be three weeks tomorrow since I left my sweet home. O sweet home! it is a heaven to me.

"The Capitol stands on an eminence, like our temple. This building is a great deal larger than our temple will be. The stone of which it is built is a little whiter color than that of the temple. It is surrounded with a large park, decorated with trees of all kinds and flowers, with several pools of pure water, with fish in them. It looks like a paradise in point of decoration. O that we had such a place! we will when we build up a sure place. I want to see our Prophet here in the chair of state—then we would come to see him.

"Elder Hyde came here on Saturday, and we held a meeting yesterday. Elder Wight and myself preached, and it left a good impression on their minds. I think we shall leave here tomorrow for Delaware, and hold a conference. If you can get the means, come with your mother, but do nothing to hinder her coming; you shall have your chance in turn. Be wise, and when you get this do not fail to write me and direct to the city of New York. Be a good girl; May the Lord bless you and your dear mother and brethren. As ever your affectionate father,

"HEBER C. KIMBALL"

A letter commenced by my mother June 7, (the same day that father wrote the above,) describes the scenes that were transpiring in Nauvoo. She says:

"Nauvoo was never so lonesome since we lived here as it is now. I went to meeting last Sunday for the first time since conference. I should have turned and come home on foot if I had not been afraid it would make me sick. Neither Joseph, Hyrum, nor any of the Twelve were there, and you may be assured that I was glad when meeting was over. Brother Joseph Nobles is very kind to me; knowing that I am not able to walk, he has invited me to ride with his folks several times. Yesterday he took his wife and me down to Hibbard's after cherries. He took us to see Sarah (my father's wife), who has been quite sick. I urged her to come home with me, but she said she would rather wait till she felt better; I expect her this week.

The weather continues cold and wet. Bishop Whitney called in today; said he'd been talking with Dr. Bernhisel—he thought the quarantine had better meet and pray for the rain to be stayed, or we would all be sick.

"June 11th. Nauvoo was a scene of excitement last night. Some hundreds of the brethren turned out and burned the printing press of the opposite party. This was done by order of the city council. They had only published one paper (Nauvoo Expositor) which is considered a public nuisance. They have sworn vengeance, and no doubt they will have it.

"June 24th.

"My Dear Husband.—Since I commenced this letter varied and exciting indeed have been the scenes in this city. I would have sent this to you before this time, but I have been thrown into such confusion I know not what to write. Nor is this all; the mails do not come regularly, having been stopped by high water or the flood of mobocracy which pervades the country. I have received no letter by mail from you since you left. I know your anxiety to hear from us must be very great, as you will no doubt hear of our trouble by report. Nothing is to be heard of but mobs collecting on every side. The Laws and
no, never; and often as I read them, I drop a silent tear and am led to say:

"I owe thee much. Thou hast deserved from me
Far, far beyond what I can ever pay—"

Here is a copy of the letter written me from Pittsburg, July 10th, 1843:

"My dear Helen,—I still remember what I told you when I left home, that I would write you. You have been on my mind much since I left home, and also your dear mother, who has the first place in my heart, then my dear children and brethren and sisters who have passed through much sorrow and pain for the cause of Christ.

"My dear daughter, what shall I say to you? I will tell you, learn to be meek and gentle, and let your heart seek after wisdom, and always speak kindly to your dear mother and listen to her counsel while you have her with you, for there is no one that feels the care for you that she does. My child, remember the care that your dear father and mother have for your welfare in this life, that all may be done well, and that in view of eternal worlds, for that will depend upon what we do here, and how we do it; for all things are sacred. God knows my heart and how I feel for my dear family. My prayer is that he will incline our hearts to serve him all the days that we shall live on the earth and our children after us through all eternity, that none of them may ever swerve from these fixed principles of virtue and to be endowed with the wisdom of God, and to be kind and merciful to all the human family, as far as mercy can have any claim on the souls of men; so let our love abound. As we measure to the human family, so it must be crowned upon our heads, either in time or in eternity. It is always time to do good, and as to wrath we will measure that out as God shall direct, and not as we will, for God says, 'Vengeance is mine, and I will repay.'

"Let us seek to be true to our integrity, wherever we shall make vows or covenants with each other; then we have got in that narrow way that leads to eternal life. Now let us be careful that we do not make a breach, but let us learn by the things that we see others suffer, and not have to pass through them ourselves. You have some experience, and you see others walking through trouble and sorrow, because those who have covenanted to be their friends have betrayed them; for instance, look and see what the Prophet has to pass through. This comes upon him because of the treachery of some who have promised to be his friends and the friends of God. We should have no trouble if it were not for such persons. They make league with our enemies, Judas like.

"Oh, God, save me and my posterity from treachery, and let our hearts be filled with true integrity and benevolence to the human family; if we have ever varied from these principles, forgive and give us light to walk in the light, as thou, oh, God, art in the light. Our hearts are known unto thee, and we desire to continue in thee, as the branch cannot bring forth fruit except it abide in the vine, no more can we, except we abide in thee. Save us from our enemies, and let us live long and do much good, and see thy work prosper and spread forth on the right and on the left, and see our enemies fall and come to naught. Now, Father, I ask these things in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

"I have written as it has come to me. I think this is the first that I have written to you. I hope it may not be the last. I hope we shall live to see many good days, and be a comfort to those of our kindred who have not yet come to the light of the gospel as we have. I have a longing desire to live many years and live that life that becomes a man of my profession, which is an apostle. I hope that I may live in honor of this title, that it may be handed down with delight by my posterity which shall follow me. Now, my dear Helen, pray for your dear father, that he may have strength to fight the fight of faith and win the prize and come off with honor in the sight of God, angels and men.

"Now, Helen, study to be a comfort to all who are connected to us by the ties of nature, and also to those who have received the gospel of Christ. Be a pattern of good works, and let your locks go down with honor. Envy no one, though they may think they are far above you. Now, listen with care and be meek, and no good thing shall be withheld either in time or in eternity, and you shall shine forth as the sun at noon day. Seek to be a comfort to your parents, brothers and sisters, and to your friends and connections, and all who love our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Probably I have said enough upon this subject at this time.

"My health was tolerably good till I got to Cincinnati, then I had symptoms of chills. ** I was introduced to a very respectable family by the name of Baker, who were Baptists. They were very kind to me
Scenes and Incidents in Nauvoo

"Now my dear child, be humble, and pray for your dear parents, that they may have strength to win their way through with honor and integrity before God, angels and men; that we may be crowned together in the eternal worlds, where we shall never part, where pain and sorrow and grief shall not be known; where we can enjoy the society of our dear children and friends throughout all eternities.

"Now, Helen, kiss your dear mother for me, and tell her to kiss the dear little babe for me. I can hardly think of him without weeping. I received the little lock of hair she sent me and carry it in my pocket. *** Give my love to Bishop Whitney and family, and to Sarah Noon. Tell her to be of good cheer, and also Brother and Sister Billings, and all that inquire for me.

"If you should see President Smith, give my kindest love to him. I hope that he is not in the hands of his enemies; if so, God will deliver him. ***

"My everlasting love to your dear mother and the children.

"As ever, your dear father in Christ to his daughter in Christ,

"HEBER C. KIMBALL."

Woman's Exponent, vol. 11, no. 5, 1 August 1882, pp. 39–40

The following is a short sketch of the rise of the young gentlemen and ladies Relief Society in Nauvoo which was printed in the Times and Seasons in the year 1843, and the reading of it will doubtless bring to many a friend of yore pleasing reminiscences of the days when we were young.

"One evening in the latter part of January last, a few young people having assembled at the house of Elder H. C. Kimball, the follies of youth and the temptations to which they are exposed generally, but more especially in our city, became the topic of conversation. The company were lamenting the loose style of the morals, the frivolous manner in which they spent their time, and their too frequent attendance at balls, parties, etc., when Elder Kimball proposed that an appointment should be given out expressly for the young ladies and gentlemen, and he would give them such instruction and advice as the spirit of the Lord might suggest to him; which, if followed, would doubtless lead to a reformation in the conduct of his

and my brethren. There was an English lady living with them as governess to their daughters, instructing them in education and taught them to play on the piano.

"While I was there, she was taken sick and lay nigh unto death. She told me she could not live, but told Mrs. Baker that she would like to have me pray for her. I did so as she had requested, and went back to my room, where I found Elder Pratt. In about twenty minutes, she came to our door and said she was well. She left the house and went around telling the people what had been done. After I had gone to bed, I was called up by Mr. Baker, as his daughter was very sick. I laid hands upon her and she was healed and went to sleep. She was well in the morning, and they were all believing. I baptized Mr. Baker and his daughter before I left.

"We reached this place on the first day of July. I was taken with the influenza. It seemed to me I could not endure it, my lungs were so bad; have not seen one well day since I came here. Elder Snow took it while on the boat, Elder Pratt also.

"Last night I was taken with the cholera morbus. It seemed to me as though I could not live till morning. There were three brethren with me a good part of the night. *** If you will examine the papers, you will find that this complaint is raging through the East. Elder Page is sick with it. There have been five baptized. They are a good people here. I think we shall leave this week for Philadelphia. *** We are very sorry that Elder B. Young does not come on.

"We have had some hints that Brother Joseph is taken with another writ. I wish that I could know. *** I expect that I shall find a letter at Philadelphia and get the news.

"I received a letter from your mother by Phineas, and was glad to get it. I have read it until it is almost worn out. Will write to her in a few days; have not been able to write before for some time; my head was so dizzy and I felt very poorly. I wrote one to William, and hope that he has received it. Tell your mother to write without fail. *** I hope to soon hear from poor William. How I long to hear from my dear family, for I love them with a perfect love, and there is no other thing that could induce me to leave them but the cause of Christ. That is all to us, for it is our meat and our drink to do the will of the Father in heaven."
APPENDIX A. THE WIVES AND CHILDREN OF
HEBER C. KIMBALL

The standard source regarding the number and names of Kimball's wives and children is Orson F. Whitney, *The Life of Heber C. Kimball* (Salt Lake City: The Kimball Family, 1888), pp. 430–36. Whitney, a grandson of Heber, made his compilation when many of Heber's wives and children were still alive and it therefore should be accurate and complete. He lists forty-five wives and sixty-five children. He does seem to have made two mistakes: he listed Sarah Buckwalter and Sarah Schuler as two individuals, which they were not, and he counted Martha McBride and Martha Knight as two, which they were not. Sarah's first husband was John Buckwalter. Her full name should be Sarah Schuler Buckwalter Kimball. Martha's first husband was Vision Knight and her second was Joseph Smith. Her full name should be Martha McBride Knight Smith Kimball. Kimball, therefore, had or was sealed to forty-three wives, not forty-five. It should also be remembered that many of these "wives" were not consensual; they were "wards" whom Heber agreed to support and protect. He had children by seventeen of his wives.

Kimball married between 1822 and 1857 and sired children (including two sets of twins) between 1823 and 1868. He had forty-five sons (sixteen named Heber) and twenty daughters. He married five sets of sisters. (Some Mormons hoped sororal polygamy would lead to greater domestic harmony.) Fourteen of his wives had been married previously. At the time of marriage, nine of his wives were in their teens, seventeen in their twenties, five in their thirties, nine in their forties, and three in their fifties. Sixteen wives separated from him during his lifetime for various reasons, but none of his widows remarried after his death. Forty-one children and at least twenty-one wives survived him. His wives were generally long-lived—thirty lived to be over sixty, fifteen over seventy, seven over eighty, and one lived to be ninety-two. The last survivor among his children, Rosalia, died in 1930. This listing is as complete and accurate as a study of temple, endowment house, patriarchal blessing, family genealogical, and cemetery records—as well as obituaries, memoirs, journals, autobiographies, and biographies—can make it. Since many variant dates, places, and spellings are found in the sources, however, the vital statistics of Heber's family may never be known with complete accuracy.

Abigail Buchanan, born Jan. 9, 1802, Waltham, Middlesex County, Massachusetts, parents and date and place of death unknown. Married and sealed to HCK Feb. 7, 1846. No children.


Clara A. Cutler, born Dec. 23, 1834, Silver Creek, Chautauqua County, New York, daughter of Alpheus and Lois Lathrop Cutler, died 1852 in Kansas Territory, on the Grasshopper River near present-day Thompsonville, Jefferson County, Kansas. Married HCK Feb. 29, 1845, sealed to HCK Feb. 2, 1846. One child by HCK: Abraham Alonso Kimball, Apr. 16, 1846—Sept. 25, 1889. Separated from HCK in 1848, married Calvin Fletcher in 1849 and had one daughter, Mary Alzina Fletcher, born Mar. 12, 1850, Silver Creek, Mills County, Iowa, died Feb. 14, 1859, Manti, Utah. Abraham entered polygamy taking three wives, Mary Eliza Hatton Wilcox, Lucy Addel Brown, and Laura Moody. He had fourteen children by the first two. (The author is a descendant of this wife.)


Elizabeth Doty (Cravath, Murray, Brown), born Apr. 29, 1808, Fairfield, Herkimer County, New York, daughter of Ida and Betsy Murray Doty, died Jan. 21, 1889, Kansas, Utah. Married HCK for time only Apr. 11, 1856. No children by HCK. She bore her first husband, Austin Cravath, four children. He died in 1844 and she was sealed to him for eternity the same day she married HCK for time. In 1846 she married William Murray. In 1848, after his death, she married Alfred Brown and bore him one son, who died the same year. She is usually referred to as Elizabeth Cravath in the sources.

Mary Dull (Duell), born Nov. 23, 1807, Quinard Township, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, daughter of Christian and Elizabeth Dull (Duell), date and place of death unknown. Sealed to HCK May 21, 1848, No children.

Mary Fielding (Smith), born July 23, 1801, Honiden, Berkshire, England, daughter of John and Rachel Bbbonson Fielding, died Sept. 23, 1852, Salt Lake City. Married HCK Sept. 14, 1844, sealed in the Nauvoo temple for time to HCK Jan. 15, 1846. No children by HCK. Married her first husband, Hyrum Smith, brother of Joseph Smith, Dec. 24, 1837, and bore two children. Also mother, Smith, brother of Joseph Smith, died 1844, and bore four surviving children of the six Hyrum had by his first wife. Hyrum was assassinated with his brother June 27, 1844, at Carthsage, Illinois. Her son Joseph F. Smith became the sixth President of the Mormon Church; her grandson Joseph Fielding Smith became the tenth. HCK preached her funeral sermon, Journal of Discourses, vol. 8, Sept. 23, 1852, 246—47.


Mary Ellen Harris, born Oct. 5, 1838, Charleston, Montgomery County, New York, daughter of Mathias and Sarah Harris Able, died Oct. 28, 1902, Salt Lake City. Married HCK Oct. 1, 1844, sealed to HCK Jan. 26, 1846. One child by lake City. Married HCK Jan. 26, 1846. No children by HCK. Married her first husband, Hyrum Smith, brother of Joseph Smith, Dec. 24, 1837, and bore two children. Also mother, Smith, brother of Joseph Smith, died 1844, and bore four surviving children of the six Hyrum had by his first wife. Hyrum was assassinated with his brother June 27, 1844, at Carthsage, Illinois. Her son Joseph F. Smith became the sixth President of the Mormon Church; her grandson Joseph Fielding Smith became the tenth. HCK preached her funeral sermon, Journal of Discourses, vol. 8, Sept. 23, 1852, 246—47.

Lake City. Married HCK Sept. 14, 1844, sealed in the Nauvoo temple for time to HCK Jan. 15, 1846. No children by HCK. Married her first husband, Hyrum Smith, brother of Joseph Smith, Dec. 24, 1837, and bore two children. Also mother, Smith, brother of Joseph Smith, died 1844, and bore four surviving children of the six Hyrum had by his first wife. Hyrum was assassinated with his brother June 27, 1844, at Carthsage, Illinois. Her son Joseph F. Smith became the sixth President of the Mormon Church; her grandson Joseph Fielding Smith became the tenth. HCK preached her funeral sermon, Journal of Discourses, vol. 8, Sept. 23, 1852, 246—47.

15. Mary Houston, born Sept. 11, 1828, Jackson, Syack County, Ohio, daughter of James and Mary Etteme Houston, died Dec. 24, 1896, Salt Lake City. Sealed for time to HCK Feb. 3, 1846. No children by HCK. Also sealed for eternity to Joseph Smith Feb. 5, 1846.

16. Presendia Lathrop Huntington (Buell, Smith), born Sept. 7, 1810, Waterdown, Jefferson County, New York, daughter of William and Zina Baker Huntington, died Feb. 4, 1892, Salt Lake City. Married and sealed for time to HCK Feb. 4, 1846. Children by HCK: Presendia Celestia, Jan. 9, 1849—May 9, 1850 (drowned); and Joseph Smith, Dec. 22, 1851—Mar. 29, 1856. She married Norman Buell about 1827 and bore him seven children. He left the church in 1839 and she married Joseph Smith Dec. 11, 1841, and was sealed to him for eternity the same day she married HCK for time. She was a sister of Brigham Young's wife, Zina Huntington, and served as a midwife in the Kimball family.

17. Sarah Lawrence (Smith), born May 13, 1826, Pickering Township, Ontario County, Canada, daughter of Edward and Margaret Lawrence, died in California, date unknown. Married HCK Oct. 12, 1844, sealed to HCK for time Jan. 26, 1846. No children by HCK. She married Joseph Smith c. May 11, 1841. She apparently did not go west until 1850. Of the sixteen women who left HCK, she is the only one known to have sought a formal divorce, which was granted June 18, 1851. She then moved to California. HCK may have become acquainted with her when she did sewing for his family.

18. Martha McBride (Knight, Smith), born Mar. 17, 1805, Chester, Washington County, New York, daughter of Daniel and Abigail Mead McBride, died Nov. 20, 1891, Ogden, Utah. Married HCK Oct. 12, 1844, sealed for time to HCK Jan. 26, 1846. She bore HCK one son who died in infancy. She married Winson Knight July 26, 1826, and bore him six children. Knight became the presiding bishop of the church until he died July 21, 1842, in Nauvoo. Later that year she married Joseph Smith.

19. Margaret McMinn, born Apr. 7, 1829, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, daughter of Robert and Mary Dull McMinn, date and place of death unknown. She may have married HCK Feb., 1846. Nothing further is known about her except that during the summer of 1844 HCK roomed with a "Sister McMinn and daughter" in Philadelphia and "took a ride with Sister McMinn's daughter."

20. Dorothy Moon, born Feb. 9, 1804, Eccleston, Lancashire, England, daughter of Matthias and Alice Plumb Moon, died in Utah probably in the 1870s.
Appendix A

Aug. 1, 1854, she reveals how concerned she was over what her family in England thought about her polygamous marriage. Edward Martin Correspondence, Church Archives.

25. Ruth L. Pierce (Cazier), born Feb. 11, 1818, Oswego, St. Lawrence County, New York, daughter of Rev. Isaac and Elizabeth Taylor Pierce, date and place of death unknown except that it was after 1861. Married and sealed to HCK Feb. 3, 1846. No children by HCK. She first married Monroe Cazier Apr. 29, 1838, and bore him six children. After his death she married HCK, but separated from him early. There is some evidence that she came to Utah in 1852. On Aug. 14, 1861, she married John Harrington.

26. Abigail Petkin, born July 17, 1797, Hartford, Windsor County, New York, daughter of Paul and Abigail Lathrop Petkin, died May 15, 1847, Winter Quarters. Married and sealed to HCK Jan. 2, 1846. No children by HCK. She was one of the two spinsters with whom HCK hoped to enter polygamy in an effort to spare Vilate's feelings. Abigail was a friend of Vilate.

27. Laura Petkin, born Sept. 10, 1790, Summers, Tollance County, Connecticut, daughter of Paul and Abigail Lathrop Petkin, died Nov. 16, 1866, Salt Lake City. Married and sealed to HCK Feb. 3, 1846. No children by HCK. She was a friend of Vilate and one of the two spinsters with whom HCK hoped to enter polygamy in an effort to spare Vilate's feelings. She often served as a midwife in the Kimball family.


29. Ellen Sanders (nee Aagat Ytensdatter Bakke), born Apr. 11, 1825, Atraa, Telemark, Norway, daughter of Ytens Sondresen and Aase Oldsatter Rommersen Bakke, died Nov. 22, 1871, Salt Lake City. Married HCK Nov. 5, 1844, sealed to HCK Jan. 7, 1846. Children by HCK: Samuel Chase, Feb. 13, 1848–July, 1848; Joseph Smith (twin), June 2, 1850–Nov. 29, 1864; Augusta (twin), June 2, 1850–Oct. 5, 1861; Rosalia, Nov. 25, 1853–Feb. 22, 1920; and Jedediah Heber, Mar. 10, 1855–June 24, 1927. She was one of the three women of the 1847 first Pioneer company. Her twins were the first set in the Kimball family. Rosalia was the last of HCK's sixty-five children to die.

Appendix A

36. Sarah Stiles, born Mar. 5, 1893, Suffield, Hartford County, Connecticut, daughter of Daniel O. and Sarah Buckland Stiles, died about 1899, place unknown. Married and sealed for time to HCK Feb. 3, 1846. No children by HCK. She may have been sealed for eternity to Joseph Smith Jan. 26, 1846. She may also have later married Alanson Barnye.

37. Rebecca Swain (Williams), born Aug. 3, 1798, Loyalsock, Lycoming County, Pennsylvania, daughter of Isaac and Elizabeth Hall Swain, died Sept. 25, 1861, Cache Valley, Utah. Married and sealed to HCK Feb. 7, 1846. No children by HCK. She married her first husband, Frederick Granger Williams, one-time counselor to Joseph Smith, Dec. 25, 1815, and bore him four children. He died Oct. 25, 1842. She was sealed to him for eternity Feb. 7, 1846.

38. Frances Jessie Swain, born June 20, 1822, Edinburgh, Scotland, daughter of Douglas and Margaret Craig Swain, date and place of death unknown. Married HCK Sept. 30, 1844, sealed to HCK Feb., 1846. One child by HCK: Margaret Jane, Apr. 9, 1846-Aug. 10, 1846. In 1851 she separated from HCK and went to California, where she married Mr. Clark.


40. Ruth Wellington, born Mar. 17, 1809, Waltham, Middlesex County, Massachusetts, parents, date, and place of death unknown. Married and sealed to HCK Feb. 7, 1846. No children. She may have been married to HCK in Philadelphia July 23, 1844.

41. Sarah Ann Whitney (Smith), born Mar. 22, 1835, Kirland, Ohio, daughter of Newell Kimball and Elizabeth Ann Whitney, died Sept. 4, 1873, Salt Lake City. Married HCK Mar. 17, 1845, sealed for time to HCK Jan. 12, 1846. Children by HCK: David, Mar. 8, 1846-Aug. 18, 1847; David Orson, Aug. 26, 1846-Apr. 16, 1849; David Heber, Feb. 26, 1850-after 1868; Newell Whit- ney, May 19, 1851-after 1868; Horace Heber, Sept. 3, 1855-after 1868; Sarah Maria, 1858-Aug. 1902; and Joshua Heber, Feb. 23, 1861-Apr. 6, 1925. She married Joseph Smith July 27, 1842. Most records give only the date Sarah Ann was sealed to HCK in the Nauvoo temple, raising the question of the legitimacy of their first child, David. One sensational account of this marriage is H. Michael Marquardt, The Strange Marriages of Sarah Ann Whitney to Joseph Smith the

Appendix A

Mormon Prophet, Joseph C. Kingsbury and Heber C. Kimball (Salt Lake City: Modern Microfilm, 1971). What Marquardt failed to find, however, was a record of the March 17, 1845, marriage of Heber to Sarah in the Newel K. Whitney, 1841-45 Account Book & Diary, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. (Newel was father to Sarah Ann). By the time the Nauvoo temple was finished sufficiently for marriage ceremonies Heber had married at least thirteen other wives, and his marriages were subsequently solemnized (some for time, some for eternity) in the temple during January and February, 1846. The situation with Sarah Ann was by no means unusual. There are other suggestions of a March marriage in Heber's journal on Feb. 6, March 27, April 15, April 19, and May 22, 1845.

42. Adelia Almira Wilcox (Hatton, Brown), born Mar. 29, 1828, Bloomfield, New York, daughter of Eber and Catherine Norimore Wilcox, died Oct. 19, 1846, Kanosh, Utah. Married and sealed to HCK Oct. 9, 1846, Salt Lake City. No children by HCK. She married her first husband, William Hawthorne Hatton, May 15, 1844, and bore him three children. One daughter, Mary Eliza Hatton, married Abraham Alonzo Kimball, one of HCK's sons. After Hatton was killed by Indians Sept. 13, 1853, at Fillmore, Utah, Adelia became a plural wife of Gideon Durphy Wood on May 25, 1854. There was friction with the first Mrs. Wood, so Adelia got her sealing or marriage cancelled Oct. 5, 1856, and went to Salt Lake City, where she eventually married HCK. She was one of the five Utah wives.


It is possible that Heber was sealed to other women. More than one woman requested that this be done. In addition to the above-mentioned account of Adelia Wilcox, there is evidence that a Jane Benson had made a similar application. Nevertheless, she married James Bonsall. Kimball "told him to take good care of her for him." (Historian's Office Journal, May 21, 1865, Church Archives).

Kimball may have had still other wives sealed to him posthumously. While this practice has long since been discontinued, it did exist for a period after 1844. According to the Encowment House Sealing Records, on June 15, 1874, Sarah Boothman, on Oct. 11, 1876, Diadama Hare, and on Oct. 19, 1876, Rebecca Ann Scott were sealed to Heber. In 1882 Heber's son Abraham Alonzo sealed Elizabeth Parkinson to Heber (A. A. Kimball Journal, 3:4, in author's possession).

Michael Quinn of Brigham Young University has found evidence of still another possible wife of HCK. In an entry in Encowment House Record, 1831-53, # 65, under date of June 8, 1851, James Golf was sealed to a woman named Lydia.
about whom the following notation was made: "Sealed by R. Cahoon to H. C. Kimball in 1844 in R. Cahoon's house in presence of sister Johnson who was sealed to R. Cahoon."

This wife appears to be Lydia Kenyon, born Dec. 11, 1799, Benson, Rutland County, Vermont, daughter of Daniel and Mary Tanner Kenyon, date and place of death unknown.

She first married Simeon Dagert Carter Dec. 2, 1818, and bore him three children; eventually she moved to Nauvoo, where she was sealed to HCK. She apparently came to Utah and married James Goff in the Endowment House in 1851. Her marriage to HCK seems to have been a sealing to become effective only after her death.

APPENDIX B. THE ESTATE

For all of Heber Kimball's prudence, and despite his threat to leave all his property to the church, he died intestate. He was survived by thirteen inheriting wives, forty-one inheriting children, at least eight other wives who had not formally separated from him, and an undetermined number of adopted and foster children. Ten of his inheriting wives had children; the other three were entirely dependent on him. The eight other wives appear to have been living with relatives and friends elsewhere, mainly in Utah. (The following information comes from Heber's estate papers in the Utah State Archives and the Utah Historical Society.)

The gross value of his estate was figured at $100,580 (or the equivalent of more than $2,000,000 in 1980), less debts of $15,235, leaving a net of $85,344, or approximately $1,400 per heir.

The estate procedures were very complicated and were not finally completed until 1876. In fact some undistributed property was discovered in 1887, and there was a question about one city lot which came up as late as 1938.

A general inventory of his estate at his death follows:

- Personal property: $20,150
  - in main home
  - in homes of other wives
  - at Grantsville ranch

- Real estate: $72,750
  - Salt Lake City lots, houses, gristmill, carding mill
  - San Pete Valley farm and ranch
  - Provo house, lot, meadow
  - Davis County farm and flour mill
  - Richfield farm
  - Cache Valley farm
  - Grantsville herd ground and house

- Livestock: $5,055
  - Grantsville
  - Salt Lake City

- Accounts receivable: $1,725

Total: $100,380

317
landing, and a number of strange gentlemen came ashore, who seemed to have quite a curiosity to see the Prophet. He got out, and in his warm and genial way, gave each of them a cordial shake of the hand. As the carriage was about starting away, one of them came up and, after being introduced by President Smith, requested the privilege of riding. After going a few rods the carriage was stopped for him to get out. He wished to have it to say that he had rode with Joseph Smith, whom they styled the "American Mahomet."

Our babe being very sick prevented my parents from going and I went with my brother. It was a lovely June morning, and animated with the lovely airs, played by William Pitt's Brass Band, every heart was made glad, and everything looked bright and hopeful for the excursionists, as we started on the little steamer bound for Quincy.

We had a most enjoyable trip down, took dinner, with others, at the house of the widow of Dr. F. G. Williams and his son Ezra, who were old Kirtland friends. Joseph and his wife Emma, and a score of his old, as well as young, friends were made welcome by others in that city. But on our return trip a heavy thunder storm came up, and Judge Elias Higbee being taken very ill we were obliged to stop over night at Keokuk. The cabin was small and the judge being so sick the majority stayed on deck, where we sat all night; umbrellas being our only protection from the beating storm. The heat had been very excessive, and being thinly clad, many were made sick, and I was among that number. Judge Higbee continued to grow worse, and only lived a few days after his return home.

The Prophet, who was noted for his tender sympathies towards the afflicted, could not rest until he went around and informed himself of the condition of each one who had accompanied him to Quincy, and offer advice and some he administered to. The morning of the second day after our return, he called at our house. He recommended some medicine to be given me that night, and then turning to me said:

"Tomorrow morning you take for your breakfast only a cup of coffee and a piece of dry bread, and you shall be well." His counsel was strictly adhered to, and the result was precisely as he had predicted.

Before leaving us to go east my father gave to his children (six in number) their patriarchal blessing, brother William Clayton acting as scribe. Father was very anxious that mother should go with him and spend a little time with their relatives; but she could hardly make up her mind to leave home. She accompanied him as far as Quincy. He wrote three or four letters while on his way to Pittsburg, and a few extracts from their correspondence may be of interest to others beside myself. The following was written by my mother, and directed to Philadelphia, as he was to have been there, but unexpectedly he was detained in Pittsburg. This was dated "June 27th, 1843.

"My dear companion:—I received your precious letter, and parcel sent by Brother Smith. * * Gladly do I retire from the busy cares of life to spend a few moments in talking to you in this silent way. * * If I could but see you for a few moments, how much easier I could unbosom my feelings, but yet I am thankful that we have this privilege of conveying our thoughts to each other. I have read your letter over and over, and my eyes have been almost blinded with tears—he feelings expressed therein are worth more to me than worlds would be without them; for nothing could make me happy without your favor. It is one week last Sunday since I closed a letter to you. Brother Brigham then expected to start the next day. * * There are many changing scenes * * one moment our bosoms may beat high with anticipation, and the next be thrown into confusion. At present there is great excitement in the city. Brigham told me this morning that he did not much expect to go; said Joseph had sent word to him not to go any way until he saw him. I am thankful that you got away before the fuses. I feel as though you were more safe than you would be here. Oh that I could be with you! I sometimes feel as though I had been foolish and would never let another such an opportunity pass without going with you. * I should not wish to go, unless I could go with you clear to the seashore; but I need not talk about it now, for there is no telling where our lot will be cast next, things look rather gloomy here at present, but I believe good will come out of evil. I will not attempt to tell you about Joseph's arrest, as Brother Hadlock, the bearer of this letter, can tell you all about it. *

"Since writing the above, I have had a visit from brother Parley P. Pratt and his wife. They are truly converted. It appears that Joseph has taught him the principle and told him his privilege, and even appointed one (a wife for him). * * She has been to me for counsel. I told her I did not wish to advise in such matters. Sister Pratt told me that she had been railing against these things until within a few days past, she said the Lord had shown her that it was all right, and wants
Parley to go ahead, says she will do all in her power to help him. * * They asked me many questions on principle. I told them I did not know much, I'd rather they would go to those that had authority to teach. Parley said he and Joseph were interrupted before he got what instruction he had wanted, and now he did not know when he should have an opportunity. * I told him that these were sacred things, and he had better not make a move until he got more instruction. ** Sarah Noon is here and sends her love to you. My daily prayer is that you may finish your mission with honor, and be returned to our embraces. * * I think you had better destroy this as soon as you can after reading it. I should not dare to send it by mail, but I trust it will go safe. If Brother Brigham should go I will write again by him. I am as ever, "Your affectionate wife."

"VILATE KIMBALL."

This is another proof that the Prophet Joseph revealed the plural wife system.

The following I gather from the second letter written by my father from Pittsburg. The first was written to me, which has been published. This one was to my mother, and was dated July 15th. He wrote that he and brethren had been there a fortnight, waiting for President B. Young, who they were looking anxiously for. He continued to suffer much from his lungs, in consequence of the smoke from burning coal in that place; after having a very severe attack of influenza and cholera-morbus, which had reduced him so low that he was hardly able to sit up, and could only write a few lines at a time. He wrote, "The Saints have been very good and kind. The people here are mostly Dutch and Irish; but very few have come out to hear us preach, as Elder Page has whipt the sects so, in his preaching, they will not come out to hear. I do wish the elders would stop it and take a mild course, and preach the gospel as they have been commanded of the Lord, and advised by Brother Joseph and the Twelve. * * I shall leave next week if Brigham comes. I want to go ahead and do what we can in order to get through before cold weather comes on. * * I have heard Brother Joseph is again clear from his enemies. I wish they could let him alone. * * "It seems sometimes as though I could not be absent from my friends and those I so dearly love, but this will not do. I must labor for my Father in order that he may provide a home not made with hands, but eternal in the heavens. * For this I am willing to suffer privation, and to wear myself out, and to lay down my life, should it be necessary to do so. My mind has been very fruitful in the things of God, most of the time since I left you in Quincy, till I was taken sick. My whole soul is bound up in the cause of Christ, and my prayer is daily that I may be a savior of men and a comfort to the human family; but I see, when I have done the best I can, that I am a poor imperfect creature. I wish that I had more wisdom, more light, more patience and more religion, and everything that is good and calculated to make my friends happy, both in time and in eternity. * O, that little babe, kiss him for me, and the rest of our dear children, and tell them to write me how they get along. * I want you to read this to Sarah and Sister Billings, who I hold as one of my bosom friends. A friend in these days is more precious than gold, and I esteem her as a mother in Israel, and she has my prayers and blessing. We are in a critical place but be of good cheer, my dear friends, for I esteem you as such in every sense of the word, and may the Lord bless you with peace forever and ever, amen."

Woman's Exponent, vol. 11, no. 8, 15 September 1882, pp. 57-58
to accompany Amasa Lyman and others, as clerk, to the southern states, where they went to preach and transact some business for Joseph, and after a short absence they returned. He was a printer by trade, and was employed by Don Carlos Smith until the death of the latter, whom he loved as dearly as an own brother. The next autumn after his return from the South the bishop moved his family into a house on Parley Street, nearer to us. About a year after her birthday party she invited my brother and I to attend another small party which, to me, was very pleasant and far more enjoyable than the other, there being present only a few select friends. The Prophet was there during the early part of the evening, and some peculiar remarks which he made, I remember, gave food for talk and no little amount of wit which passed from one to the other after he had left; and William and I talked it over after we returned home, of the enjoyable time and the peculiarities of Joseph. Soon after this, on the 12th of May, 1843, Horace left for the East to visit his mother’s parents, who were then living in North Canaan Co., Connecticut, and other of his connections in Ohio, remaining away over a year. He and Joseph Kinsgury were in Kirtland when they heard of Joseph’s and Hyrum’s death, and they returned to Nauvoo as quickly as possible. It was not till the summer after he had gone east that I learned of the existence of the plural order of marriage, and that the spring of 1842 had seen his sister Sarah Ann the wife of Joseph Smith. My father was the first to introduce it to me; which had a similar effect to a sudden shock of a small earthquake. When he found (after the first outburst of displeasure for supposed injury) that I received it meekly, he took the first opportunity to introduce Sarah Ann to me as Joseph’s wife. This astonished me beyond measure; but I could then understand a few things which had previously been to me a puzzle, and among the rest, the meaning of his words at her party. I saw, or could imagine, in some degree, the great trial that she must have passed through, and that it had required a mighty struggle to take a step of that kind, and had called for a sacrifice, such as few can realize but those who first rendered obedience to this law. It was a strange doctrine, and very dangerous too, to be introduced at such a time, when in the midst of the greatest trouble Joseph had ever encountered. The Missourians and Illinoisians were ready and determined to destroy him. They could but take his life, and that he considered a small thing when compared with the eternal punishment which he was doomed to suffer if he did not teach and obey this principle. No earthly inducement could be held forth to the women who entered this order. It was to be a life-sacrifice for the sake of an everlasting glory and exaltation. Sarah Ann took this step of her own free will, but had to do it unbeknown to her brother, which grieved her most, and also her mother, that they could not open their hearts to him. But Joseph feared to disclose it, believing that the Higbee boys would embitter Horace against him, as they had already caused serious trouble, and for this reason he favored his going east, which Horace was not slow to accept. He had had some slight suspicions that the stories about Joseph were not all without foundation, but had never told them, nor did he know the facts till after his return to Nauvoo, when Sarah hastened to tell him all. It was no small stumbling-block to him when learning of the course which had been taken towards him, which was hard for him to overlook. But Joseph had always treated him with the greatest kindness from the time that he came to live in his father’s house in Kirtland, in fact they had attended the same school and studied Hebrew together, and had pitched quots and played ball together many a time there and in Nauvoo, and he could hold nothing against him now he was dead. Joseph was noted for his childlike love and familiarity with children, and he never seemed to feel that he was losing any of his honor or dignity in doing so. And if he heard the cry of a child he would rush out of the house to see if it was harmed. Sarah felt when she took this step that it would be the means of severing her from the happy circle in which she had moved as one of their guiding stars. She was called proud and somewhat eccentric; but the influence that she seemed to hold over one was almost magnetic. I found her incapable of professing anything which she did not feel, and that she was a most pure-minded, conscientious and God-fearing girl. Our friendship dated from that period, and we became, as much as is possible, like "the two halves of one soul."

Bishop Whitney was not a man that readily accepted of every doctrine, and would question the Prophet very closely upon principles if not made clear to his understanding. When Joseph saw that he was doubtful concerning the righteousness of this celestial order he told him to go and enquire of the Lord concerning it, and he should receive a testimony for himself.
teachings of the church, and that its introduction was a “shameless trick of wicked men, who were obliged to find an excuse to cover up their crimes.”

He must be blind not to see that his own tongue has condemned him, not only as an uninspired leader, but an unprincipled enemy to his own father’s house. For he says, “In 1855 he began a crusade on his own hook, and in 1860, when he entered public life, it was with the avowed determination to oppose polygamy evermore.”

Now what man of God ever went to work on his own hook, or even thought to set up his own will independent of revelation from on high?

The man, whoever he was, who told Elder Joseph Smith that if an angel were to come down from heaven and tell him polygamy was wrong he would not believe the angel, was just as much of an impostor as the Prophet’s son, who made the following reply, “I would believe, but I would tell the angel to go to someone else, for I would not preach the doctrine.”

A poor captain and soldier of the cross he would make to stand as his father’s representative to carry out the purposes of the Almighty, for which the Prophet was willing to suffer with his people, and endure every kind of persecution, imprisonment and death, for the sake of the religion which his son Joseph, under the inspiration of the Evil one, has denied, and is now leagues himself with the worst enemies of his father to destroy the work for which he had to suffer so much and at last lay down his life.

His son declared that, although he had been accused of being an apostate, he had always been true to the faith taught by his father; and “I have eagerly sought for a proof of the divine inspiration of polygamy, but cannot find it, and believe the doctrine to be infamous, root and branch.”

Here he contradicts himself, which is only another proof of his infidelity and lack of inspiration, and wisdom from on high. He was hardly old enough when his father was killed to know or understand what his faith consisted of; but if he entered public life with this avowed determination, which he declares he did, how could he expect to obtain any proofs either one way or the other? For the Lord requires of his children honesty and sincerity of heart and purpose, in which selfishness must have no place, and

“As ever your affectionate wife;

"VILATE KIMBALL."

The family that my mother mentions where I watched had lately come then from England and were all laying sick in a house at the steamboat landing. Katherine Walker, who was living with Emma Smith, Diantha Farr, and myself sat up together. Joseph and his family attended to them, and provided medicines, watchers and whatever was needful, and this was only one case out of many where he acted as the "good Samaritan."

Here is what my father's wife, Sarah, wrote on the same sheet, though her name she withheld because of the perilous times.

"My very dear friend: Inasmuch as I have listened to your counsel hitherto I have been prospered, therefore I hope that I shall ever adhere to it strictly in future.

"Your kind letter was joyfully received. I never read it but I receive some comfort and feel strengthened, and thank you for it. You may depend upon my moving as soon as the house is ready. I feel anxious as I perceive my infirmities increasing daily. Your request with regard to Sister Kimball I will attend to. Nothing gives me more pleasure than to add to the happiness of my friends; I only wish that I had more ability to do so. I am very glad we are likely to see you soon, and pray that nothing may occur to disappoint us. When you request Vilate to meet you, perhaps you forget that I shall stand in jeopardy every hour, and would not her absent for worlds. My mind is fixed and I am rather particular, but still, for your comfort, I will submit.

"I am as ever"

It will be seen by the few lines written in connection with my mother’s letter that Sarah Peeke Noon, who the Lord commanded his Prophet Joseph, that my father should take to wife, was sealed to him, by the Prophet, as early as 1842. Joseph Smith, who professes to be his father’s successor, has (in an anti-"Mormon"

prophets that in the meeting, lately held in Chicago, a city noted for its crimes, and the deepest dens of infamy and corruption, the description, which was a rev. in that city, is so soul sickening that it may well be called the Sodom of the West; which is ripeing so fast that it may be wrapped again in another consuming fire) declared that it was not until 1852 that polygamy was attempted to be introduced in the
and pomp of this lower world, when compared with the great exaltation and glorious riches of eternity which will endure forever; and how small and insignificant does it make the works of man appear to Saints of God, who are awake and have in weakness girded on the armor of truth and righteousness, and now stand firm upon the watch-tower waiting to witness the grand tableau, yea, the closing, the winding up scene of the Almighty King of Kings, and Lord of Lords who has ever been our friend and advocate and his spirit still whispers to his Saints, Fear not for as the poet said:

"I have beheld my love and mercy shone;  
Have seen my laws despised, my name blasphemed,  
My providence accursed, my gracious plans  
Opposed; and long, too long, have I beheld  
The wicked triumph, and my saints reproached  
Maliciously, while on my altar lie,  
Unanswered still, their prayers and their tears,  
Which seek my coming, wearied with delay;  
And long disorder in my moral reign  
Has walked rebelliously, disturbed the peace,  
Of my eternal government, and wrought,  
Confusion spreading far and wide among  
My works inferior, which groan to be  
Released."

—Pollock's Course of Time.  
Woman's Exponent, vol. 10, no. 24,  
15 May 1882, pp. 185-86

I will now begin where I left off. My father, Brigham Young, George A. Smith and Amasa Lyman were on missions preaching in the southern part of Illinois. The following extracts were written by my mother to father, it is dated: "NAUVOO, Oct. 16th, 1842."

She says: "We still enjoy a comfortable degree of health, though in the midst of sickness and death. Sister Winchester said she saw four coffins carried by her house yesterday, in one wagon—there are more or less buried every day. Almost every family on the disputed land are sick with a fever. Helen watched last night where there were seven in one family all sick—the woman nigh unto death."

"Sister Marinda Hyde is sick with chills and fever. Brother Joseph and Emma were sick when Brother Brigham left. Emma was brought down nigh unto death; Brother Joseph despaired of her life, he mourned over her and refused to be comforted. But the Lord has spared her life and she is now able to ride out. Joseph was obliged to leave her before she was able to sit up. He has left the place. I don't know where he is but suffice it to say they hear from him occasionally and all is well."

"You mentioned my meeting you on your return home. I shall be happy to do so if circumstances will admit."

"Our good friend S. (Sarah, father's other wife) is as ever, and we are one. You said I must tell you all my feelings; but if I were to tell you that I sometimes felt tempted and tried and feel as though my burden was greater than I could bear, it would only be a source of sorrow to you, and the Lord knows that I do not wish to add one sorrow to your heart, for be assured my dear Heber, that I do not love you any less for what has transpired, neither do I believe that you do me; therefore I will keep my bad feelings to myself, as much as possible, and tell you the good. I can say with propriety that the most of my time I feel comfortable in my mind, and feel that I have much to be thankful for. I realize that the scenes we are called to pass through are calculated to wean us from the world, and prepare us for a better one. My desire is to live while I can be a comfort to you and bring up our children, for I don't know of a person on earth that I should be willing to leave them with.

"Brother Joseph felt it very keenly when he thought his wife would not live. 'Oh dear,' said he, 'what will become of my poor children?'"

"Brother Joseph Kingbury has buried his wife today. She was confined yesterday. She and child died within a half an hour of each other.

"I must tell you of a little of the prosperity in Quincy. Sister Pinkham came up to teach Brother Adams; says there was a great turn out in Quincy to hear him preach. The courthouse was filled to overflowing, and many were believing; and she expected that Mr. Heywood would be baptized when they returned, and she did not know but his brother-in-law, Kimball would also."

"I must leave room for Sister S. to write you a few lines."

"I asked little David today, what I should tell Pa; said he, 'Tell my Pa tum home see me.' I must now bid you good night."
"As ever your affectionate wife;

"VILATE KIMBALL."

The family that my mother mentions where I watched had lately come then from England and were all laying sick in a house at the steamboat landing. Katherine Walker, who was living with Emma Smith, Diantha Farr, and myself sat up together. Joseph and his family attended to them, and provided medicines, watchers and whatever was needful, and this was only one case out of many where he acted as the "good Samaritan."

Here is what my father's wife, Sarah, wrote on the same sheet, though her name she withheld because of the perilous times.

"My very dear friend: Inasmuch as I have listened to your counsel hitherto I have prospered, therefore I hope that I shall ever adhere to it strictly in future.

"Your kind letter was joyfully received. I never read it but I receive some comfort and feel strengthened, and thank you for it. Your request with regard to Sister Kimball I will attend to. Nothing gives me more pleasure than to add to the happiness of my friends; I only wish that I had more ability to do so. I am very glad we are likely to see you soon, and pray that nothing may occur to disappoint us. When you request Vilate to meet you, perhaps you forget that I shall stand in jeopardy every hour, and would not her absent for worlds. My mind is fixed and I am rather particular, but still, for your comfort, I will submit.

"I am as ever"

It will be seen by the few lines written in connection with my mother's letter that Sarah Peake Noon, who the Lord commanded through his Prophet Joseph, that my father should take to wife, was sealed to him, by the Prophet, as early as 1842. Joseph Smith, who professes to be his father's successor, has (in an anti-"Mormon" meeting, lately held in Chicago, a city noted for its crimes, and the deepest dens of infamy and corruption, the description, which was lately given by a rev. in that city, is so soul sickening that it may well be called the Sodom of the West; which is ripening so fast that it may soon be wrapped again in another consuming fire) declared that it was not until 1852 that polygamy was attempted to be introduced in the teachings of the church, and that its introduction was a "shameless trick of wicked men, who were obliged to find an excuse to cover up their crimes."

He must be blind not to see that his own tongue has condemned him, not only as an uninspired leader, but an unprincipled enemy to his own father's house. For he says, "In 1855 he began a crusade on his own hook, and in 1860, when he entered public life, it was with the avowed determination to oppose polygamy evermore."

Now what man of God ever went to work on his own hook, or even thought to set up his own will independent of revelation from on high?

The man, whoever he was, who told Elder Joseph Smith that if an angel were to come down from heaven and tell him polygamy was wrong he would not believe the angel, was just as much of an impostor as the Prophet's son, who made the following reply, "I would believe, but I would tell the angel to go to someone else, for I would not preach the doctrine."

A poor captain and soldier of the cross he would make to stand as his father's representative to carry out the purposes of the Almighty, for which the Prophet was willing to suffer with his people, and endure every kind of persecution, imprisonment and death, for the sake of the religion which his son Joseph, under the inspiration of the Evil one, has denied, and is now leagued himself with the worst enemies of his father to destroy the work for which he had to suffer so much and at last lay down his life.

His son declared that, although he had been accused of being an apostate, he had always been true to the faith taught by his father; and "I have eagerly sought for a proof of the divine inspiration of polygamy, but cannot find it, and believe the doctrine to be infamous, root and branch."

Here he contradicts himself, which is only another proof of his infidelity and lack of inspiration, and wisdom from on high. He was hardly old enough when his father was killed to know or understand what his faith consisted of; but if he entered public life with this avowed determination, which he declares he did, how could he expect to obtain any proofs either one way or the other? For the Lord requires of his children honesty and sincerity of heart and purpose, in which selfishness must have no place, and
In Bashall Eaves two of Heber’s converts, James and Nancy Knowles Smithies, had an infant daughter, Mary, and also the first child born into the Mormon Church in Great Britain. The parents insisted on taking her to a church to be christened. In Mormon doctrine, infant baptism was contrary to the scriptures and the will of God, and Heber urged them against it. But they believed that if their daughter died she could not be buried in the churchyard. Their insistence caused Heber to utter the first of many prophecies for which he eventually became famous: “Brother and Sister Smithies, I say unto you in the name of Israel’s God, she shall not die on this land, for she shall live until she becomes a mother in Israel.” Two weeks later Heber blessed the infant, who grew to womanhood, went to Utah, and in 1857 became the last plural wife of Heber himself, bearing him five children.

In Chalbury, where he converted twenty-five his first evening, Heber had perhaps the most moving experience of that mission. As he took leave of the Saints there, he was touched by their grief at his departure. “While contemplating this scene,” he wrote, “I was constrained to take off my hat, for I felt that the place was holy ground. The Spirit of the Lord rested upon me and I was constrained to bless that whole region of country.

After the Christmas conference, Heber’s main efforts were to organize the branches so that they could carry on by themselves after he and his companions left. He arranged to lease the Cock Pit in Preston, a hall which, as its name suggests, had been built originally for gaming but had not been used for that purpose since 1830. Subsequently it had been utilized as a school and a lyceum, and in 1837 was the official meeting hall of the Preston Temperance Society. Throughout the early days of the church in England the elders benefited much from the organized temperance movement. Since Mormons then generally abstained not only from alcohol but even from tea and coffee, they were frequently welcomed to preach in temperance halls. Located in the heart of town and seating 800, the Cock Pit was an appropriate choice for the Mormons. (It no longer stands, although a plaque marks its site behind the parish church on Church Street.)

The Mormon request of January 4, 1838, to lease the Cock Pit is probably the earliest document in the Old World referring specifically to the “Latter day Saints.” The second general conference in England, held April 8, 1838, in the Cock Pit, was another confirmation of their success. From 600 to 700 attended, representing twenty-six branches with a total membership of about 1,300. During this conference, twenty converts were baptized, 100 children were blessed, and much instruction was given, since Heber, along with Orson Hyde and Isaac Russell, was preparing to

First Mormon in the Old World

leave England. Joseph Fielding was sustained to preside in their absence, with Willard Richards and William Clayton as counselors.

On April 9 the three elders left Preston for Liverpool, whence they sailed for home on April 20, again on the Garrick. For several days they experienced seasickness and a storm so strong that the bowsprit was broken twice, the boom blown down, and the rigging much torn. For a few days the ship could spread only the jib sails. Thereafter the weather was calm. The missionaries again preached on the Sabbath, and Heber made himself much favored by assisting the ship’s steward in treating a large but sick Durham cow—their only source of milk. Having been a farm boy, Heber quickly discovered that the cow could not raise her cud. He told the steward to cut a half-dozen slices of pork fat as large as his hand, which he gave to the cow. Heber knew that anything as foreign to a cow’s stomach as pork fat would cause her to vomit and thereby resume her normal cud-chewing, but his real skill must have been in inducing Old Boss to swallow the meat in the first place. After the cow recovered, the steward sent the Elders turtle soup, wine, and other luxuries and presented them with many gifts.

Another company wager had been made at Liverpool regarding whether the Black Ball’s New England or Collins’s Garrick would arrive in port first. Although the New England kept four or five miles ahead of the Garrick, Heber assured his officers that their ship would go in first. And indeed, on May 12, near New York City, although neither of the ships was sailing at more than three knots, suddenly the wind left the sails of the New England, and the Garrick ran in one hour ahead.

The next day, Sunday, the missionaries met with the Saints in New York City and gave them an account of their work in England. On Monday they headed for Kirtland, arriving home on May 22, eleven months and nine days from the time they left. Heber’s family was in good health and overjoyed to see him again.

By the time Heber reached Kirtland, few Saints were left in that city. Over half of the original membership had left the church, and many of those who remained were weak in the faith. During his absence the financial and spiritual trouble which had broken out in Kirtland before Heber had left on his mission had grown worse. The success of the dissidents, led by three former Apostles, John F. Boynton, Luke S. Johnson, and Lyman E. Johnson, can be gauged from the fact that during the winter of 1837–38 they had taken possession of the temple and caused both Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, together with many others, to flee to Missouri. The faithful Hebe unhesitatingly made ready to join his brethren.
Aug. 1, 1854, she reveals how concerned she was over what her family in England thought about her polygamous marriage. Edward Martin Correspondence, Church Archives.

25. Ruth L. Pierce (Cazier), born Feb. 14, 1818, Oswego County, St. Lawrence County, New York, daughter of Rev. Isaac and Elizabeth Taylor Pierce, date and place of death unknown except that it was after 1861. Married and sealed to HCK Feb. 3, 1846. No children by HCK. She first married Monroe Cazier Apr. 29, 1858, and bore him six children. After his death she married HCK, but separated from him early. There is some evidence that she came to Utah in 1852. On Aug. 14, 1861, she married John Harrington.

26. Abigail Pitkin, born July 17, 1797, Hartford, Windsor County, New York, daughter of Paul and Abigail Lathrop Pitkin, died May 15, 1847, Winter Quarters. Married and sealed to HCK Jan. 7, 1846. No children by HCK. She was one of the two spinsters with whom HCK hoped to enter polygamy in an effort to spare Vilate's feelings. Abigail was a friend of Vilate.

27. Laura Pitkin, born Sept. 10, 1790, Summers, Tolland County, Connecticut, daughter of Paul and Abigail Lathrop Pitkin, died Nov. 16, 1866, Salt Lake City. Married and sealed to HCK Feb. 3, 1846. No children by HCK. She was a friend of Vilate and one of the two spinsters with whom HCK hoped to enter polygamy in an effort to spare Vilate's feelings. She often served as a midwife in the Kimball family.


29. Ellen Sanders (née Aagaat Ysteinsdatter Bakke), born Apr. 11, 1823, Arendal, Telemark, Norway, daughter of Ystein Sorensen and Aase Olsdatter Romerens Bakke, died Nov. 22, 1871, Salt Lake City. Married HCK Nov. 5, 1844, sealed to HCK Jan. 7, 1846. Children by HCK: Samuel Chasse, Feb. 13, 1848—July 1848; Joseph Smith (twin), June 2, 1850—Nov. 29, 1864; Augusta (twin), June 2, 1850—Oct. 5, 1861; Rosalia, Nov. 25, 1853—Feb. 22, 1900; and Jedediah Heber, Mat. 10, 1855—June 14, 1927. She was one of the three women of the 1845 first Pioneer company. Her twins were the first set in the Kimball family. Rosalia was the last of HCK's sixty-five children to die.


Appendix A

14. 1932. She was a sister of Ellen and at one time worked in the HCK home to help Vilate with her four small sons.

32. Sarah Schuler (Backwaltner), born May 25, 1807, Chester County, Pennsylvania, daughter of William and Sarah Crull Schuler, died Jan 25, 1879, Salt Lake City. Married HCK for time Feb. 7, 1846. No children by HCK. She married her first husband, John Backwaltner, Feb. 21, 1828, and bore him eight children. He died Mar. 5, 1844. She did not come west until 1852 and never lived with HCK.

32. Sarah Scott, born Oct. 25, 1815, Belfast, Ireland, daughter of Jacob and Sarah Wainfield Scott, date and place of death unknown. Married and sealed for time to HCK Feb. 3, 1846. No children by HCK. Also sealed for eternity to Joseph Smith Feb. 3, 1846.

33. Sylvia Porter Sessions (Lyon), born July 31, 1818, Newry, Oxford County, Maine, daughter of David and Patty Bartlett Sessions, died Apr. 13, 1882, Bountiful, Utah. Married for time to HCK Jan. 26, 1846. No children by HCK. She married her first husband, Dr. William Palmer Lyon, in 1838 and bore him six children, most of whom died in infancy. While her first husband was living and with his permission, she married Joseph Smith for eternity Jan. 26, 1846, and married HCK for time. She separated from HCK in 1847 and married Ezekiel Clark Jan. 1, 1850. She bore him one child in Iowa City, Iowa. She apparently returned to Kimball in 1854.

34. Mary Ann Shefflin, born Oct. 31, 1815, Speedwell, New Jersey, daughter of Hugh and Margaret Brown Shefflin, died Sept. 26, 1869, Salt Lake City. Married and sealed to HCK Feb. 4, 1846. She bore HCK one child, Mary Ann, dates unknown. She separated from HCK about 1850 and later married Alfred Walton, Nov. 1, 1855, Salt Lake City. The separation must have been amicable for she was buried in the Kimball family cemetery. In reference to this matter Heber wrote a son on Dec. 21, 1844: "Mary Ann Kimball has taken upon her her original name, Mary Ann Shefflin, as she could not endure any longer without having a man to herself, there were no tears on the subject; but the matter took its natural course. This is quite a relief to your father." (Historian's Office Letterpress copybooks, vol. 1, pp. 47—57.)

35. Mary Smithies, born Oct. 7, 1837, Barshal Eves, Lancashire, England, daughter of James and Nancy Ann Knowles Smithies, died June 8, 1880, Salt Lake City. Married and sealed to HCK Jan. 5, 1847, Salt Lake City. Children by HCK: Mary Melvina, Aug. 29, 1848—May 8, 1933; James Heber, Apr. 9, 1860—June 4, 1866; Wilford Alfonzo, Oct. 6, 1861—Nov. 15, 1928; Lorenzo Heber, Feb. 6, 1866—July 2, 1959; and Abbie Sarah, Jan. 15, 1868—Feb. 23, 1941. She was the first child born to Mormon parents in England. Heber blessed her as an infant and promised her she would be a mother in Zion. She was his last wife. Lorenzo Heber was HCK's last son and Abbie Sarah his last child.
fore Preston in company with Elders Mellon, Whitehead, W[illard]. Richards, [got] to Arthur Burrows 10 o'clock.27

---

27Following the abrupt end of this English mission account are forty-two pages, in various hands, of miscellaneous prayers, revelations, and patriarchal blessings for the period 6 April 1839 through 28 May 1844. The diary starts again on 10 June 1843.

---

Two years and three months elapse between parts one and two of diary two. Before concluding his second mission to England (recorded in part one), Kimball attended a conference of the church in Manchester. During this meeting, he learned that the church in England had 5,814 members, in addition to about 800 who had already emigrated to the United States; that 5,000 copies of the Book of Mormon, 3,000 hymnals, 50,000 tracts, and 2,500 copies of the Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star had been printed; and that a permanent shipping agency had been established for the emigrating concerts. On 21 April, Kimball and six other apostles left Liverpool with a company of 130 emigrants on the Rochester. Thirty days later they arrived in New York City and by 1 July 1841 were back in Nauvoo.

Kimball lived in Nauvoo nearly three years before recommencing his diaries.1 During this time he provided better housing for

---

1Kimball may have kept a diary covering this period of his life.
his family and attended to church duties. In 1842 he received a
paternal blessing, helped to organize a Masonic lodge and the Young
Gentlemen and Ladies Relief Society, received his endowments, and
was introduced to the doctrine of plural marriage, taking his first
plural wife that same year. The following April he was appointed to
go on yet another mission, this time to the eastern states to collect
tithing from members. His diary entries begin again at this point
with an account of his departure.

June the /10th 1843/. This day I left my home at
Nauvoo in company with my wife and fore of my Chil-
dren, Sister Noon [Sister Billin[g]], on the 10 /11th/
Preached at Lima, on the 12th/ reached Quincy. I had a
presheus [precious] tim[e] with my dear Wife [Vilate]. O
God the Eternal Father in the name of Jesus Christ with
Thou bless hur with peas [peace] and with a long life and
when Thou shall see fit to take hur let Thy servent go
with hur and dwell with earch other through out all Eter-
nity that now [no] power shall ever seappeurate us from
each other. For Thou O God knowest we love each other
with pur[e] harts. Still we are willing to leave each other
from time to time to preach Thy word to the children of
men. Now O God hear Thy Servent, and let us have
the desires of our hearts fore we want to live to gether and
die and be buried [buried] and rise and Reign to gether

which is no longer extant. William Clayton recorded on 23 April 1843,
"At bro Kimballs this fore noon assisting him to arrange his history"
(cited in James B. Allen, Trials of Disobedience: The Story of William
More likely, however, Clayton's comment explains some of the
attempted corrections scattered throughout diary one.

2Sarah Peak Noon (1811–73), usually referred to as Sarah Peak,
was Kimball's first plural wife. Her first husband, William S. Noon,
deserted her in Nauvoo, and she married Kimball sometime in 1842.

in Thy Kingdom with our dear Chidren. In the name of
Jesus Christ of Nasrus [Nazareth] amen.

On the 11 I took passage on the Missouria packet, a
fine boat. $2.50 was my fare. I took leave of dear Vilate.
O my Goc bless hur dear soul.

Jure the 15. I reached St. Lewis a little past ten.
In a few moments I found Elder [Lorenzo] Snow at
Father Connors. We directly touch [took] passage on the
Meridian four Sincinattia [Cincinnati]. Fare was five dol-
ars. Wher we left St. L[ewis] at half past five and reached
Cairo nine next morning.

June the 15. We left St. Lewis for Sincenata half
past five in the after noon reached Cairo half past nine of
the next morning. On the 18 we reached Lwisvill [Louis-
ville] ten in the morning. We were prosperd.

Lerder Snow and my self had a presheus time. On
the 17[th] our minds were opened on things pertaining to
our furture State. Such as laying a good foundation fore
here after and to do all things in view of Eternity. Fore
all things that are only done [for] time will desolve when
the body does. Therefore our works will be vein [vain].
I feel a great Zeal this morning to press my way forward
and have all things made shure fore time. O God the
Eternal Father in the name of Jesus Christ of Nasreth
with Thou fore give me all the sins that I have ever done
since I have come here on this Thy foot stool, and let my
heart be pure in Thy sight and my hands clean all the
days I shall live in this probation, that my feet may never
slip, that I may be filled with Zeal and that according to
the knowledg and that knowledg that proceeds from the
Father keep Thy servent from Evry vein thing, and as-

2Lorenzo Snow (1814–1901) became an apostle in 1847 and
president of the LDS church in 1898.
sist me to be true to The[e] and to all that love Thy name that treacherry may never have a place in my heart or ever be known among my posturity. Let peas beat down upon my dear Vilate that sorrow may pass away, and pease take the seat. Let Health be and abide with them and all that belongs to me. Even so Amen.

We reached Sincenata on Monday morning about sun rise. This /was/ on the Ninteenth all well. Found the Saints in tolerable Spirrits. Frances Highey came to us on the 22 and on the tw[e]nty third he left us. I sent a letter to my son Wm. and one to my wife. O that I was such a man as I would desire to be, and Thou O God knowest I wish [to] be pure in hart, that all of /my/ sins may be bloted out that no one of them may ever appear before me in time or through out /all/ Eternity, or Ever sepperate me from my dear Vilate or anny of those that are con[ne]cted to /me/ by the ties of Na[t]ure. Thou knowest I Love my dear family, and may it incease more and more, that now [no] power can sepperate us from Each other, that we may dwell to gether through out all Eternity, and thare be in thrond [enthroned] on worlds, to propragate that thare may be no end to us or our Seeds. I desire to be wise and filled with Knowledge, even the knowledge of God. Let not Thy servant feet slip or do anny thing to bring a stane on his caricter or on the caus of Christ which he has imbraced. Now Father in Heaven I ask The[e] to seel these blessing on my head and all that belongs to me, and Thy nam shall have all the glory through Jesus Christ Amen.

This I rote on the 23 of June.

---


July 28, 1843. Last Evening Elders Young, Smith, and Woodruff come in to our meeting. A Elder Page was preaching. I must say I was glad to see them as Elder O. Pratt and myself have been hear in the City of Pittsburgh near fore [nearly four] weeks wating fore our Brethren. Now they have come I am glad and I thank my Father in Heaven. I have the priviledge of hearing from my dear brethren and sisters and family. I recieved three leters one from my dear Vilate, one from my son Wm. and [daughter] Hellen. How pressous to hear from my dear wife and chilren in whom I love, and prize above all other things here on Earth, but I leave all of those things fore Christ sake and the Gospell. Y[e]a the Lord knows why I do this. O Lord my God help Thy poor servant to stand fast in The[e], that he may be true and faithfull to The[e] and his Brethren, all of his days, that thou O God would spare the Love of my Youth that we may be one in the all of /our/ days. and come forth in the Eternal worlds to gether with our dear Children and friends. Amen.

August the 3. We left Pittsburgh by coash [coach] to Cumberland, [Maryland]. 125 [miles] most of the way on Rayl [rail] by the National Road. At Cumberland we took the [railroad] cars to Baltimore 140, we took a steem boat fore Phillidelpha. 65 by Steam and 14 by Rail way, then fifty by steam, first waters. 65 miles was [on] the Chespeake Bay. The other was Delaware River 50 miles

---

*Francis Highey (ca. 1820–after 1846) would be excommunicated for apostasy.*

*Phineas Young (1799–1879) was a brother to Brigham Young.*

*This is probably John E. Page (1799–1867), an apostle since 1841 who would be excommunicated in 1844.*
we stade in P - - - [Philadelphia] two weeks. Left on the 18 twok [took] steam boat fore Burlington [New Jersey] where we twok coach fore Mount Holly [New Jersey] - at Judg Richards. He twok his cask [coach?] and Caried us to a place called the Square in Burlentown [Burlington] where we held a woods meting on.

On the 21 we left fore New York. We took cars at Bording town [Burlington?]. Reached New York at six in the after noon.

A Bill of Expenses from Nauvo, to city of New York

to St. Lewis ................ $ 2 50
to Sincinata ............... 5 00
to Pittsburgh ............. 4 00
to Philadelphia ........... 13 00
to New York ............... 3 00

$28 00

Left New York on the forth of Sept. reachede [Boston?] on the 5. On the 6 Elder Young and my self went to Salem. In Evening went to Marble Head hurd Elder Pratt. Preach. On the 7 we returned to Salem where we stade one night then went back to Boston held our confrance on the 19 in Boston. Eight of the twelve present. We left the 23 of Sept. that is Elder G[orge]. A. Smith and myself, to New York. Left on the 27 fore Ph - - while thare went to Mount Holly on the 28 stade one night then returned on the next day left Ph - - on the third of Oct. reached Pittsburgh on the 7. Left on the Eight. Took the Steam boat Rariton. Got fast [fastened?] on a sand bar on the 8, 12 miles below and held fast till the 9, Eight in the morning.

We stopt two days in Sincinata. Left on the 14. which was Sartaday on the Steamer, Nautius. We reached Lewisvill on Sunday morning at 3 O Clock. Left the same day in the after Noon. Past threw the Lock. Sun one hour high. On the 17 we reached Cairo, the mouth of the Ohio River in the fore part of the day weather pleasant. On the 19, we lay still in the morning on the account of Fog within 14 miles of St. Lewis.

*This part of the diary abruptly ends at this point and several miscellaneous items are added, including an 1847 poem by Kimball’s first wife, Vilate, in her own hand:*

**Winter Quarters Jan 17th 1847**

No being round the spacious Earth
Beneath the vaulted arch of heaven
Divides my love, or draws it thence
from him to whom my heart is given

Like the frail ivy to the oak
Drain coser by the temptest [dliven
Through soors flood he'll bear me up
And light with smiles my way to heaven

The gift was on the alter laid
The Plighted vow, on earth was given
The seal eternal has ben made
And by his Side, I'll reign in heaven

Lines written by Vilate Kimball
to her companion Heber C. Kimball

*This poem is followed by five “Strange Events” in Kimball’s hand pertaining to temple work for the period 1842-45.*

Strange Events, June 1842. I was anicated [initiated] into the ancient order was washed and appointed and Sealled and ordained a Preast, and so forth in company with nine others, Viz. Josph Smith, Hiram Smith,
January 1844. My wife Vilate and menny feemales was recieved in to the Holy Order, and was washed and inoointed [anoitted] by Emma.

February the first 1844. My self and wife Vilate was announded Preast and Preastest [Priestess] unto our God under the Hands of Brigham Young and by the voys [voice] of the Holy Order.

April the first 4 day 1844. I Heber C. Kimball recieved the washing of my feet, and was annointed by my wife Vilate fore my burial, that is my feet, head, Stomach. Even as Mary did Jesus, that she mite have a claim on Him in the Resurrection. In the City of Nauvoo.

In 1845 I recieved the washing of my feet by \[what follows is in Vilate's hand:]\}

I Vilate Kimball do hereby certify that on the first day of April 1844 I attended to washing and anoointed the head, Stomach and feet of my dear companion Heber

---

7 William Law (1809-92), second counselor to Joseph Smith in 1841, would be excommunicated for apostasy in 1844.
8 William Marks (1792-1872), a Nauvoo stake president, was called a traitor after Joseph Smith's death, in part, because of his opposition to plural marriage.
9 George Miller (1794-1856) became second bishop of the church in 1844.
10 Newel Kimball Whitney (1795-1850), the first bishop of the church in 1844, was the father of one of Kimball's plural wives, Sarah Ann Whitney (1825-73).
11 This is a reference to Joseph Smith's private prayer circle in which members were instructed in ceremonies later administered in the Nauvoo Temple (see Allen, *Trials of Discipleship*, pp. 125, 127).
12 This is most likely a reference to Emma Smith (1804-79), the first wife of Joseph Smith (1805-44).
13 At this point, for the sake of continuity, diary two—which jumps from 19 October 1843 to 28 May 1845—will be interrupted by diary three. Diary two, part two, ends with Kimball near St. Louis enroute to Nauvoo, which he reached 22 October 1843. Kimball would spend seven months at home before being called on his eighth and last mission. "I remained in Nauvoo all winter," he later related, "enjoying the teaching of the Prophet, attending council, prayer meetings, preaching in Nauvoo and branches round about, and doing all I could to strengthen the hands of the First Presidency" ("Synopsis of the Life of Heber C. Kimball," *Deseret News*, 20 April 1838). Politics were also important in 1844, an election year. The Mormons debated whether to support the Democratic president, Martin Van Buren, or the Whig, Henry Clay. Since both candidates had refused to do anything to help the Mormons secure redress for Missouri's wrongs, a proposal came to nominate Joseph Smith as a candidate for the presidency. This was done at the annual April conference of the church, and on 17 May 1844 a convention was held in Nauvoo at which Kimball and 343 Elders were appointed to go throughout the states to stump for Joseph Smith. This is the point at which diary three starts.
The following record more clearly resembles a proper diary than Kimball’s earlier efforts and provides interesting and important information about his visits in St. Louis, Cincinnati, Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York City, Boston, and other eastern cities. We learn of Kimball’s efforts in Washington, D.C., to secure redress for Missouri wrongs to the Mormons, his reaction to the death of Joseph Smith on 27 June 1844, and his return to Nauvoo on 6 August 1844, three months after leaving home. Thereafter we are witness to his detailed account of Nauvoo from the death of Joseph Smith through 27 May 1845.

On the 10 of Sept. [1842; this entry is out of place in the original] I left Nauvoo with my wife fore Lima where I met B[righam]. Young, G[eorge]. A. Smith,
Arness Limon [Amasa Lyman] where we held a two days meeting. 19 Elders ordained, 12 baptised and since 8 more. Our Confiance in Ramos [Ramus] thare was 7 baptised, at Quincy thare was 5 baptised, 3 or 4 in Pason [Payson], on the 26 I retur[ned to Quincy. On the 27 Mr. John Carli died.

Nauvoo, May the 15, 1844. And it come to pass that I blest my wife and children and Sealled my blessing on thare Heads in the name of the Lord. I also ordained my son Wm. Henry an Elder. About ten in the morning I went to the landing with my wife, El[ders John Pack, Lelery [Ezra T.?] Benson. Wm. Carri[c]ed us with a waggon. Elder White [Lyman Wight] was not ready to go. We went to Elder B. Youngs. Stopt a short time then came home, and all was well.

May the 17. A general convention was held at Nauvoo fore the purpus of chusing Delegate fore to Represent the different State in the union.

May the 20. Church called to gether by Elder L. White, spok on Pollicks. Cailled fore a collection. Recieved $4050 [$40.50]. In the evening Bishop Whitney and wife come in, had prairis.

21. I left Nauvoo in company with about 50 or sixty of the Elders of Isreal. My wife and daughter and son Wm. went to the Lending to see me start.

22. Reached St. Lewis 10 in the fore noon. I see menny of the Saints. Spent the most of the day in getting some few things to send to my family and rote one letter to my wife I will give a bill of the things that I got and the price as follows.

- 24 P[ounds] of chugar [sugar]  Price $ 2.00
- 15 P of Coffee .......................... 1.50
- 4 Pounds of rasons .......................... 0.60
- 1/2 half bushel of aple[s] .................. 6

[The above are in one box by themselves; in another box are:]

- 8 Pounds of lump chugar .................. 1.00
- 15 Pounds of chugar .......................... 1.00
- 4 P of salaratus [saleratus, baking soda] .................. 40
- 1/2 pound of Tea .......................... 31
- one quarter nutmags .......................... 37
- one Pound of nuts .......................... 25
- one doson of Lemmons .......................... 18
- 2 Jacks nives, fore boys .................. 25

All of these I sent up by the O[ney in care of Mr. Holdridge. A] New York store merchant his name is Holdridge. $8.54. I also sent my wash by him one cog [kg] of rce 44 Pounds at fore cents, 1,92, two boxes and one cag [kg] 64 [pounds]. $11.14.

On the Evening of the 22 we held meeting in St. Lewis. Elder Young and my self spoke to near 300 saints.

23. We left St. Lewis on the Steamer Louis Philippe at half pas twelve in the after Noon.

24. We reached Cairo at 3 in the Morning, the water High and on the rise. Elder B. Young and my self have a state room by our selves good fare, and a b[eal]utifull boat. Passengers and crew all sivel [civil] and kind.

25. All things past o[l] well. Br[other]. B. Young
Under date of June 21, 1892, Sister Sarah M. Kimball signed her name to the following statements: "At a Relief Society Meeting held April 28, 1842, I heard the Prophet Joseph make this statement. "While other leading men of the Church have been unrighteously aspiring, Heber C. Kimball has been true and is to me what John was to Jesus, my beloved disciple." Bro. Kimball showed me a rod that the Lord through the Prophet Joseph had given to him. He said that when he wanted to find out anything that was his right to know, all he had to do was to kneel down with the rod in his hand, and that sometimes the Lord would answer his questions before he had time to ask them." My mother and my sister, Helen Mar, told me the same thing and added to it, that Pres. Young received a similar rod from the Lord at the same time. They claimed that these rods were given to them because they were the only ones of the original Twelve who had not lifted up their hands against the Prophet.

After father died, we found in a blank book where he had dotted down some of the things the Lord had told him, which in part are as follows: "Feb. 23, 1859, we find this: "The Word of the Lord to me was, that the army or most if it, will leave the territory next year."

March 6, 1859, "I was told by the Lord that there would be much sickness during the coming summer which will cause the people to mourn Jan. 4, 1862," It was revealed to me by the Spirit that the United States would soon make war upon this people to test them, and see if they would remain true to the Lord.

"March 12, 1862, it was made known to me that I could live 25 years longer, if I so desired."

"April 30, 1862, the Lord told me that Adam was my father and that he was the God and father of all of the inhabitants of this Earth."

"In the evening of January 12, 1865, I was told by the Lord that I should not be removed from my place as first counselor to Pres. Young and those who had oppressed me, when it was in their power to do me good, shall be removed from their places. That Daniel H. Wells, Albert Carrington, Jos. A. Young and others were among that number. In the name of the Lord I predict that this will come true."

HEBER C. KIMBALL.

There are other things in the book that was revealed to father.
Kimball had participated fully in the limited, preparatory ordinances of washings and anointings which had been administered in the Kirtland Temple in 1836. On 4 May 1842, however, Joseph introduced the full endowment ceremony and eight Church leaders, including Heber C. Kimball, Brigham Young, Willard Richards, George Miller, and Newell K. Whitney participated. This presentation was not done in the uncompleted temple, but in the upper rooms of Joseph's brick store on Water Street. While some few others received their endowments before the top story of the temple was completed during December 1845, most of the Saints in Nauvoo received their endowments from then until the general exodus west in 1846.

In about 1842, Kimball was introduced to the doctrine of plural marriage. This troublesome doctrine was revealed to Joseph Smith as early as 1831 in Kirtland, but was not practiced (save for one or two probable instances in Ohio) until 1841 when Joseph and a few other married brethren secretly married additional wives. The revelation concerning plural marriage was set down in writing and read before the Nauvoo High Council in July 1843, but was not openly taught until 1852 in Utah, and not officially published until 1876.35

Although Kimball was sealed to forty-five wives before he died in 1868, he did not act hastily nor out of romantic inclination. Vilate, his first wife, was as much a prime mover in his practicing the doctrine as he. He did not take any other wives for two years after marrying his first plural wife, Sarah Perry Peak Noon, in 1842. Then in September 1844, he married Ann Alice Gheen, granddaughter of President Spencer W. Kimball, Frances Jessie Swan, Sylvia Porter Sessions, Charlotte Chase, Nancy Maria Winchester, Mary Ehen Harris Able, and Ehen Sanders. In 1845 he married at least five more wives—the sisters Clarissa and Emilie Cutler, Amanda Gheen, Sarah Ann Whitney, and Lucy Walker. Then, just prior to the February 1846 exodus from Nauvoo, Kimball was sealed to at least twenty-eight women during January and February. He married nine widows of Joseph Smith, and it is clear that some of these and others to whom he was sealed were not connubial wives, but the sealings expressed his willingness to protect and care for these women while heading into the western wilderness. He had a total of sixty-five children by sixteen women, the extent of his connubial plurality.36

Kimball has told us little of his initial reaction to the doctrine of polygamy. From two other sources, however, we learn something of it. The better account comes from his daughter, Helen Mar, as she wrote in the Woman's Exponent in 1882:

When first hearing the principle taught, believing that he would be called upon to enter into it, he thought of the two Sisters Pitkin, who, as they were both elderly ladies and great friends of mothers', he believed would cause her little if any unhappiness. The woman he was commanded to take, however, was an English lady [Sarah Noon], nearer my mother's age, who came over with her husband and two little girls in the same ship in which President Brigham Young and my father were returning from their second mission to Europe.37
Her husband was a drunkard and soon returned to England, abandoning his wife and daughters. According to Helen, "This, no doubt, was the cause of father's being told by the Prophet to take her and the children, to provide them with a home." She further records how her father agonized over the commandment and says that "the Prophet told him the third time before he obeyed the command."38

Helen is also the source of the following now famous incident in the life of Vilate which reveals how she came to understand and accept the doctrine of polygamy:

Stanley B. Kimball, BYU Studies, Vol. 15, No. 4, p.461
My mother had noticed a change in his looks and appearance, and when she enquired the cause, he tried to evade her question, saying it was only her imagination, or that he was not feeling well, etc. But it so worked upon his mind that his anxious and haggard looks betrayed him daily and hourly, and finally his misery became so unbearable that it was impossible to control his feelings. He became sick in body, but his mental wretchedness was too great to allow of his retiring at night, and instead of going to bed he would walk the floor; and the agony of his mind was so terrible that he would wring his hands and weep, beseeching the Lord with his whole soul to be merciful and reveal to his wife the cause of his great sorrow, for he himself could not break his vow of secrecy. His anguish and my mother's, were indescribable and when unable to endure it longer, she retired to her room, where with a broken and contrite heart, she poured out her grief to [God]. . . .

Stanley B. Kimball, BYU Studies, Vol. 15, No. 4, p.462
My father's heart was raised at the same time in supplication, and while pleading as one would plead for life, the vision of her mind was opened, and she saw the principle of Celestial Marriage illustrated in all its beauty and glory, together with the great exaltation and honor it would confer upon her in that immortal and celestial sphere if she would but accept it and stand in her place by her husband's side. She was also shown the woman he had taken to wife, and contemplated with joy the vast and boundless love and union which this order would bring about, as well as the increase of kingdoms, power, and glory extending throughout the eternities, worlds without end.

Stanley B. Kimball, BYU Studies, Vol. 15, No. 4, p.462
Her soul was satisfied and filled with the Spirit of God. With a countenance beaming with joy she returned to my father, saying, "Heber, what you have kept from me the Lord has shown me."

Stanley B. Kimball, BYU Studies, Vol. 15, No. 4, p.462
She related the scene to me and to many others, and told me she never saw so happy a man as father was, when she described the vision and told him she was satisfied and knew that it was from God. She covenanted to stand by him and honor the principle, which covenant she faithfully kept, and though her trials were often heavy and grievous to bear, her integrity was unflinching to the end.39

Stanley B. Kimball, BYU Studies, Vol. 15, No. 4, p.462
Few other Mormon wives were rewarded with such a vision of the celestial order. Vilate,
however, stated that at least one other woman claimed to have received a divine sanction of polygamy. On 27 June 1843, Vilate wrote to Heber, who was on a mission in Philadelphia:

Stanley B. Kimball, BYU Studies, Vol. 15, No. 4, p.462

I have had a visit from brother Parley [Pratt] and his wife, they are truly converted it appears that J....h has taught him some principles and told him his privilege, and even appointed one for him. I dare not tell you who it is, you would be astonished and I guess some tried. She has been to me for council. I told her I did not wish to advise in such matters. Sister Pratt has been raging against these things. She told me herself that the devil had been in her until within a few days past. She said the Lord had shown her it was all right. She wants Parley to go ahead, says she will do all in her power to help him; they are so ingaged I feer they will run to fast.

Stanley B. Kimball, BYU Studies, Vol. 15, No. 4, p.463

They asked me many questions on principle. I told them I did not know much and I rather they would go to those that had authority to teach.40

Stanley B. Kimball, BYU Studies, Vol. 15, No. 4, p.463

The wife who came to Vilate for council and who had been "rageing against these things" was Mary Ann Pratt who, after her husband had been sealed to several wives, became alienated and divorced him in 1852 in Utah. The woman to whom Vilate referred when she wrote, "I dare not tell you who it is, you would be astonished and I guess some tried," was Elizabeth Brotherton. Elizabeth was the sister of Martha Brotherton, who left Nauvoo in 1842 and went to St. Louis where she published her unfavorable view of plural marriage in the St. Louis Bulletin of 15 July. Among other things she claimed that Heber C. Kimball and Brigham Young had tried to pressure her into polygamy. This may be why Vilate felt Heber would be "astonished." In any event, Pratt married Elizabeth.

Stanley B. Kimball, BYU Studies, Vol. 15, No. 4, p.463

The second account of Kimball's introduction to polygamy comes from his son-in-law, James Lawson, who married a daughter of Kimball's first plural wife, Sarah Noon. This story was printed in Whitney's Life of Heber C. Kimball in 1888. As Lawson and others who could have commented on its truthfulness were still alive in 1888, there seems to be no good reason to discount it. The story is rather unusual and is best told by Lawson himself:

Stanley B. Kimball, BYU Studies, Vol. 15, No. 4, p.463

In 1855, Heber C. Kimball sent for me (I had just been married thirteen days) and said "Brother James, I want you to give your wife Betsy a divorce." I said, "Brother Kimball, what is the matter? There is nothing wrong with us, and we think everything of each other." He said, 'Nothing is the matter, but here is the divorce and I want you to sign it.' I signed it and he told me to send her home to her mother which I did. At the same time I asked her if she had been making any complaints to Brother Kimball about me. She said, "Never, to anybody." I did not sleep a wink that night, and no one knows what I suffered in my feelings. I prayed frequently to the Lord and inquired of Him what all this meant. Towards morning I received an answer to my prayers. The Spirit came unto me, "Be comforted, my servant James, all will come out right." Soon after this Brother Kimball went to the Legislature, which was held at Fillmore, and was absent from home about two months. When he returned he gave me a
mission to Carson Valley and told me to get Betsy and bring her to the Endowment House with me. I did so and he sealed us for time and all eternity. After this took place I said, "Brother Kimball what did you do that for?" He said, "Brother James, I did it to try you as I was tried. I will tell you. After I had returned from my second mission to England in 1841, the Prophet Joseph came to me one evening and said, Brother Heber, I want you to give Vilate to me to be my wife, saying that the Lord desired this at my hands." Heber said that in all his life before he had never had anything take hold of him like that. He was dumbfounded. He went home, and did not eat a mouthful of anything, nor even touch a drop of water to his lips, nor sleep, for three days and nights. He was almost continually offering up his prayers to God and asking Him for comfort. On the evening of the third day he said, "Vilate, let's go down to the Prophet's" and the went down and met him in a private room. Heber said, "Brother Joseph, here is Vilate." The Prophet wept like a child, said Heber, and after he had cleared the tears away, he took us and sealed us for time and all eternity, and said, "Brother Heber, take her, and the Lord will give you a hundredfold."41

Stanley B. Kimball, BYU Studies, Vol. 15, No. 4, p.464

Apparently Lawson accepted this all very meekly, even the fact that he was left both wiseless and explanationless for more than two months while Kimball was in Fillmore.

Stanley B. Kimball, BYU Studies, Vol. 15, No. 4, p.464

Kimball's reference to his having been tried or tested by the Prophet is not the only account of Joseph Smith's requesting other men's wives in marriage. Orson Pratt was excommunicated for his stand against polygamy (see the T. Edgar Lyon article in this issue), and William Law apostatized and became a bitter enemy of the Prophet.
stage, for which we paid from eight to ten cents a mile, and had taken three meals a day, for each of which we were charged fifty cents, also fifty cents for our lodgings. Brother Brigham often suspected that I put the money in his trunk of clothes, thinking that I had a purse of money which I had not acquainted him with; but this was not so; the money could only have been put in his trunk by some heavenly messenger, who thus administered to our necessities daily as he knew we needed."

Walking through the neglected and nearly deserted streets, Heber found Kirtland a desolate-looking place; about half the houses were empty and falling into ruin, and the town was still full of the same spirit of apathy and dissension that had earlier driven the Saints to Missouri. "I am disappointed," he reported in one letter to Vilate, "in what I expected to find here. I anticipated meeting the Brethren united and enjoying the blessings of the people of God, but to my sorrow, I found them all broken up and divided into several different parties. . . ."

Other letters reveal the surprising fact that Vilate wanted to leave frontier Nauvoo and return to more settled Kirtland or Victor. "As for going to Kirtland to live as things are now it is against my will," Heber responded, "for I had rather live in a cave or be driven with the Saints every other year while I live and be one than to have all the good things of the Earth and be at variance with the other as they are there, for you can't find two that agree." Again he emphasized, "I don't want to settle in the East now . . . I don't want to settle in the East without times change."

As a counterproposal, he urged Vilate to come east for a visit, go to Victor the next summer, and stay with friends and relatives until he returned from England. Then, in a manner suggesting that there might have been some stigma attached to those leaving Nauvoo for personal reasons, he wrote, "I think no one will have any objections of your visiting your friends." The actions of the Apostle's wife were obviously of public interest. Had Heber agreed to leave Nauvoo and return east he would have appeared disloyal and most likely would have forfeited his apostleship. That Vilate must have realized this but still wanted to leave is surely an indication of the degree of hardship she was facing.

Following three weeks in Kirtland, Heber spent the next six in western New York, visiting and preaching to relatives in Byron, Pike, Rochester, Mendon, and Victor. All were happy to see him, most were sympathetic to what he had suffered since he left Mendon, some offered to help if he would forsake Mormonism, but only Vilate's brother, William E. Murray, and his wife (and perhaps their two children, Carlos and Jenette) accepted baptism at his hands.

---

**NOTES**

1. The Ross home was located east of the road about 100 yards north of the intersection of roads 14 and 96 in Atlas. Brigham Young probably stayed in the storehouse still standing on the northwest corner of this same intersection.

2. H. C. Kimball, Journal 94c, 104, Church Archives.


4. H. C. Kimball, Journal 94c, 111, Church Archives.

5. Ibid., 114-15.

6. H. C. Kimball to Vilate Kimball, Nov. 16, 1839, H. C. Kimball Papers, Church Archives.


8. H. C. Kimball to Vilate Kimball, Mar. 5, 1840, H. C. Kimball Papers, Church Archives.

9. Ibid.
to come. The fourth type, the most important and today considered the ideal, was the temple (or celestial) marriage during mortality and in eternity. This marriage could be entered into only by two living persons and meant that their union was not "until death do ye part" but rather forever, in the fullest sense, both in this life and the next. (In wedding announcements modern Mormons look for some variant of the words "sealed for time and eternity in the... temple" much as Catholics watch for the phrase "fortified with Sacraments of Holy Mother Church" in obituaries — both expressions suggesting a happier afterlife to their adherents.) Such a belief, even in conjugality in the next world, makes marriage a total commitment for most Mormons. Divorce is relatively rare, and Mormon men are constantly reminded to be good husbands and fathers. "No success in life can compensate for failure in the home" is a twentieth-century Mormon saying.

Following the sealing, Joseph turned to Heber and said, "Brother Heber, take her and the Lord will give you a hundred fold." The last part of this statement foreshadowed a further test. Sometime later it came—Heber was commanded to take another wife, and not merely to do it but to do it secretly—to betray his wife's confidence. Secrecy was the great problem in plural marriage. In Nauvoo plural marriage was never openly practiced, taught, or admitted. In fact, to prevent wholesale apostasy over such a radical doctrine, the teaching was not only kept secret but was officially denied. A few knew about it and accepted it, a few opposed it, and most knew nothing about it. This, of course, led to many tales, rumors, and stories of seduction and adultery, which stirred up anti-Mormon sentiments, disturbed many faithful Mormons who had not been taught the doctrine, and embittered many in and out of the church against Joseph Smith.

These tales, rumors, misrepresentations, charges, countercharges, denunciations, unauthorized acts by some Mormons, and denials became and have remained the stock-in-trade of many sensation-seeking writers. Had the doctrine been made public the reaction could hardly have been worse than it was. Joseph was placed in the position of being damned if he did and damned if he didn't admit to it.

Heber appears to have been involved in only one such rumor, that of the Martha Brotherton affair. During July, 1842, Martha accused Heber of having been party to a "locked room" attempt to persuade her to become the plural wife of Brigham Young, and the charge spread far and wide. While Heber might well have interceded with her in behalf of his own interest, he vigorously denied having done anything improper. His statement is easy to believe, for he was very open in his affairs. He was in fact so
A Time of Testing

Regarding, or had ever practiced it; although she had heard the revelation and was eye-witness to the marriage of the three wives above mentioned."

Although Heber was sealed to at least forty-three women before he died in 1868, he had children by only seventeen. There is little indication that he ever considered plural marriage as more than a chore, a religious responsibility for raising up a large family and providing for widows. The principle certainly did not contribute to domestic tranquility. Heber was not able to give his various wives equal attention and he appears to have been much less emotionally involved with his other plural wives than with Vilate. Many years later in 1895 one of his wives, by whom he had nine children, admitted that there was "not any love in the union between myself and Kimball, and it is my business entirely whether there was any courtship or not."

He did not act hastily or out of romantic inclination and did not take any other wives for two years after marrying his first plural wife. In his letters, journals, and discourses there are frequent references to Vilate and her children, but seldom a mention of others in his family, which eventually totaled at least 108 persons. It was always Vilate who remained the center of his emotional life. He frequently felt the necessity of trying to comfort her, to assure her that she was the first in his life, the love of his youth, and that no one could or would ever take her place.

Shortly after entering his first plural marriage, Heber was on a mission in Illinois. From Apple Creek on October 16 he wrote Vilate. This letter is the earliest known record of how polygamy affected their relationship, and, surprisingly, it appears that the practice of plural and temple marriage brought them closer together. He had never before written anything about his emotions and romantic as "I dream about you most every night, but always feel disappointed for when I awake, behold it is a dream and I could cry if it would do me any good. I am quite a child some of the time." Or "You were speaking about if I had sent a kiss to you. I will send you several on the top of this page where those round marks are, no less than one dozen. [These tender symbols are still clearly discernible.] I had the one dozen. [These tender symbols are still clearly discernible.] I had the one dozen.

Helen did, however, feel free to record some pertinent information about the much-debated question of Emma Smith's knowledge of and reaction to plural marriage: "He [Joseph] taught the principle to wife, Emma, who humbly received it and gave to him three young women to wife, who had been living with her in her home, and had been like adopted daughters. Until she lost the spirit and her heart became hardened, they lived happily together. . . Emma deceived her children and denied to everyone that the Prophet had ever received a revelation on Celestial mar-

He never before written anything about his emotions and romantic as "I dream about you most every night, but always feel disappointed for when I awake, behold it is a dream and I could cry if it would do me any good. I am quite a child some of the time." Or "You were speaking about if I had sent a kiss to you. I will send you several on the top of this page where those round marks are, no less than one dozen. [These tender symbols are still clearly discernible.] I had the one dozen. [These tender symbols are still clearly discernible.] I had the one dozen.

Nine days later, from Springfield, he wrote how he regretted the sorrow he had caused her: "I never suffered more in all my life," he affirmed, "than since this thing came to pass." At the time of this letter he had been gone from home less than five weeks and had never been more than 100 miles from Nauvoo. Compared with previous separations, this 1842

Helen did, however, feel free to record some pertinent information about the much-debated question of Emma Smith's knowledge of and reaction to plural marriage: "He [Joseph] taught the principle to wife, Emma, who humbly received it and gave to him three young women to wife, who had been living with her in her home, and had been like adopted daughters. Until she lost the spirit and her heart became hardened, they lived happily together. . . Emma deceived her children and denied to everyone that the Prophet had ever received a revelation on Celestial mar-

He never before written anything about his emotions and romantic as "I dream about you most every night, but always feel disappointed for when I awake, behold it is a dream and I could cry if it would do me any good. I am quite a child some of the time." Or "You were speaking about if I had sent a kiss to you. I will send you several on the top of this page where those round marks are, no less than one dozen. [These tender symbols are still clearly discernible.] I had the one dozen. [These tender symbols are still clearly discernible.] I had the one dozen.

Nine days later, from Springfield, he wrote how he regretted the sorrow he had caused her: "I never suffered more in all my life," he affirmed, "than since this thing came to pass." At the time of this letter he had been gone from home less than five weeks and had never been more than 100 miles from Nauvoo. Compared with previous separations, this 1842
HEBER C. KIMBALL
MORMON PATRIARCH
AND PIONEER

STANLEY B. KIMBALL

University of Illinois Press
Urbana Chicago London
him as a wife. Heber, emotionally overwhelmed by the request, came home to wrestle with the request. He touched neither food nor water for three days and three nights and continually sought confirmation and comfort from God. On the evening of the third day, some kind of divine assurance came, and Heber and Vilate walked from their home to Joseph’s store. Having placed her hand into the Prophet’s, Heber and Vilate submitted their will to his.

Joseph wept at this act of faith, devotion, and obedience. The Prophet never intended to take Vilate from Heber—his request was only a test. Passing the test, Vilate and Heber were rewarded by being sealed for time and eternity by Joseph before they returned home.

For many disciples, another test, much more difficult, was introduced in Nauvoo by Joseph Smith—the principle of plural marriage (technically known as polygyny).\(^\text{31}\) It is not known how extensively plural marriage was practiced in Nauvoo, but less than twenty-five individual men can be identified as participating in the Church-sanctioned practice.

This particular teaching tried the souls of the most devoted disciples. In almost every account, both of men and women, initial presentation of the principle produced “shock, horror, disbelief, or general emotional confusion.” For those who accepted it, they generally went through a “period of inner turmoil lasting from several days to several months.” Many prayed and fasted that God would “reveal the truth of the new beliefs to them.” They often reported “a compelling personal experience revealing the truth of the new standards.”\(^\text{32}\)

Brigham Young, following his return from England, was informed of the revelation and commanded to take an additional wife. He recalled:

Some of these my brethren know what my feelings were at the time Joseph revealed the doctrine: I was not desirous of shrinking from any duty, nor of failing in the least to do as I was commanded, but it was the first time in my life that I had desired the grave, and I could hardly get over it for a long time. And when I saw a funeral, I felt to envy the corpse its situation, and to regret that I was not in the coffin.\(^\text{33}\)

Heber C. Kimball was warned that he would lose his apostleship and was rebuked on three separate occasions before he accepted the revelation. Another Apostle, John Taylor, said the whole Quorum of
the Twelve "seemed to put off as far as we could, what might be termed the evil day" when they would take plural wives. Despite these reactions, Joseph "clapped his hands and danced like a child," so relieved he was of not carrying the burden alone anymore.35

The practice was both difficult and against the Saints’ Puritan traditions. Following the death of their father, sixteen-year-old Emily and twenty-year-old Eliza Partridge moved into the Smith home to assist Emma with the many duties surrounding her public and private life. During this time Joseph was sealed to the two sisters.

Emily recalled, "We were married to Brother Joseph about the same time, but neither of us knew about the other at the time; everything was so secret."36 Her sister remembered:

A woman living in polygamy dare not let it be known, and nothing but a firm desire to keep the commandments of the Lord could have induced a girl to marry in that way. I thought my trials were very severe in the line, and I am often led to wonder how it was that a person of my temperament could get along with it and not rebel; but I know it was the Lord who kept me from opposing his plans, although in my heart I felt that I could not submit to them. But I did and I am thankful to my Heavenly Father for the care he had over me in those troublous times.17

A few sources also indicate that some of the marriages were "for eternity only."38 Another obscure aspect of the plural marriages in Nauvoo was the practice of "sealing" a woman who was already civilly married to another man. For example, twenty-year-old Zina Diantha Huntington married Henry Jacobs 7 March 1841; later, on 27 October 1841, when Zina was sealed to Joseph Smith, Henry stood as a witness. Though married for eternity to Joseph, Zina continued to live with Henry in Nauvoo and bore him two children.19

In spite of the difficulties, some sister Saints became close to their sister wives. In many cases, living the principle often brought the first wife and her spouse closer together, as was demonstrated in Vilate and Heber Kimball's letters during this period.

Vilate sent her husband off on a mission in October 1842. She remained home in Nauvoo with Heber's first plural wife, Sarah Peak. Both women were pregnant at the time. In the letters between Heber and Vilate, and, in one case, Sarah added as postscript to one of Vilate's letters, an added dimension of concern and tenderness is shown.
To Vilate, Heber wrote, "I dream about you most every night, but always feel disappointed when I awake; behold, it is a dream, and I could cry if it would have done any good. I am quite a child some of the time." In closing the letter, Heber noted, "You [spoke] about if I had sent a kiss to you. I will send you several on the top of this page where those round marks are, no less than one dozen. I had the pleasure of receiv[e]g those that you sent. I can tell you it is a pleasure in some degree, but when I come home I will try the lump itself."  

Vilate noted a few days later, "Our good friend Sarah Peak, Heber's first wife, is as ever," and "we are one." Though harmony existed between the two sister-wives, Vilate admitted that the marital arrangement was stressful and difficult:

I sometimes felt tempted and tried and feel as though my burden was greater than I could bear; it would only be a source of sorrow to you, and the Lord knows that I do not wish to add one sorrow to your heart, for, be assured, my dear Heber, that I do not love you any the less for what has transpired, neither do I believe that you do me.  

Not all to whom Joseph Smith confided the doctrine accepted it and passed this test of obedience. Some apostatized and became bitter enemies of Joseph and the Church as a result, including Jane Law, the wife of Joseph's counselor in the First Presidency.  

For the women involved in this test, many relied on their faith and personal dedication to the gospel to sustain themselves. Some asked not to be considered but remained faithful to the Church and its other principles. When Joseph revealed the doctrine to Sarah G. Kimball, she told Joseph "to go and teach it to someone else."  

As difficult as this may have been to the sister Saints who were invited to become a second wife, the first wife also struggled tremendously. Many women in Nauvoo who began to live the law with their husbands indicated that their decisions to move forward were based on personal revelation. Vilate Kimball, having watched her husband suffer from some unknown cause, received a vision that confirmed to her the rightness in accepting this test. How unique an experience this was for the sisters involved in Nauvoo is unknown, but Vilate was not the only one to receive special divine sanction.  

Vilate Kimball noted the change in Mary Ann Pratt's attitude in a letter to her husband, Heber:

"I have had a visit from brother Parley [Pratt] and his wife; they are truly converted. It appears that Joseph has taught him some principles. . . . Sister [Mary Ann] Pratt has been raging against these things . . . until within a few days past. She said the Lord had shown her it was all right. She wants Parley to go ahead, says she will do all in her power to help him."

Elizabeth Ann Whitney noted, "We pondered upon [these principles] continually, and our prayers were unceasing that the Lord would grant us some special manifestation concerning these new and strange doctrines." Another woman, Lucy Walker, first rejected the teaching but afterwards received a manifestation and was married:

When the Prophet Joseph Smith first mentioned the principle of plural marriage to me, I became very indignant and told him emphatically that I did not wish him ever to mention it to me again, as my feelings and education revolted against anything of such a nature. He counseled me, however, to pray to the Lord for light and understanding. . . . After I had poured out my heart's contents before God, I at once became calm and composed; a feeling of happiness took possession of me, and at the same time I received a powerful and irresistible testimony of the truth of plural marriage, which testimony has abided with me ever since.  

There is some evidence that some of these sister Saints, once committed to the principle, not only willingly accepted it but also encouraged hesitant husbands and in some cases took the first steps in selecting sister wives themselves.  

Bathsheba Smith helped her husband select five wives within a year—Lucy Meserve; Zilpha Stark; Sarah Ann Libby; Sarah's sister, Hannah Maria Libby; and Nancy Clement. Bathsheba noted:

"They all had their home with us, being proud of my husband and loving him very much, knowing him to be a man of God and believing he would not love them less, because he loves me more. I had joy in having a testimony that what I had done was acceptable to my Father in Heaven."  

Because of the cultural difficulties, plurality was taught in a confidential way. Joseph knew that its introduction in Nauvoo would

16. Times and Seasons, 15 November 1845.
17. According to Susa Young Gates, Joseph Smith told Zina that she would meet her mother again, and “more than that, you will meet and become acquainted with your eternal Mother, the wife of your Father in Heaven.” Susa Young Gates, History of the Young Ladies’ Mutual Improvement Association (Salt Lake City: General Board of the YLMIA, 1911), 15–16.

21. Joseph Smith to Emma Smith, 16 August 1842, Joseph Smith Collection, LDS Church Archives.
23. Vilate Kimball to Heber C. Kimball, 8 June 1843.
25. Jacob Scott to Mary Warnock, 5 January 1844, RLDA.


34. Sermon of Brigham Young, delivered in the Bowery in Provo, Utah, 14 July 1855, JD 3:266.
38. Helen Mar Whitney to [her children], 30 March 1881, Helen Mar Whitney Papers, LDS Church Archives.
39. Later, when the temple was completed, this sealing was reconfirmed and Zina was then sealed to Brigham Young “for time” as Henry stood as witness again.
40. Heber C Kimball to Vilate Kimball, 16 October 1843.
42. Sarah G. Kimball, as quoted in Andrew Jenson, The Historical Record, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Andrew Jenson, 1887), 6:232.
45. Lucy W. Kimball, as quoted in Jenson, The Historical Record 6:229.
46. Bathsheba W. Smith, Autobiography, HBLLBYU.
47. Sarah Hall Scott to Abigail Hall, 13 April 1843, RLDA.
49. Sarah Hall Scott to Abigail Hall, 16 June 1844.