place in the fall of 1843, the ceremony may have actually occurred sometime during April-May 1844 (or perhaps in late spring 1843), as William was living in the eastern United States from the summer of 1843 to April 1844.

On October 19, 1845, William was excommunicated from the LDS Church for various infractions, including unauthorized plural marriages, undertaken after Joseph Smith’s death. In late 1846, Covington married Joseph A. Stratton (born 1821). Stratton died in 1850 in Salt Lake City. In 1864 Covington wed Chauncey Walker West, who had married Mary Ann’s sister Sarah in 1855 and who would add a third Covington sister, Susan, as his plural wife in 1867. Later, Covington was sealed to Stratton, with West acting as proxy.

Like most early Mormon diarists, Erastus Snow did not record his first plural marriage. However, unlike most early diarists, he did record in code—his early eternal sealing to his civil wife, Artimesia Beaman (married 1838). She was a sister of Joseph Smith’s first Nauvoo plural wife, Louisa Beaman. As translated, Snow’s diary entry for February 15, 1844, reads: “Record of Marriage On the 15th day of February 1844 I Erastus Snow according to the laws provisions of the Holy Priesthood, was married and sealed for Times Eternity to Artimeia Beaman by Hyrum Smith Patriarch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.” According to a later statement by Snow, he was sealed to Minerva White, his first plural wife, in March 1844. Hyrum Smith, “officiating under the Prophet’s direction,” performed the ceremony. Both wives were later resealed and anointed to Snow in the Nauvoo Temple.

Five years before he died, Snow publicly described his introduction to early Mormon plural marriage:

The Prophet Joseph Smith in the year 1841 [sic, 1843] made known the principle of the Celestial Order of Marriage to him. He invited me out for a walk with him and told me that when He was translating the Scriptures that part of it where one of the Old Prophets was deviding His property to His offspring. “Then it was that the Lord revealed unto him: That the time had come now when the principle should be practiced. Joseph told me the Names of some of the wives or womankind which had been sealed to him by Joseph B. Noble. That Emma His 1st wife was acquainted with these women and had administered to him but she had turned against him now. That in the conversation the Prophet was pure and Noble. He [i.e., Erastus Snow] testified that He was perfectly acquainted with the Wives of the Prophet Joseph. The 1st ones Name was Luisa Demom [i.e., Louisa Beaman] who was a pure and virtuous woman all her life. Emma believed that there could not be a Holy Alliance between the man and the woman unless the woman consented to it with all her heart. Emma used her womanly nature to teas and annoys Joseph and went so far as to threaten Joseph that she would leave Him and cohabit with another man and the Lord forbade her in the Revelation. . . .

I [i.e., Erastus Snow] know and do bare record that He [i.e., Joseph Smith] did [practice plural marriage] and counseled me to obey and enter into this order and about a year after my conversation with him upon the subject He sent His brother [i.e., Hyrum Smith] who sealed on April 2, 1844 a second wife [i.e., Minerva White] to me and she is living now. The Law was that the 1st wife place the right hand of the 2d into the hand of her husband and expressed her willingness and consent. He [i.e.,

---

Minutes of the Council of the Twelve:

Box 12, fd 1, Brigham Young Minutes [?]. Jan. 17, 1840- (July) 1846

England
Conference of the Quorum of the Twelve at the house of President B. Young, Nauvoo, Aug. 31, 1841, "assist the Trustee" in Trust in his arduous duties

Nov. 31 [1841] "Voted that Eben Robinson be requested solicited to give up the Department of Printing the paper to Bro Richards."

Jan. 17, 1842, B. Young Pres't. H. C. Kimball, O. Pratt, W. Woodruff, John Taylor, G. A. Smith, W. Richards, "the Revelation concerning Amos Fuller was read, when it voted unanimously that Amos Fuller take a mission to the city of Chicago. & that Henry Jacobs accompany Bro Fuller." ... "Moved <by the President> that all those who are in favor of assisting Bro Robinson in printing the Book of Mormon & the other Books, and backing up the concern, manifest it by the usual sign. Not a hand raised, but every hand was raised in the negative." W. Richards Scribe

Has minutes of May 27, 1843

Twelve – High Council. President, 70s. April 18th. 1844 ... Object of the meeting to take in consideration the Two Laws and Foster ...
Jack Scot = ... Went to Wm wife to attempt to seduce her. Joseph wanted her to come into the order. Not privilege to seld unless he obed. & marry more privilege sealed to him – watch his opportunity Mrs. Out in bed room attempt to take her abed. Repent. & kill him – spare his life she told her husband. Get time told William. Joseph swore. &c Wm told Joseph Wm wife lied some where. Joseph said you did Joseph Joseph acknowledged & sealed William & wife. Was not a more gallant scoundrel ever hung between the heavens. and the earth.
Vote carried unanimously. Wilson Law Clayton moved Wm Law be cut off. 2d J. P. Green, Wm Clayton spoke C. C. Rich said Ho---? Said Wm Law made a statement at wedding last winter Joseph had revelation for the Devil

Box 33, fd 10, Minutes of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Aug. 31, 1841-Feb. 8, 1846

March 12, 1844: a meeting of the foregoing was called at the Assembly room -- but few attended The president of the Twelve was absent and all the Twelve except W. Richards. Prt Hyrum Smith & Sidney Rigdon were present.
The Dissenters Flee to Burlington

David Wells Kilbourne (1803–76) was a well-to-do farmer who had immigrated to Iowa Territory from England. He had nothing to do with the events in Hancock County, but he was a resident of Fort Madison on 12 June 1844, when word came that Joseph Smith had destroyed the Reformed Church newspaper at Nauvoo and that the Mormon dissenters had been threatened and scared for their lives. The people of Fort Madison responded with a riverboat of volunteers to assist in their evacuation. The dissident families were taken to Burlington.

Kilbourne was apparently one of the volunteers, and during the miniature exodus from the hostile city, he spoke with Reformed Church leader William Law. His 15 June 1844 letter to Reverend T. Dent, a minister in England, is well-informed, although he mistakenly places the destruction of the Expositor on 11 June, rather than the evening of 10 June. The original letter is available in the David W. Kilbourne Papers, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines. It is published here for the first time.

Fort Madison
Upper Mississippi River
June 15 1844

Rev. T. Dent
Burlington near Whalley
Lancashire England

My dear Sir

Your kind & interesting letter of April 16th was rec'd on the 24th Ultimo. I can say in all sincerity that your correspondence has been a source of great pleasure as well as profit to me & I shall always be very happy in my [?] way to keep you advised of events of any interest as they transpire at the famous City of Nauvoo.

Since I last wrote you the troubles at Nauvoo have continued to increase among the Mormons themselves. The eyes of some among the most honest of the leaders have been opened to see Jos. true character. In the case of a Mr. Law, a man who had stood high among them & who has considerable property—has a steam flouring mill at Nauvoo—and several dwelling houses—the one in which he has resided being a fine two story brick home—this man was sent out some time last fall on a mission to preach & during his absence Joe made proposals to his wife which she rejected & on her husbands return communicated the fact to him—this
William LawRecalls the "Expositor" Affair

The destruction of the Expositor was a tragedy for William Law (1809–92), the president of the new Reformed Mormon Church and a copublisher of the newspaper. A native of Ireland, Law had immigrated to America as a child and later settled in Churcheville, Ontario. Converted to the Mormon Church in 1836, he led a caravan of Canadian Saints to Nauvoo three years later. He became a leading businessman and in 1841 was selected as a counselor in the First Presidency to advise Joseph Smith. However, in 1843 he objected to the new doctrine of polygamy and to the concentration of political and economic power in the prophet’s hands, so early in 1844 Smith dismissed him. Two months later Smith publicly denounced Law and other critics as enemies of the people—conspirators who were planning a mass murder of all the heads of the church—thus opening the floodgates of slander and intimidation which he hoped would force them from the community.

Instead of leaving, Law and others established the Reformed Mormon Church and began holding meetings and recruiting members. Smith had several of them—including Law—excommunicated in April, but the dissenters continued their work. In May they established their opposition newspaper, the Expositor, which was soon destroyed. At the same time, their lives were threatened by Mormons who had been inflamed by the prophet’s denunciations. Law fled with his family to Burlington, Iowa Territory, leaving behind his home, flour mill, and other property. He first went to Hampton, then Galena, and finally to Apple River, Illinois, where he practiced medicine, as he had done in Canada. He moved to Shullsburg, Wisconsin, in 1866, where he remained until his death.

Regarding his activities as a dissenter, Law wrote a letter to the editors of the Rock Island Upper Mississippian, which appeared on 7 September 1844, p. 1. At that time he and other former dissenters were living in Hampton, several miles northeast of Rock Island. His letter is reprinted here. It is a defense of the values and purposes of the dissenters, and Law wrote it because all Mormons at that time were viewed with suspicion by other Illinois residents. As the letter reveals, he viewed himself and the other dissenters as victims of tyranny whose civil rights had been violated and who had been driven from their homes for daring to speak against the prophet. The Mormons had, in fact, done to them what the Missouri had earlier done to the Mormons.

Equally interesting are the religious and moral values of the dissenters, for whom Law was speaking. Trying to reconcile their earlier commitment to Smith's church with more recent developments, Law asserted that "modern Mormonism is a complete apostasy from the original doctrines"—which is precisely the view that Smith had developed about Christianity in general. In short, the dissenters were Mormon Puritans, driven by a desire to cleanse the church of perceived evils. As
I did not happen to be present when he attempted to escape from the window of the Sheriff's sitting room in the second story of the jail, and was shot by the guards, but I fully approve of it.

If the people of the United States understood our true situation, I am sure that instead of calling it a "cold blooded murder," they would hold public meetings, and express their thanks to men who dared (in spite of the strongest oaths that bound a lawless band together) to execute justice upon two of the vilest men that ever lived.

---

A Heroic Poem of the Martyrdom

Eliza Roxey Snow (1804–87) was one of the most gifted poets in the early Mormon Church, and a leader of Latter Day Saint women, both at Nauvoo and the Great Basin. Her poem recounting "The Assassination of Generals Joseph Smith and Hyrum Smith" offers a heroic image of the Mormon leaders and presents their slaying by an unrighteous world as an event of cosmic significance, second only in spiritual importance to the death of Christ. And it views America as not a locus for Zion but an ungodly place of wickedness from which the Saints must flee. A deeply mythic poem, it was first published in the Times and Seasons 5 (1 July 1844): 575, and is reprinted here from Snow's Poems, Religious, Historical, and Political (Liverpool, England: F. D. Richards, 1856), 142–45.

The Assassination of Generals Joseph Smith and Hyrum Smith, First Presidets of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; Who Were Massacred by a Mob, in Carthage, Hancock County Ill., on the 27th of June, 1844.

"And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also, and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled."—Rev. 6:9, 10, 11.
Council to hear the investigation. Joseph declares that he and I are very good friends and that the Devil gets into people to destroy and break up friends; that he has nothing against me, and would not be afraid to trust his life in my hands; that I was too good a man to injure him, &c. &c. Hyrum Smith made a speech very much in my favor and Wilson Law's. Said we and all our people were high minded and noble and no one ought to have any suspicions against us &c. &c. Council dismissed.

4 [January]. This morning a new rumour is afloat. Leonard Soby⁹ states that Warren Smith¹⁰ one of the Police men said he believed I was the Brutus and that Wm. Marks¹¹ was an other, and that we had better keep out of his way or he would pop us over. Wilson Law, Hyrum Smith and I went to Joseph

---

Norton. No. Did not say much about Law. Did not say you had ever administered any private oath. Carn never intimated to me that Law must be put out of the way. Did not call William Law's name, nor any other name. Did not say the policemen had received a private oath. Understood Carn to say they had received private instructions; and if a man could not keep a secret, he was not worthy of a place in the Church. Did not say the mayor had given him a private charge. Did not tell where the danger was expected to come from. Told me there were dough-headers about. Did not say the dough-headers were in danger, but the mayor was in danger from the dough-headers.

Question by William Law.* Did you not understand from Brother Carn that he was suspicious of some person near Joseph being a dough-header, and that that person was myself?

[Norton's] Answer. He mentioned a dough-header as being very near Joseph, and he guessed you was the man; and I thought it might be that Danielism was not done with.

Mayor. Tell what you know that made you so alarmed about Brother Law.

[Norton's] Answer. There was no chain to the conversation; but I drew the inference that Brother Law was the dough-header from Carn's conversation; but Carn did not name Law.

Daniel Carn. Moron. Said, "I told Brother Norton that certain men had been counseled by the Prophet to invest their means in publishing the new translation of the bible; and they, instead of obeying that counsel, had used their property for the purpose of building a steam-mill and raising a hundred acres of hemp; and the Lord had not blessed them in the business, but soon lost their hemp in the Mississippi river. I told him it was my opinion that Brother Law was the dough-header referred to."

I have had no secret conversation whatever with the mayor, and never received any charge except the one, with the rest of the police, before the city council.

The mayor suggested the propriety, since Rockwell and other are clear, and we have the promise of protection from the governor; and as the police are now well organized, that they put up their guns and said the council pass such an order. The Daniel system alluded to by Law Norton never had any existing spiritual wife. It was a term made use of by some of the brethren in Far West, and grew out of an expression I made use of when the brethren were preparing to defend themselves from the Missouri mob, in reference to the viewing of Macahah's images (Joseph page 17).—If the enemy comes, the Danities will be after them, the brethren in self-defense.

The mayor instructed the police to lay up their arms till further orders. At half past four p. m. council adjourned.

---

*original minutes*

By Wm Law. Did you not understand from Bro Carns, that he was suspicious of one near him as a dough head, & he must be taken care of & satisfied he had reference to me? E. Norton. Yes. he mentioned a dough head standing near Joseph, had conversation on Spiritual wives. I did not believe, knew Bro Law was opposed, and in this conversation the dough head come in Carns did not say Joseph had anything to do with spiritual wives or had taught any such things, did not say Bro Law had any thing to do with it. There was no chain to the conversation he suggested there was another law, the Law of God. Do not know who administrates the other oath. Mayor: tell what you know that made you so alarmed about Bro Law—

Eli Norton: Carns told me several times Danielism was not down, never said Mayor had anything to do about Danielism, Carns, said it was a good system, said every Quorum had their teachings and they must not tell another quorum, did not say I must take an oath to remain

---

[Original Nauvoo City Council Minutes, 3 January 1844, LDS archives]
Nauvoo City Council Minutes

3 January 1844

[pencil: 35]

to certain purposes. & then want & build a mill. & sowed a hundred acres of hemp & lost it in the river, - Norton said Bro Law knew about the Spiritual wife system. I never intimated that Bro Law life was in danger, I intimated that Bro Law might be the doe head. previously Bro Law and me had conversation about stories afloat on spiritual wife. he thought it was from the devil. - and we must put it down that he knew such a thing was in existence. & breaking up of families &c

Did I said not say

By Law. we have a good foundation because Joseph blew it all up before the High Council. & Hyrum before the Elders Quorum. Yes said Cairns, Law did not speak disrespectfully of Joseph or of the Church. -

with Mayor

Had no secret conversation. No charge except before the council never heard anything from me to endanger the life of any man.

Mayor Spoke on Spiritual wife System. and explained.
The man who promises to keep a secret and does not keep it he is a liar. and not to be trusted. Esq Wells came to me the other night and say that he was satisfied & pleased with all I had said. - I did sayid H Wells. -

Wm

Gen Law Spoke. said there was no man in the city more zealous to support Mormonism than himself.

one

I have ever been ready to stand forth against g. for the defense of Joseph. and am yet. if he lives till I shed his blood or strike a hair from his head he will live till he is as old as Methuselah. - and I firmly believe if I live till Joseph kills me or sets anyone to kill me I shall live as long as I shall want to. z

Mayor. Did I ever tell you that any body had told me that you would sell your popity you would blow up Mormonism? -

Law. - Hyrum told me that.

Bishop Cairns said he had never conveyed the idea to father Norton had that Joseph said that Mr Law was the Doe head.

Mayor - when a man becomes a traitor to his friend or country who is innocent. treachery to innocent blood I consider it right to cut off his immense influence so that he could not injure the innocent. -

[words "said" and "innocent" crossed out in original or just errors on the part of the person who copied down the account?]
Plural wives in Holy Order:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date endowed</th>
<th>Sealed to Joseph Smith</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Durfee</td>
<td>1 Oct. 1843</td>
<td>by June 1842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fanny Young Murray</td>
<td>23 Dec. 1843</td>
<td>2 Nov. 1843 by Brigham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Young 1859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>died 1859</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fanny Young born 8 November 1787 in Hopkinton, Mass.
made 1803 to Robert Carr
married 2 Feb. 1832 to Roswell Murray
died 11 June 1859

At a city council meeting held in June 1844:

Councillor, H. Smith, ... referred to the revelation, read to the High Council of the Church, which has caused so much talk about a multiplicity of wives; that said revelation was in answer to a question concerning things which transpired in former days, and had no reference to the present time.

Mayor ... they made it a criminality, for a man to have a wife on earth, while he has one in heaven according to the keys of the holy priesthood - and he then read a statement of William Law's from the Expositor where the truth of God was transformed into a lie concerning this thing. He then read several statements of Austin Cowles in the Expositor concerning a private interview, and said he never had any private interview, and said he never had any private conversation with Austin Cowles on these subjects -- that he preached on the stand from the Bible, shewing the order in ancient days, having nothing to do with [t]he present time.

Councillor H. Smith proceeded to show the falsehood of Austin Cowles in the 'Expositor,' in relation to the revelation referred to, that it was in reference to former days, and not the present times as related by Cowles.

Mayor said he had never preached the revelation in private as he had in public - had not taught it to the anointed in the church in private, which statement many present confirmed, that on inquiring concerning the passage on the resurrection concerning "they neither marry nor are given in marriage," &c., he received for answer, men in this life must marry in view of eternity, otherwise they must remain as angels, or be single in heaven, which was the amount of the revelation referred to, and the Mayor spoke at considerable length in explanation of this principle ...

(Nauvoo Neighbor 2 [19 June 1844]: __)

(Nauvoo City Council Minutes, 10 June 1844, LDS archives needs to be checked original minutes for wording)
Revelation on Marriage and the Resurrection (?)

City Council of the City of Nauvoo, Illinois, June 8, 1844.

Mayor - Joseph Smith said: "... that on enquiring concerning the passage in the resurrection concerning 'they neither marry nor are given in marriage,' etc., he received for answer, men in this life must marry in view of eternity, otherwise they must remain angels, or be single in heaven ..."

Also Joseph Smith said; "... they make a criminality for a man to have a wife on earth, while he has one in heaven, according to the keys of the Holy Priesthood ..."

(Nauvoo Neighbor, June 19, 1844; also DHC Vol. 6:442, 441

see also Time Vol. 2: 243-244

Nauvoo Neighbor Vol. 2, No. 6, June 19, 1844
References to William Law and Emma Smith
On Joseph Smith, spiritual wives
Jane Law and 12 July 1843 revelation

before 12 July 1843; 1844
1. William Law, Salt Lake Tribune, July 1847
2. Mormon Portraits, by Wyl, p. 108
Letter of Dale Morgan to Fawn M. Brodie, with William Arrowsmith [real name?], Taylor
Marvin S. Hill, Diss (University of C letter of George Rockwell, August 3, 18
Bachman, thesis, 166-167, 264, 158
Joseph Jackson (1844), 22 [p. 27?]
Alexander Neibaur Journal, 24 May 184
(Bachman mention on page 264) [th
Minutes of Meeting, 18 April 1844, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Archives
No Man Knows My History, p. 369, and fn
Mormon Enigma, 176-178
Religion and Sexuality (1981) by Larry Foster, p. 134, fn 136
BYU Studies Vol. 19, No. 2, p. 147, fn 34, Andrew Ehat
Andrew Ehat thesis, p. 74, p. 267, fn 221-222
Richard Van Wagoner and Steve Walker, Sunstone paper, August 1983, pp. 32-33
Mormon Polygamy (ed. ?), p. 58, 64 [check 2nd ed.]
Kenneth W. Godfrey, ... A Most Unlikely Quartet, pp. 15-16
William Clayton Journal, 12 June 1844
check:
1. William Law to Dr. W. Wyl, 7 January 1887, Salt Lake Daily Tribune, Jan. 1887
Jane Law

William Law Diary, 13 May 1844 - authorship?

John D. Lee, Mormonism Unveiled p. 147

Joseph Jackson, Narrative p. 21

Edward Bonney, The Bandits of the Prairies (1963 reprint) 16-17

Alexanders Heber Journal, 24 May 1887
THE DAILY TRIBUNE: SALT LAKE CITY, TUESDAY, JULY 3, 1887

THE MORMONS IN NAUVOO.

Three Letters from William Law on Mormonism.

AN HONEST MAN'S VIEW AND REMORSE.

The Nauvoo Hell--Its Deviltries Touched Upon--The Sort of "Kingdom of God" Joseph Smith Fixed up for Himself--A Plain Portrayal.

EDITOR TRIBUNE:--Dr. Wyl, author of "Mormon Portraits," has made a study of Mormonism in its past and present; has so penetrated its secret machinations and wicked workings, and presented such an array of facts, that his book is the most valuable on the subject that has ever been published. If there are any errors they are only in dates, names and minor details, and of no importance to the history and the facts--mistakes only of memory and small matters that affect nothing. It is to be remembered, however, that Dr. Wyl has not willfully misrepresented anything, but has good foundation even for incidents in which he cannot relate minutest particulars correctly. Considering the time that has elapsed since the history of this "peculiar people" began, the distant or obscure places where the acts were committed, the lying spirit of the fraud, and the character of the people, and the willful perversion of facts recorded by themselves in their own history of the "church," he has produced a wonderful work.

But Dr. Wyl continues the study of the system and produces new testimony, or rather old testimony from parties whom he has ferreted out, who kept themselves aloof from writers and interviewers. In his investigations he is presistent [sic] and cannot be bluffed or turned aside. His knowledge of human nature, is insight and foresight enable him to wind his way into the confidence of his subjects, and draw from them truths that they would otherwise unwillingly reveal.

By the merest accident, while Dr. Wyl was in Denver, preparing his second volume of "Mormon Portraits" he learned that Mr. William Law, whilom [who was?] Jos. Smith's "counselor" in Nauvoo, is still alive, and practicing medicine in Wisconsin. Dr. Wyl set his wits to work on obtaining information from Mr. Law, and to have the pleasure of interviewing him. He wrote to the gentleman and received three letters in reply to his several letter of inquiry. Mr. Law absolutely refused to be interviewed. A fund of valuable, reliable testimony was elicited by this correspondence and subsequently by aid of the mediation of Mr. Law's son an interview was obtained containing the most interesting disclosures, and incidents in the life of Mormonism in Nauvoo while Mr. Law resided there.

We give below a copy of three letters received by Dr. Wyl fro Dr. William Law, in which will be seen the honesty, truthfulness and sincerity of the writer, and that he feels it an eternal disgrace to be mentioned even that he lived among such an infamous community, although opposing their diabolical teachings and corrupt practices. The old gentleman is exceedingly sensitive and really condemns himself for his innocent weakness. In being once with such a treasonable, wicked crew, running under the name of religion.
LETTER I.

SHULLSBURG, Wis., Jan. 7, 1887.

Dr. W. Wyl:—Dear Sir: I received yours of the 24th ult. also your book. Please accept thanks. I have not been well for three or four weeks, hence delay answering. You say it is very important to you to know, "if I am the Law who played such an important part in the Nauvoo events of 1843 and 1844." I am unfortunately the one. I cannot see how you are at all interested in my identity, for I assure you I have retired for ever from the Mormon controversy. When I left Nauvoo I left Mormonism behind, believing that I had done my part faithfully, even at the risk of my life, and believing. also, that the Expositor would continue to do the work it was intended to do. The Smiths thought they had killed it; whereas, by destroying the press, they gave it a new lease of life and extra power to overthrow them and drive their followers from the State. I have looked over your book, and am astonished at the amount of matter you have gathered together; it seems to me that you know at least ten times as much about Mormonism as I do, or ever did. I never resided with the Mormons as a people, only during my short stay in Nauvoo. I think that to have a thorough knowledge of any people it is necessary to live amongst them a considerable length of time. Before reading your book I had but very little knowledge of the family history of the Smiths or Rigdon; had never inquired into the particulars. After I left Nauvoo I did not care or trouble myself about them. I had no personal knowledge of the swindling and other wicked doing at Kirtland, nor did I know anything about the Missouri trouble; was told that their troubles in Ohio and Missouri all grew out of "religious persecution." I went from my home in Canada to Nauvoo and found a very poor, but industrious people, they appeared to be moral and religiously disposed; the Smiths and others preached morality and brotherly kindness every Sunday. I saw nothing wrong until after the city charter was obtained. A change was soon apparent; the laws of the country were set at defiance and although outwardly everything was smooth, the undercurrent was most vile and obnoxious. Time revealed to me and to many others much that we had not even suspected. We were kept in the dark as long as possible and held up before the public as examples of the Mormon people. Well, you know what followed. I believe you have endeavored to give a true account or history of the Mormons and Mormonism and I think you have succeeded wonderfully well. Your informants, however, may, now and then, have drawn a little on their imagination, may have reached false conclusions in some instances judged from circumstances and not from facts; doing injustice, perhaps, to the innocent. Where testimony conflicts it is sometimes very difficult to form conclusions. Mormon history is rather a mixed up affair. I would call your attention to one or two little mistakes concerning myself. You say I was a general in the Nauvoo legion. I never was, never held a commission of any kind in it. I sometimes (by request) assisted in drilling the men. having a little knowledge of military tactics. My Brother Wilson held a general's commission from Governor Carlin. My brother was not a Mormon. On page 108 you speak of "swapping wives," and state that you have it from one who knows. Now let me say to you that I never heard of it till I read it in your book. Your informant must have been deceived or wilfully lied to you. Joseph Smith never proposed anything of the kind to me or to my wife; both he and Emma knew our sentiments in relation to spiritual wives and polygamy, knew that we were immovably [sic] opposed to polygamy in any and every form; that we were so subsequent events proved. The story may have grown out of the fact that Joseph offered to furnish his wife, Emma, with a substitute for him, by way of compensation for his neglect of her, on condition that she would forever stop her opposition to polygamy and permit him to enjoy his young wives in peace and keep some of them in her house and to be well treated, etc.

The great mistake of my [life was my] having anything to do with Mormonism. I feel [it to be] a deep disgrace and never speak of it when I can avoid it; for over forty years I have been almost entirely silent on the subject and will so continue after his. Accept my kind regards.

Wm. Law.

In the foregoing it will be seen that Mr. Law was innocent of the many evils that existed in Nauvoo, hence he can can [sic] tell but little, but that little is true and of value; and being unsuspecting in disposition he does not pretend to know all, but what he knew he knew. He believed for years the "priesthood" tales of persecution, without inquiring or questioning. On "exchange of wives" he was not fully informed, but there is abundant testimony that it was practiced there frequently.

His remarks on the Nauvoo Charter are in consonance with the whole history, spirit and purpose of Mormonism, and it is valuable at the present time when the "Church" and its "heads" are clamoring for Statehood. Let the words of Dr. Law, which are the expression of his experience forty-four years ago, be kept in memory: "I saw nothing wrong until after the City Charter was obtained. A change was soon apparent, the laws of the country were set at defiance, and although outwardly everything was smooth, the undercurrent was vile and obnoxious. Time revealed to me and many others much that we had not suspected." etc. Let our Gentile friends fast read and ponder, and our fellow citizens in Utah be prepared to avert the fearful evil and its consequences of Statehood in Utah as present.

We can see now more clearly as we have seen all along, that Joseph Smith withdrew his proffer to give Emma a "substitute", for it is so stated between the lines in the pseudo "revelation" on polygamy and
Sidney Rigdon "was a disappointed man" indeed! He, the originator of the fraud, the manipulator of Spalding's story into the "Book of Mormon," a visionary and speculator on the teachings and prophecies of Scripture, aspired to be a Church founder and a leader, as were the Campbells, and he used young Joseph Smith, the peep-stone fellow, for that end, but Joe liked the ruse, like the honor himself and kept Sidney back as well as he could. Sidney now and then appeared as the "head," as when he washed Joe's feet in imitation of Jesus washing his followers' feet. Sidney, the originator of Mormonism "was disappointed."

LETTER II

SHULLSBURG, La Fayette Co., Wis. Jan. 20, 1887.

Dr. W. Wyk. Sir: I duly received yours of the 12th inst. I now reply: in looking over your book again. I remain of the opinion that your knowledge of Mormonism or the leaders of it is very extensive and as I said before, far greater than mine. I admit also, that the work may do some good in the world; and yet to me it brings humiliation, deep mortification and pain. The case stands like this: in your book you give a most appalling, black and horrible history (true, no doubt) of the Smiths. Rigdon and many others, leaders and members of the organization, show them guilty of almost every form of crime and abomination, murderers, robbers, thieves, swindlers, perjurers, fornicators, adulterers, polygamists denying the laws of God and man, a people not fit to live with or to associate with in any way. And then you go on to speak of different individuals, amongst them Wilson law and William Law as generals in the Nauvoo Legion, and that William Law also held the office of "vice-president" of the Church. You say, however, that the Laws were a "pretty good kind of men," and "would not be forced to prostitute their wives and daughters" etc. For this admission I thank you. Now see how this looks before the world! Associated with, residing with and doing business among such fiends, no matter how we endeavored to redeem ourselves, how we risked our lives and sacrificed our property, the world will only see the dark side that is given, for somehow it is natural for most people to see the faults and errors of their fellow beings, rather than the good that may be in them. For more than forty years I have kept Mormonism and all my past connected with it, out of my mind, and away from my friends and acquaintances so far as possible. Have never read any of the books published about the Mormons; never read Bennett's book, have kept no papers published in Nauvoo; haven't a scrap of any kind; the only number of the Expositor I had, some one carried off. My wife (at an early day) burned up the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants. She said no Mormon work could find a place in her house. We have lived down a great measure the disgrace following our unfortunate association with the Mormons. We committed a great error, but no crime. This is my consolation, that we only erred in judgment.

I said that in your book you spoke rather favorably of my brother and myself; of my wife, however, your remarks were far from flattering. She, were she living, would consider them insulting. You said she was much "admired and desired" by Smith; that Smith admired and hustled after many men's wives and daughters, is a fact, no doubt; but they could not help that. They or most of them considered his admiration an insult, and treated him with scorn. In return for this scorn, he generally managed to blacken their reputations—see the case of your friend, Mrs. Pratt, a good, virtuous woman. I will now take the trouble of showing you just how my wife and Joe Smith stood toward each other. Sometime in 1843 (I think), he ordered the Twelve to meet, and cut off from the Church William Law and his wife, also Dr. Foster, and to publish it in the Times and Seasons at once. They did so. A few days after I saw the notice in the paper, I think it was the same day, met Elder John Taylor and remarked to him: You have been cutting off my wife and me from the Church. I asked him what the charges were, and who had made them. He said: "Brother Joseph ordered you cut off." He said further that Joseph had known for a long time that we were apostates, and further that my wife had been speaking evil of him in a long time; he had found it out, said she had slandered him, had lied about him without cause. I said: "Elder Taylor, my wife would not speak evil of yourself or anyone else without good cause. Joseph is the liar and not she, and as to the cutting off, it is illegal and contrary to the laws of the Church to cut off or condemn without a trial, simply by the command of a base tyrant, but you can tell His Majesty that we withdraw from the Church months ago, so his cutting off comes too late." My wife is dead over four years, and a truer, purer, more faithful wife never lived. My brother Wilson is also dead, these ten years. He stood by me in all my troubles at Nauvoo, risking his life, defying the "Destroying Angels" and all the rest of them. You would not wonder then that the reputation and memory of such a wife and such a brother, should be as dear to me as life itself.

You asked me if the Expositor continued? No. When I spoke of its work continuing. I meant that its destruction gave it a new life and power to destroy its destroyers. For it was the chief factor in bringing about the death of the Smiths, and the expulsion of the Mormons from the State of Illinois. As to Emma's deathbed declaration, it was like her life, FALSE. If she ever had any good in her, Smiths dehumanized her, that she had none left. Anything for money and power and gratification while she lived, and the same to her sons after her. She and the Smiths, as many as I knew, were infidels, if not atheists, at least I believe so.

As to the history of Joseph Smith, I have but little to add to your knowledge of him. One trait was his jealousy of his friends, lest any of them should be esteemed before him in the eyes of the Church or of the public. He would destroy his best friend for the sake of a few hundred dollars. It was his policy to get away with a man's money, first, because he wanted it, and second, because he believed that in getting a man's money he deprived him of power and position, and left him in a measure helpless and dependent. He was a tyrant: self-exalation and gratification of his grosser passions with an entire disregard of others rights. [sic] And of all
Joseph had a wonderful memory. Hyrum was short in that, was a very poor public talker, but a pretty good secret worker. Sidney Rigdon was very close. I could never fairly understand him. While I knew him he appeared like a disappointed man, very retired in his ways. He professed to be a great Biblical historian; he was an eloquent preacher. I can hardly think he intended to be a bad man; would be leader if he could. Bennett was a scandrel, but very smart. I never became closely acquainted with him. Joseph thought he was using him, and he was using Joseph. They were a bad pair. Bennett wrote out the Nauvoo charter and was perhaps the one who got it started. It was a wonderful charter; gave too much power; it was a curse to the Mormons. The Higbee boys (or young men) were strong supporters of the Smiths until the death of their father; after that event they became bitter enemies; it was whispered that he as father had been foully dealt by, the Smiths being the cause; I never knew the facts; I believe the boys meant to do right.

Dr. Foster was an Englishman, a fine surgeon and a wholesale man, when I knew him. He was zealous in the cause, until he found out the wickedness of the Smiths and other leaders. He stood by me faithfully throughout our troubles, left Nauvoo with me and remained near me for more than a year, his family and mine being close friends. He afterwards moved south and I lost track of him. I never knew much of Orson Pratt, as he was off on missions most of the time that I was in Nauvoo. Brigham Young was a deep, quiet, wicked man, kept his thoughts mostly to himself, I never understood him. John D. Lee was a leader in the Danite band, I knew but little of him.

I cannot think of anything that you do not know already. For forty-five years I have kept from thinking (as far as I could) of my horrible experiences in Nauvoo; the dangers through which my family and myself and my brother passed; the disgrace attached to our names, on account of our association with such a gang. Consequently I have forgotten many things that I once knew; cannot bring them to my mind and it is exceedingly painful to me to try to remember anything connected with Mormonism; you must therefore be content with the effort that I have made; with what little information I have given you. I do not wish to be discourteous; but I cannot be interviewed. I have denied many others and must deny you. I trust you will not be offended, I am now in my 78th year and these things annoy me very much. I wish to pass the remainder of my life in quiet, in peace if I can. Since my wife's death I have been very lonesome and unhappy; while she lived I got along very well. I have prospered very much, notwithstanding Joseph's curse; I have done a large medical practice--think I have been fairly successful; am retiring from it as fast as I can.

I will say now, that were you here I could not give you any more information than I have already given. We will therefore drop the matter just here. Wishing you success.

I am yours,

Wm. Law.

In this letter he keenly feels the disgrace of his association with the Mormon fraud. His sensitiveness makes him unjustly condemn himself. But no honorable person will so apply [a] stigma to him. The theory of the Mormon "religion" is calculated to deceive the masses; it is the practical part, the hidden mysteries and treasonable purposes of the institution that are so mischievous [sic], and when a man drawn by false pretense, and pious [pious?] presumption into such a vortex of iniquity, rids himself of its pollution, and manfully opposes its arrogance; he is to be praised rather than censured.

Mr. Law shows the low cunning of the Church in making a virtue of "cutting off" members who withdraw, in order that the Church may hold up its hands in hold horror at sin, and try to blacken the character of people much their superior in morals, intellect and disposition. The same "dodge" is carried on still, but the public see through the little farce. Mormonism has learned nothing during its infamous history, and is no better now than when it ordered United States troops out of the Territory, and the spirit of its teachings led to murder at Mountain Meadows and many other places. Mr. Law shows that the Nauvoo City charter was a curse to the "Saints"--it gave them political power, as it would be a dreadful curse to Utah, and to none so much as to the Mormons, to bestow Statehood now on a rebellious community hiding from, or protecting those who hide from, or protecting those who hide from the consequences of persistent law-breaking.

With what discrimination and truthfulness does he describe the persons alluded to in his letters. And yet the "half is not told," and never will be until eternity discloses the acts and infidelity and deception of the "church" if eternity will ever do it.

LETTER III.

SHULLSBURG, Wis., January 27, 1887.

Dr. W. Wyl--Dear Sir: Have just received your very kind letter and hasten to thank you for the good will expressed therein. I suppose you will have left Denver when this reaches that place. Years ago, soon after I left Nauvoo I was annoyed very frequently...
no man or woman should ever interview me on that subject, and none ever shall. I am heartily sick of it all. I wish you all the success you can desire and think you must admit that I have done pretty well by you, and I wish you to believe me when I say that I have forgotten many things, which might be interesting. I cannot help it, would give you more information if I could. Will mention one item in relation to the Book of Mormon. You will find in the Book of Jacob (I think) a strong condemnation of polygamy. Read a little further and you will find; "If I the Lord will raise up a pure seed unto myself. I will command my people," or words to this effect. I have no Book of Mormon and may not quote correctly. This last passage opened a door for Joseph to command the priesthood to get all the wives they could and raise a pure seed to the Lord (I say to the Devil). Young Joe Smith, President of the "Reorganized," is a "chip off the old block" and would be just as bad as his father if he had the ability. David Whitmer is a crank and always was and so was Martin Harris.

I shall say no more. I wish you God speed, and goodbye. Yours, Wm. Law

We can all sympathize with William Law, and thank him that even now his last words will vindicate him. The laws were honest, upright men, William was Joseph's counselor, and a prominent citizen, drawn into Mormonism by guile, their course was honorable, and their characters pure; they were held up as such by Smith and his associates, and were a source of pride to the "church." When, however, Mr. Law saw the immoral conduct of the leaders, learned their true purpose, and realized that their ambition was to subvert our republican principles, and make their adherents a brand of rebels, he and his friends withdrew from the unholy alliance like honest men. Joseph "curse" him for effect, but—he was not cursed. What though Smith tried to blacken his character and that of his wife? The church has always pursued that course; and does so to this day, to better men and women than the malingerers [sic] ever were.

His latest testimony will do much to inform the country as to the beliefs—falsely called religious—designs and secret practices of the Mormon system to blind the eyes of American citizens, destroy our Republican Institutions under the guise of religion, and to build up the most tyrannical theocracy the world has ever seen, or fanatical and corrupt minds ever imagined.

We are authorized to state that Dr. Wyl went to Shullsburg, Wisconsin, and succeeded in having an interview with the good man, William Law. He first visited Judge Law, his son, and by his mediation was introduced to the father. Dr. Wyl assures us that he secured such points and facts as put into the shade everything that has hitherto been published—facts showing the infamous history of the people of Nauvoo, during the reign of the Smiths and their apostles. We are promised the report of the interview which occupies fifty pages in the writer's journal.

SALT LAKE CITY, June 20, 8187 [sic].

INVESTIGATOR.

The William Law Interview:

The Daily Tribune, Sunday Morning, July 31, 1887. William Law gives a rare interview regarding the events the led to his excommunication and the creation of the Nauvoo Expositor. Also provided are excellent insights Emma Smith, Joseph and Hyrum's involvement in politics, and the introduction of polygamy.

Other Related Links:

Polygamy and Truth—January 1988, Salt Lake City Messenger—An overview of the origins and history of Mormon Polygamy from its inception, through a United States Senate Investigation at the turn of the century, and on to present times. Included in this exploration are: the "first" and "second" manifestos issued by LDS prophets—Church deception against federal authorities—the Reed Soot investigation—"sealing" already married women to early church leaders—women sealed to more than one living husband at a time—interesting methods of divorce—many quotes from church leaders teaching polygamy as "essential to United States today, and more.
THE DAILY TRIBUNE: SALT LAKE CITY, SUNDAY MORNING, JULY 31, 1887.

THE LAW INTERVIEW.

Elsewhere in this impression will be seen an interview between Wm. Law and Dr. Wyl. Of course THE TRIBUNE cannot vouch for the truth of the statements of Mr. Law; but he was for a long time First Counselor to JOSEPH SMITH; he was better loved than almost any other man by the Mormons; it seems he is now revered by his neighbors as one of the most loveable of men. He broke with the SMITHS when he found what a measureless and wicked fraud he had become involved in; he started a newspaper in Nauvoo to expose that fraud, but it, with the office, was destroyed by a mob shortly after the first edition was printed. Men here whose honesty no one doubts, vouch for the perfect truthfulness and superior abilities of the man. The career of JOSEPH SMITH, as portrayed in this interview, is something fearful when we consider that he pretended to be an oracle of God; but it was practically repeated in this valley. How a delusion so awful can continue to hold in thralldom the minds of men in other ways sensible, is one of the marvels of the age. A creed founded on fraud and enforced by assassination, here in this free country is most strange. That any pure woman was ever persuaded to accept its cruelties is only accountable on the theory that some women delight in sacrifice, if thereby they imagine that they are serving God. How any Government with all the accumulating proof can still regard this as a religion and entrust with political power the men who entertained it, is beyond all comprehension. To Gentiles of Utah this story of JOSEPH SMITH'S life and ways in Nauvoo, the patching of one revelation to make it in accord with another, the preying upon women, the financial dishonor, the treachery in politics, the means resorted to to silence enemies; they have seen all this paralleled right here, and yet have seen the chief instrument in all the filth and wickedness worshipped [sic] as a god. If it was possible here why was it not in Nauvoo? It seems to us there is no remedy for the hallucination except to strike all power from this creed, and all men who believe in it, and then compel the children to attend school and to study mathematics and the other exact sciences, until their eyes shall be opened. The reference to the wife of JOSEPH SMITH clears up much which has always been obscure. Had she been all that the Saints here pictured her to be, her course could only be explained on the theory of woman's devotion. If she and her husband were working in accord to delude the rabble, then the whole thing is plain, because a vicious woman is more vicious than a vicious man. If she knew that another man had to make good the sums belonging to others that her husband had spent, and felt neither sorrow nor remorse, then she was bad clear through. If all SMITH'S property was in her name, then she was bad clear through. A man may secure his wife a homestead; if, when rich, he puts all his property in her name, it means he has acquired his means dishonestly, or is meditating a steal.

DR. WYL AND WM. LAW.

A Deeply Interesting Talk on Old Nauvoo Days.
ASTOUNDING REVELATIONS OF DARKNESS

Political Chicanery, Trickery, Deceit and Murder—Licentiousness and Fraud—Drunkeness and Avariciousness—Robbing Men of Their Money to Make Them Submissive—An Unprecedented Interview.

EDITOR TRIBUNE:—In your issue of July 3rd, by your courtesy, we gave a copy each of three letters from William Law, once one of the "heads" of the Mormon "Church," to Dr. W. Wyl. Those letters spoke for themselves as from a truthful, conscientious and intelligent man, still suffering in his feelings from his former connection with the religious and political fraud, Mormonism. In the remarks accompanying the letters, in your paper, we stated that Dr. Wyl had succeeded in obtaining an interview with the venerable Dr. Law—a privilege never accorded to any interviewer before, and we said that it would be furnished ere long for the information and study of your many readers.

In perusing this interview we are impressed with the goodness of heart, the honesty of purpose, the hatred of imposition under guise of religion and politics, and the remorse of soul in being caught in the meshes of such a corrupt and deceitful class of religious adventurers and speculators, displayed by the good old man, and we see, as well, the innocent, unsuspicious and confiding gentleman and Christian becoming a dupe in the system by the pretension and sophistical arguments of the delusion. Many fearful deeds and horrible acts were perpetrated in Nauvoo, of which he knew nothing, and only whisperings and innuendoes caught his ear of many of the dark plots and secrets. But when their trickery and treason became so bold and daring his eyes with those of many other good men and women, were opened and they saw more and more that shocked their sensibilities and they exposed the hypocrisy and schemes of the unholy priesthood. Like an honest man, that had the courage of his convictions, he dared to bear the lions in their dens, dared to speak out, and try to counteract the designs of the leaders. His statement of the false revelation on polygamy is interesting as showing how it was tinkered up afterwards to make it more plausible, and, also, that as in many of the so-called revelations of that church many alterations were effected to deceive the credulous and uncritical. Poor innocent Mr. Law thought that Joe Smith would repudiate the document and pronounce it false, but the dear Mrs. Law knew more of Joe's falsity, impure teachings and practices than did the man, and she said at once that the false prophet would declare it was from God.

The low cunning and deceit of Joe and Hyrum Smith—par nobile fratrum!—on the political question is well exposed by their dragging in their God to father their little schemes. Let the reader notice well how the brothers

WORKED AND DECEIVED

Both [sic] political parties to their selfish end. Joe's nefarious ending of the presumption and double dealing is a study of itself that all those who sympathize with Mormon politics under the mask of "rights" would do well to consider. It is no better now, and would be no better hereafter—Mormonism never learns or improves. It is well-known that the heads and feet of the Mormon Church pose and pretend that they are Democrats, but if both houses of Congress were largely Republican the Mormons would be Republican to a man and, especially, Statehood. This is proved beyond contradiction to be true by
the fact that both "apostle" Geo. A. Smith and "apostle" Geo. Q. Cannon, representing the "church" by Brigham's revelation were sent to and presented themselves as Republicans delegates at the great Republican convention held a few years ago in Philadelphia—they were rejected, however, and the American gentleman and patriot, Judge McKeen with another were accepted; and from the other fact that Geo. Q. Cannon, as Delegate from Utah appeared upon the Records of Congress as Democrat and as Republican in two different terms. Legislators, Americans, be not deceived by the apostles or prophets of Mormonism either in politics or religion.

The testimony of Dr. Law is a fearful arraignment of Emma, Joe's wife, but it is in accordance with other facts well known to many here, and it ought to be a matter for the better class of Mormons, the Josephites, to reflect upon--false, false, all false, the words and testimony she gave.

The ostracism that characterizes Mormonism here existed in Nauvoo, and ever will with its leaders--like Ishmael, "their hand is against every man, and every man's hand is against them." [sic] But we hope that this expose of the whole treasnable and deceitful theocratico-politico government which not only threatens our liberties here but would sap the foundation of all just democratic government, will enable some of our Mormon neighbors and Gentle sympathizers to diagnosis the disease that affects the body politic.

But I give at once the interview obtained by the intelligent, careful and persistent Dr. Wyl with the honest, truthful and good-hearted Dr. Law. Let our readers ponder it carefully—it is worth more than gold:

Interview with Wm. Law. Mech. 30, 1887

Dr. William Law lives with his son, Judge "Tommy" Law. The house is a fine cottage, large, well-kept grounds surround it. We entered a cheerful looking room and there sat William Law, dressed in black, a most venerable looking figure. The head has a striking expression of intelligence, the large clear eyes are of a remarkably deep steel blue; the general impression is that of a thinker, of a benevolent and just man. He greeted me in a fatherly way. I expressed my joy at seeing at last so important a witness of a history, to whose study I had devoted two years.

I sat down near the venerable figure. I hesitated to put any question to him, but he made my task easy by saying: "You speak, in your book, of Joseph Smith having sent Rockwell to kill Governor Boggs. Let me tell you, that Joe Smith, told me the fact himself. The words were substantially like this, "I sent Rockwell to kill Boggs, but he missed him, it was a failure, he wounded him instead of sending him to Hell."

This beginning gave me some courage and I began the pumping business, in a cautious way, though, that I might not frighten my subject. I had put down in my note book a score of questions or so. So I glanced over them now and then, stealthily, and ventured this or that question, waiting till the good doctor would get warm in the recollections of the past. This happened soon and then I could ask with more liberty.

"What position had Rockwell in Joseph's house?"

"Rockwell was the lackey of the house. He used to comb and shave Joseph, blackened his boots and drove his carriage. He would have done anything Joe wanted him to do. I never saw a horse or carriage belonging to Rockwell which you say he got from Joseph for the attempt to kill Boggs."

The reader will easily understand that I had particular reasons to ask about the Expositor, Wm. Law being the only surviving publisher and editor of that celebrated sheet, born and killed June 7th, 1844. So I began:

"I suppose that you originated the Expositor, Doctor Law?"

"Yes, I originated the idea to publish that paper. I had friends in many parts of the country. They knew that I had become a member of the Mormon religion. I wanted to show them, by publishing the paper, that I had not been in a fraud willingly (here the old man's eyes filled with tears and his voice quivered) nor was it an ambition. William, stood to me like a brother should. I don't remember
whether it was I, or not, who gave the name "Expositor." But I and my brother, we gave the money, about $2000. I gave the biggest part. The Highies etc., had scarcely a dollar in it."

"You were well off at that time. Dr. Law?"

"We had property to the amount of about $30,000, which was a good deal in those days. We had farms in Nauvoo, city lots and our residences. My brother had a fine brick two story building. By starting the Expositor we lost nearly everything."

"Didn't you have a store and a mill?"

"Yes, we had a large steam flour and saw mill and a store. It would have been the smart thing to do, to remain quiet, sell our property without noise for what we could get and move away. That would have been smart, but I wasn't cool and smart then. I wanted to do my duty and nothing else, and didn't care for the consequences, not a bit. Many friends advised me to be smart and remain quiet, but I would not hear of it and spoke my mind whenever an opportunity offered. When the Smiths saw that we were against them, then they applied to us their usual system, that is, to freeze us out. Secret orders went out that nobody could buy property without the permission of Joseph Smith, Hyrum or the authorities, as they called them, so our property was practically worthless. Yes, my brother Wilson stood to me like a man, fully, fearlessly. He died, here in Shullsburgh, of a stroke of apoplexy, after an illness of three days, ten years ago. He was a very fine and tremendously strong man. He wrestled with Joe in Nauvoo and threw him on his back."

"How did you become a Mormon, Doctor?"

"John Taylor and Almon W. Babbitt came as missionaries to Canada and preached where I lived, twenty-five miles south of Toronto. I believe that Taylor was sincere then and I believe he was to a late day. Finally the greed of power and money killed his conscience. There was, now and then, a good man in Mormondom, for instance Wm. Marks. He was a very good man and knew as little of the secret crimes of the leaders as I knew myself."

"The letters you wrote me, made me suppose that the Smiths tried to kill you when they saw an enemy in you?"

"They tried to get rid of me in different ways. One was by poisoning. I was already out of the church when Hyrum called one day and invited me for the next day to a reconciliation dinner as he called it, to his house. He said Joseph would come, too. He invited me and my wife. He was very urgent about the matter, but I declined the invitation. Now I must tell you that I, in those dangerous days, did not neglect to look out somewhat for the safety of my person and that I kept a detective or two among those who were in the confidence of the Smiths. That very same evening of the day on which Hyrum had been to my house inviting me, my detective told me that they had conceived the plan to poison me at the reconciliation dinner. Their object was a double one. My going to the dinner would have shown to the people that I was reconciled and my death would have freed them of an enemy. You may imagine that I didn't regret having declined that amiable invitation."

"Have you had any knowledge of cases of poisoning in Nauvoo, ordered by the authorities?"

"I know that several men, six or seven, died under very suspicious circumstances. Among them were two secretaries of the prophet, Mulholland and Blaskel Thompson. I saw Mulholland die and the symptoms looked very suspicious to me. Dr. Foster, who was a very good physician, believed firmly that those six or seven men had been poisoned, and told me so repeatedly."

"What may have been the reason for poisoning the secretaries?"

(With a smile) "They knew too much, probably."

"What do you know about the Danites?"

"Nothing of my personal knowledge. They existed, but their workings were kept very secret. I never belonged to the initiated. Smith tried very hard to get them to kill me. One day my detective told me, that two Danites had gone to Joseph and told him that they wanted to put me out of the way. Joseph said: "Don't do it (the Law) is too influential, his death would bring the country down upon us, wait." Later when I was thoroughly aware of my danger, they tried in all manners to use me up and had Danites all day and night for me, but I looked out and kept myself safe. Whatever there was of crime in Nauvoo was kept
secret. On the outside everything looked nice and smooth. There were lots of strangers every Sunday as visitors and then the best speakers were put on the stand as samples of the fruits of this fine religion."

"Did Emma, the elect lady, come to your house and complain about Joseph?"

"No. She never came to my house for that purpose. But I met her sometimes on the street and then she used to complain, especially because of the girls whom Joseph kept in the house, devoting his attention to them. You have overrated her, she was dishonest."

"Do you mean to say that she was so outside of the influence Joseph had over her?"

"Yes, that is exactly what I mean. Let me tell you a case, that will be full proof to you. Soon after my arrive in Nauvoo the two L[awrence] girls came to the holy city, two very young girls, 15 to 17 years of age. They had been converted in Canada, were orphans and worth about $8000 in English gold. Joseph got to be appointed their Guardian, probably with the help of Dr. Bennett. He naturally put the gold in his pocket and had the Girls sealed to him. He asked me to go on his bond as a guardian, as Sidney Rigdon had done. "It is only a formality," he said. Foolishly enough, and not yet suspecting anything, I put my name on the paper. Emma complained about Joseph's living with the L[awrence] girls, but not very violently. It is my conviction that she was his full accomplice, that she was not a bit better than he. When I saw how things went I should have taken steps to be released of that bond, but I never thought of it. After Joseph's death, A. W. Babbitt became guardian of the two girls. He asked Emma for a settlement about the $8000. Emma said she had nothing to do with her husband's debts. Now Babbitt asked for the books and she gave them to him. Babbitt found that Joseph had counted an expense of about $3000 for board and clothing of the girls. Now Babbitt wanted the $5000 that was to be paid Babbitt, who was a straight, good, honest, sincere man, set about to find out property to pay the $5000 with. He could find none. Two splendid farms near Nauvoo, a big brick house, worth from $3000 to $4000, the hotel kept by Joe, a mass of vacant town lots, all were in Emma's name, not transferred later, but transferred from the beginning. She always looked out for her part. When I saw how things stood I wrote to Babbitt to take hold of all the property left by me in Nauvoo and of all claims held by me again in people in Nauvoo. And so the debt was paid by me—Emma didn't pay a cent."

We had chatted about an hour when Dr. Law said that he felt a little tired. I kept silent for a few minutes. The old gentleman rallied very soon, and began to speak without being questioned.

"I told you that the Smiths tried to poison me. When Joseph saw that I had no great appetite for reconciliation dinners, he tried with the Indians. The plan was, that somebody should use me up who was not openly connected with the church, he was yet afraid of the people because of my influence. Later he would have killed me without any regard. One day about one hundred redskins came to town and twenty or thirty were sent to my house. We tried to get rid of them, but could not and we saw clearly that they had a dark plan for the night. But we had to keep them, gave them blankets and they were all night in our hall. Wilson Law, I and some friends, though, kept good watch all night, with barricaded windows and doors and guns and pistols ready."

"You have known the parents of the prophet, old Lucy and old Joe, the Abraham of this new dispensation?"

"Oh, yes, I knew them. Old Lucy was in her dotage at that time; she seemed a harmless old woman. Old Joe sold blessings, so much a head, always in the same style—that my sons should be emperors and my daughters mothers of queens, and that everybody should have as many children as there was sand on the shore. Old Joe was an old tramp."

"How about Dr. Bennett?"

"Bennett was very smart and clever, but a thorough scoundrel. Never could find out the reason of his downfall. Mrs. Pratt was a most excellent, pure woman, but the fact that Bennett visited her sometimes, was used by Joseph to ruin her character. He had his spies everywhere, and if a woman refused him, he sent his fellows out to whisper stories around about her."

"What do you remember about Emma's relations to the revelation on celestial marriage?"

"Well, I told you that she used to complain to me about Joseph's escapades whenever she met me on the street. She used to call it 'unlimited revelation.' She said once: 'The revelation says I..."
must submit or be destroyed. Well, I guess I have to submit." On another day she said: "Joe and I have settled our troubles on the basis of equal rights." * * * Emma was a full accomplice of Joseph's crimes. She was a large, coarse woman, as deep a woman as there was, always full of schemes and smooth as oil. They were worthy of each other, she was not a particle better than he."

"You think that Joseph was an infidel?"

"Yes, that he was I have not the slightest doubt. What proofs have I? Well, my general and intimate knowledge of his character. And is it possible that a man who ascribes all kinds of impudent lies to the Lord, could have been anything else but an infidel?"

"Did you ever see the celebrated peepstone?"

"No. I never saw it and I never saw Joseph giving a revelation. But Hyrum told me once that Joseph, in his younger years, used to hunt for hidden treasures with a peepstone."

"Was Joseph a habitual drunkard?"

"I don't believe he was. I only saw him drunk once. I found Joseph and Hyrum at a place where they kept quantities of wine. I remember that Joseph drank heavily, and that I talked to Hyrum begging him to take his brother away, but that was the only time I saw the prophet drunk."

"Have you ever heard of the old woman that was drowned in the interest of the church?"

"I have heard of a woman being put aside. They said she had been brought over the river and buried on an island near the shore or on the other shore, near the water. But at that time I did not believe a word of rumors of this kind, and did not investigate them."

"Did you ever hear of abortion being practiced in Nauvoo?"

"Yes. There was some talk about Joseph getting no issue from all the women he had intercourse with. Dr. Foster spoke to me about the fact. But I don't remember what was told about abortion. If I heard things of the kind, I didn't believe in them at that time. Joseph was very free in his talk about his women. He told me one day of a certain girl and remarked, that she had given him more pleasure than any girl he had ever enjoyed. I told him it was horrible to talk like this."

"What do you know about robbery being practiced for the benefit of the church?"

"That sort of business was kept very secret. Hyrum had once a very fine, bran [sic] new blue suit, and people told me the suit was the produce of the spoils of the Gentiles. I have no doubt, that Hyrum played an important role in this department of church affairs. I think I can prove it. There was one day a "little council" called in Hyrum's office, and I was invited to come. Joseph called at my house and took me to the little council. Eight or ten were present, all leaders in the church. Hyrum made a long argument—and said he: "The Missourians have robbed, plundered and murdered our people. We should take our revenge on them as thoroughly as possible, and regain what we have lost in Missouri. The simplest way would be if our people would go to Missouri and buy their horses and cattle on credit and then not pay for them; and our merchants would go to St Louis and take their large quantities of goods on credit and then, when the notes became due, simply not pay them; our people always go there and pay for everything. That's foolish, very foolish, but it is just the thing that, for instance, Brother Law is doing. He has paid thousands of dollars there; but get all these things from them for nothing, horses, cattle and goods, that would help the people wonderfully. Our merchants should transfer all they have—not only their stock in trade, but their lots, houses and farms, too; to their wives and friends in general, so that the creditors could not get a cent out of them." Some of those present applauded the proposition, and said that would be only fair. I said nothing. Then somebody said: Brother Law has said nothing. I said: This seems to me not only wrong and unjust, but at the same time very ridiculous, because it is not practicable. You cannot buy horses and cattle on credit without having established a credit by long trading; and as to St. Louis, I was always of the opinion that the people there had been very good to the Mormons. So you would ruin your friends to injure your enemies, punish the innocent to hurt the guilty. The St. Louis merchants were surely not the men that persecuted you in Missouri. Hyrum got up, furious, ready to attack me. But Joseph rose and said: "I move that we adjourn this meeting. Brother Law has said his opinion, and that is all you wanted from him. Joseph went home with me and on the way he told me that he shared my views fully, and that I had a higher and nobler view of the justice and honesty of my views. I did not
talk;' said he, 'since you took the very words from my lips.' I need not tell you, that this was diplomacy on Joseph's part, but Hyrum hated me from that moment, and never forgave me for what I had said at that little council. But Hyrum hated me for another reason."

"Was that in the robbery line, too?"

"No. That was from a political reason. It was because I opposed him in the dirty political trade he made with Hoge against Walker. Walker had bought Joseph's influence by declaring that the city charter of Nauvoo secured the habeas corpus. I stood by them when Joseph promised that he should have nine out of every ten Mormon votes. But Hyrum went to Galena to meet the Democratic convention there, and promised the support of the church to Mr. Hoge for a seat in Congress. Yes, General Hyrum Smith was to sit in Congress next year. Saturday came and I went to Hyrum and had a talk with him. He said he would tell the people to vote for Hoge, and I said I would oppose him on the stand. He made objections but finally had to consent to my speaking on the stand in this matter. When it came to the speaking in public Hyrum did all he could to obstruct me by putting long-winded speakers on the stand, one after the other, so that it was nearly dark when I got on the stand. Now, I showed the people how shamefully they had treated Mr. Walker, and I made such an impression that they began to shout for Mr. Walker. Then, Hyrum jumped on the stand and declared that he had a revelation from the Lord, that the people should vote for Mr. Hoge. This was Saturday. Sunday morning I went to Joseph and told him what Hyrum had done. We went over to the meeting and Joseph told Hyrum what I had said. Hyrum insisted that he had had a revelation. Oh, said Joseph, if this is a revelation, then it is all right, and he went on the stand and said to the people: 'My office is so high, that I could not think of bothering the Lord with political affairs. But brother Hyrum has had a revelation—when the Lord speaks let the people obey.'"

"Had you ever some dramatic scene with Joseph about the difficulties between you and him?"

"He avoided me. But once I got hold of him in the street and told him in very plain terms what I thought of him. I said: 'You are a hypocrite and a vulgar scoundrel, you want to destroy me.' Instead of knocking me down, which he could have done very easily, being so much bigger and stronger than I, he went away hurriedly without uttering a single word."

"Were you in Nauvoo when the Expositor was destroyed?"

"No. I was in Carthage. There was a meeting at the court house, many people were present and it was considered what should be done regarding the Mormons. I think Stephen A. Douglas was present at the meeting. My friends urged me to come to Carthage with the press immediately. No conclusion was arrived at, however. The same evening we went home and when we came to Nauvoo we rode over our type, that was scattered in the street, and over our broken office furniture. The work of Joseph's agents had been very complete; it had been done by a mob of about 200. The building, a new, pretty brick structure, had been perfectly gutted, not a bit had been left of anything."

"Had anything been prepared for a second number?"

"Yes, the inside of number two had been set up. Seeing what had been done, I my abode, for safety's sake, at my brother's. I left Nauvoo on a large new steam ferry-boat, which transported me, my family and my brother to Burlington, Iowa. While we had people packing our things in our house, we rode, my brother and I, through the city in an open carriage, to show that we were not afraid."

"Did you ever see Joseph again after you left Nauvoo?"

"Only once. I saw him in Carthage at the trial. We spoke not to each other and he seemed greatly preoccupied. We left Nauvoo on the second day after the passing of the ordinance which put the press under the absolute will of Joseph and his creatures. This ordinance gave them power to imprison and fine us at liberty."

"What opinion have you of Governor Ford?"

"Ford made a good impression upon me; he was surely a good, straight man."

"What kind of a life did the prophet lead in Nauvoo?"

"Joseph lived in great plenty. He entertained his friends and had a right good time. He was a jolly fellow. I don't think that in his family tea and coffee were used, but they were served to the strangers with whom he was on familiar terms. At least, I saw no. The Smiths had plenty of money. Why, when
I came to Nauvoo I paid Hyrum $700 in gold for a barren lot and at that rate they sold any amount of lots after having got the land very cheap, to be sure. Their principle was to weaken a man in his purse, and in this way take power and influence from him. Weaken everybody, that was their motto. Joseph's maxim was, when you have taken all the money a fellow has got, you can do with him whatever you please."

"What became of Dr. Bennett?"

"The last thing I heard of him was that he went up the river with a large lot of fancy fowls, a speculation of his."

"What do you know about the revelation on polygamy?"

"The way I heard of it was that Hyrum gave it to me to read. I was never in a High Council where it was read, all stories to the contrary notwithstanding. Hyrum gave it to me in his office, told me to take it home and read it and then be careful with it and bring it back again. I took it home, and read it and showed it to my wife. She and I were just turned upside down by it; we did not know what to do. I said to my wife, that I would take it over to Joseph and ask him about it. I did not believe that he would acknowledge it, and I said so to my wife. But she was not of my opinion. She felt perfectly sure that he would father it. When I came to Joseph and showed him the paper, he said: 'Yes, that is a genuine revelation.' I said to the prophet: 'But in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants there is a revelation just the contrary of this.' 'Oh,' said Joseph, 'that was given when the church was in its infancy, then it was all right to feed the people on milk, but now it is necessary to give them strong meat.' We talked a long time about it, finally our discussion became very hot and we gave it up. From that time on the breach between us became more open and more decided every day, after having been prepared for a long time. But the revelation gave the finishing touch to my doubts and showed me clearly that he was a rascal. I took the revelation back to my wife and told her that Joseph had acknowledged it. That is what I fully expected, said she. 'What shall we do?' said I. She advised me to keep still try to sell my property quietly for what I could get. But I did not follow her advice. My heart was burning. I wanted to tread upon the viper."

"You returned the revelation to Hyrum?"

"Yes, I did. I was astonished to see in your book that the revelation was such a long document. I remember DISTINCTLY that the original given me by Hyrum was MUCH SHORTER. It covered not more than two or three pages of foolscap. The contents are substantially the same, but there was not that theological introduction. The thing consisted simply in the command of doing it, and that command was restricted to the High Priesthood and to virgins and widows. But as to Joseph, himself, the Lord's chosen servant, it was restricted to virgins only, to clean vessels, from which to procure a pure seed to the Lord."

"In what manner would Joseph succeed to keep you and others from knowing what was going on behind the curtain?"

"Marks, Y-yes, I and some others had, for a long time, no idea of the depravity that was going on. This was simply the result of a very smart system adopted by the prophet and his intimate friends like Brigham Young, Kimball and others. They first tried a man to see whether they could make a criminal tool out of him. When they felt that he would not be the stuff to make a criminal of, they kept him outside the inner circle and used him to show him up as an example of their religion, as a good, virtuous, universally respected brother."

"Was Joseph a coward?"

"Yes, he was a coward and so was Hyrum. You see it already in the fact that when I attacked him on the street with most violent words, he did not dare to answer a word."

"How did the prophets dress?"

"Joe and Hyrum were always dressed well, generally in blue, sometimes in black. Joseph was a fine man, no doubt of it."

"How was it with Joseph's wrestling?"

"The forces of the prophet in this line have been exaggerated. My brother Wilson wrestled once with him and he laid him down on the floor like a baby. Wilson could throw a lead bar much farther than Joe could. But Wilson was an uncommonly fine and strong man, over 6 feet. He could hold a weight of 56 pounds by his left hand. There is his name on the wall in his letter. Joseph was flabby; he never
worked at anything and that probably made him so. Rockwell did everything about the house."

"Had you any idea that there was a sort of conspiracy to kill Joseph in jail?"

"No. I had no idea, no idea. I had been ruined by that man; all my property was gone; all my dearest illusions destroyed, and through my connection with him I got a black spot on my life, which will pain me to the very last minute of my existence. But I tell you [The old gentlemen buried his head in his hands and when he removed them, his eyes were wet.] I tell you, no, if I had had any idea of any such scheme, I

would have taken steps to stop it. I have always considered the killing of Joseph Smith a wrong action. It is my opinion that he deserved his fate fully, much more than thousands of men who paid the penalty of their crime to Judge Lynch--but I would have preferred that he should have been tried by court and sent to the Penitentiary."

"Did you practice medicine in Nauvoo, Doctor?"

"Only occasionally. I came to Nauvoo with money. I had had a mill in Canada, already. Joseph said to me: 'You must not be a doctor here. Buy lands, build mills and keep a store to keep you running. As to practicing and not making anything, let some Gentiles come and do that. You look out for business and profit. I practiced, however, occasionally. Once John Taylor was taken with a very malignant fever. He was treated by his regular physician. I think Dr. Wells was his name. He grew worse and worse. At last I was called in, saw him and prescribed for him. They followed my prescriptions and he got better. This is, I believe, the worst thing I did in Nauvoo or anywhere else!' --Dr. Law followed this joke with a chuckle, so as to give me to understand that it was a sin to cure so great a rascal.["]

"What kind of men were the other editors of the Expositor?"

"Dr. Foster was a fine physician and surgeon and a very agreeable, lively, interesting man. The Higbees had been very good friends of Joseph in Missouri and had served his cause there with a kind of boyish enthusiasm. Frank died long ago and Chauncey only lately. He had studied law, was an attorney and sat on the bench for a while. He was quite intelligent. The father of the Higbees had been an excellent man. He died rather suddenly, and from that time there was something between his boys and Joseph."

"What kind of a physician was Dr. Bennett?"

"He was a physician of the old school. I could not say whether he was very successful as a doctor or not. He was so much occupied for Joseph, that he had no time to attend the sick."

"Did Joseph pay any salary to this Bismarck of his?"

"I don't know, but in that honeymoon of favor, which he enjoyed in his first Nauvoo time, Joseph gave him surely all he wanted."

"Did you ever hear Joseph speak of his money?"

"Oh yes, he used to boast of his riches. He expressed the opinion, that it was all important that he should be rich. I heard him say myself, 'it would be better that every man in the church should lose his last cent, than that I should fall and go down.'"

After pumping the dear, good old Doctor for two hours. I relaxed my hold on him and our conversation began to run on in an easier style. He made some interesting remarks, still, indeed he didn't say anything that wasn't interesting, every instance bearing the strong impress of his keen intelligence and interesting strong, manly character. Let me quote one more detail. Said Wm. Law: "What saved me from death in 1844 was, 1, my caution; 2, the devotion of my detectives and 3, Joseph himself. He had inculcated into the minds of his followers the rule, that the "heads" of the church must be safe before all. This became a strong superstition in the minds of his people, so strong that they did not dare to touch me. And he himself feared me so much because of my popularity and good standing, that he tried for a long time to put me out of the way in a manner that the church could not be charged with it. At last, however, he became desperate and would have killed me in any manner--but then it was too late in the day."

What I got out of the venerable Patriarch, William Law, the friends of the study of Mormon History owe entirely to the masterly tact and diplomacy of Judge Law, the son of the good Doctor. Judge Tommy J. Law is an attorney and publisher of a very successful weekly paper. He is a splendid figure of a man, with a flowing beard, every inch a whole hearted, frank gentleman. He venerates his father and the

business."

"My father," he says proudly, "was considered the best speaker in the Mississippi
valley; many men said he would have beaten Beecher had he followed that career. I heard him myself some thirty years ago, deliver a Fourth of July speech. He kept his audience spellbound, his influence was truly magnetic. Wilson Law was one of the finest and strongest of men, but intellectually he was below my father. He was a few years older and died 70 years old. He had been a farmer for many years. We are five boys, two are lawyers, two doctors, and one is a merchant. John is a leading physician in Leadville, Colorado. He is 45 years. The merchant, now a man of about 54, R. S. Law, lives in California. William Law junior lives in Chicago and is a very successful lawyer practitioner. W. R. Law, a physician, about 40 years old (the youngest) lives in Darlington, Wisconsin. Our only sister, Mrs. Douglas, is the wife of the president of the Shullsburgh Bank. My mother was a most excellent woman, good to the people in the highest degree, charitable, visiting the sick. Everybody loved her and the whole country turned out when she was buried. My father received a terrible shock through her death. I don't believe there was ever a happier couple. For many months after her death he used to break down whenever he saw anybody who had known her. We all thought he would follow her soon. But he rallied, though he is yet unable to speak of her without tears. What has been said about Joseph having made an attempt on her is not true. In such a case my father would not have started a paper against him—he would have shot his head off. No man can be more delicate and conscientious about the relations of husband and wife and more apt to be terrible in such a case, than my father. Two years ago he had an attack of pneumonia. My brother came from Leadville and nursed father for two weeks. His life was despaired of but he rallied once more. He said at that time: "Well, my life has anyhow been a failure." Nobody can cure him of this idea, that Mormonism has ruined his career. A man less sensitive, less retiring would have made capital out of what he knew, lectured all over the country, etc. After leaving Burlington, Iowa, my father came to Wisconsin and lived for many years on a farm. He was the confidential physician of all his neighbors for ten miles around, the most popular physician there ever was. We always want him to give up practicing, but there are so many people who absolutely must have Dr. Law when they are sick.

"Yes, I was once in Utah, I saw Brigham Young but had no talk with him. One of his brothers, a very stout man, who kept a store, told me not to be on the street after dark. 'There are always some hotheaded young fellows,' said he, 'who would think of gaining great merit and reputation if they would injure a man of your kind. It is so very difficult to control them—so you had better keep at home after dark.'"

This is what Judge Law told me about the history of the Law family: "My father was born in Ireland, Tyrone County, his parents were of Scottish descent. They emigrated to America, when William Law was nine years old. He lived with his parents for years in Pennsylvania; he studied in Philadelphia and Pittsburg [sic]. His father was a wealthy farmer. Wm. Law later emigrated to Canada and married there a lady of the Silverthorn family and lived there till he went to Nauvoo. Wilson Law never lived in Canada. William Law was the youngest of five brothers, and he is the only surviving one."

I have tried hard to verify Judge Law's opinion about his father by asking lots of people in Shullsburgh and on the train. I heard nothing but "Oh, Dr. Law is a fine old gentleman, the most popular man we have round here." Mr. Sheaby, who keeps the hotel, in which I spent two days, said: "Dr. Law is a good, fine old man, honest and very kind to the people. I don't think that this old man has a single enemy, and his wife was loved by everybody, too, she was the soul of kindness."

The good Doctor had been quite sick for a good many weeks and it was very doubtful, whether he would receive me or not. Judge Law convinced him, that I was a pretty decent fellow and succeeded in getting admission for me, though the Doctor had said, pretty energetically, when he heard of my arrival: "I don't want to be interviewed." When I had finished my operations, the Dr. said: "I hope you will do the Laws more justice now"—and he said it with a good, dear look in those wonderfully eloquent, steel-blue eyes.

There is nothing in the aspect of the old gentleman that indicates 78 summers, except the white hands, that tremble a little. I said: "God bless you, Dr. Law," when I went to the door. I looked round and I couldn't help it—went back to shake his hand once more. I held out both hands; he put aside his black staff and grasped both my hands, and gave me such a hearty, warm, good shake. I said: "Doctor, be kind! You will live many years yet like William of Parosia. The Williams are a good race. I belong to..."
it myself."

There is a strong resemblance between the Law and the Godbe movement and still a stronger one between the great heart of Wm. Law and the deep, unselfish, noble soul of Wm. S. Godbe. The rebellions of 1844 and 1870, both came from great hearts, that had been destroyed by the lies and driven to despair by the cruel egotism of the Mormon leaders. And while speaking of hearts crushed by Mormonism, was there ever a kinder, a purer, a braver one than that beating in the bosom of Mrs. Sarah Pratt? And was this grand woman’s heart not martyred a thousand times worse, than those of our justly celebrated friends Law and Godbe? Men can resist, oppose, fight and wound and finally win and overthrow—but the wife and mother, what is her prize? The tears of her children on her grave—that is all. Well, may the Lord—not Joe’s Lord—bless those three Great souls and all those excellent friends that helped me to study and understand Mormon History; and may they all see the downfall of one of the greatest infamies in human history. God bless them all and may He bless the great, good, patriotic paper, the joy of the student, the consolation of the philosopher, the hope of the Gentile and Mormon sufferer. THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE! W.WYL.

SUCH AN INTERVIEW

As the foregoing has never before been published on the Mormon question. It may aid the cause of liberty in Utah, and prevent the success of Mormon movements looking towards Statehood. To some Mormons it may help to bring them to the standsill and make them think of the origin and development of this stupendous fraud, but to the mass of the people who may read it, yet the majority may never see it, we fear that they are in as hopeless a condition as was the ancient Ephraim. "He (Ephraim) is joined to his idols, let him alone."

Salt Lake City, July 23, 1885 [sic].

INVESTIGATOR

The William Law Letters:

The Letters of William Law to Dr. William Wyl, The Daily Tribune, Tuesday, July 3, 1887

The original correspondence between Law and Wyl that lead to the above interview. These letters provide an important post-script to the interview—providing a look a Law’s struggles with Mormonism and his reluctance to talk about it or grant interviews.

Other Related Links:

Polygamy and Truth—January 1988, Salt Lake City Messenger—An overview of the origins and history of Mormon Polygamy from its inception, through a United States Senate Investigation at the turn of the century, and on to present times. Included in this exploration are: the "first" and "second" manifestos issued by LDS prophets—Church deception against federal authorities—the Reed Soot investigation—"scaling" already married women to early church leaders—women sealed to more than one living husband at a time—interesting methods of divorce—many quotes from church leaders teaching polygamy as "essential to salvation"—polygamy in the western United States today—and more.

Legacy: A distorted view of Mormon History—May 1995, Salt Lake City Messenger—Why were the Mormons driven from their homes in Missouri and Illinois? This issue discusses the LDS church’s film "Legacy," and how the production presents a sanitized, one-sided view of events that led to the murder of Joseph Smith, and the pioneer exodus to the state of Utah. Explore what important historical events this LDS missionary tool leaves out.
keys are conferred; and I have constantly said no man shall have but one wife at a time, unless the Lord directs otherwise (Joseph Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, B. H. Roberts, ed., 7 vols. [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1902], 6:46; hereafter History of the Church).

18. Andrew Jenson, Historical Record 6 (July 1887): 226.

19. For a lengthy treatment of this, see Van Wagoner, 4:14.

20. Monogamy was the divinely declared law of the church throughout Joseph Smith's lifetime. This was clearly outlined to him by revelation on 9 February 1831: "Thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart, and shall cleave unto her and none else" (D&C 42:22). A month later, another heavenly mandate declared: "It is lawful that [a man] should have one wife, and they two shall be one flesh." A "Chapter of Rules for Marriage among the Saints," canonized by the church on 17 August 1835, read: "we believe, that one man should have one wife; and one woman, but one husband, except in the case of death, when either at liberty to marry again." Furthermore, although a reading of the Old Testament provides ample evidence that polygamy was an acceptable lifestyle in ancient Israel, the practice is strongly denounced in several Book of Mormon passages (Jacob 1:15; 2:23:27; 3:5; Mosiah 11:24-14; Ether 10:5).

21. The Nauvoo City Council, of which Smith was a member, on 17 February 1842 passed "An Ordinance Concerning Marriages" which required persons solemnizing marriages to return a record of them to the city recorder within thirty days or face a twenty-dollar fine ("Nauvoo City Council Minutes").


23. This secret organization was called the "Endowment Council," the "Endowment Quorum," the "Holy Order," the "Holy Order of the Anointed," "Joseph Smith's Prayer Circle," or simply the "Quorum." Its primary function was to introduce a select group of men and women to instructions the prophet said would help them obtain full salvation with God. A secondary function was to "test" initiates' ability to keep a secret prior to their introduction to plural marriage. The introduction of Masonry to Mormonism in 1842 provided another vehicle for swearing adherents to secrecy. See D. Michael Quinn, "Latter-day Prayer Circles," Brigham Young University Studies 19 (Fall 1978): 79-105.

24. Parley P. Pratt, in speaking of the means by which church leaders should sustain Joseph Smith, advised that "we must lie to support brother Joseph, it is our duty to do so" (Sidney Rigdon in Letter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate [Pittsburgh], 18 June 1845).

25. For a treatment of the personal difficulties between Joseph and Emma, see Van Wagoner, 47-59.

26. William Clayton Diary, 23 June 1843, cited in George D. Smith, ed., An Intimate Chronicle: The Journals of William Clayton (Salt Lake City: Signature Books in association with Smith Research Associates, 1991), 108. Emma's threat to "be revenged and indulge herself" may have been merely a warning to the prophet to give up his spiritual wives. But Joseph H. Jackson, a non-Mormon opportunist who gained the confidence of the prophet in Nauvoo, recorded in an 1844 expose of Mormonism: "Emma wanted [William] Law for a spiritual husband," and because Joseph "had so many spiritual wives, she thought it but fair that she would at least have one man spiritually sealed up to her and that she wanted

Between Family and Friends

Law, because he was such a 'sweet little man'" (Joseph H. Jackson, A Narrative of the Adventures and Experiences of Joseph H. Jackson in Nauvoo: Dissecting the Depths of Mormon Villainy Practiced in Nauvoo [Warsaw, IL: n.p., 1844], 20).

Although there is nothing to suggest that Law and Emma were more to each other than friends, Law later confirmed that Joseph "offered to furnish his wife Emma with a substitute for him, by way of compensation for his neglect of her, on condition that she would forever stop her opposition to polygamy and permit him to enjoy his young wives in peace and keep some of them in his house and to be well treated etc." ("The Mormons in Nauvoo—Three Letters from William Law on Mormonism," Salt Lake Tribune, 3 July 1887).

27. Elroyd, D. P. Young, "Incidents in the Life of a Mormon Girl." In a ploy to appease his wife Emma, William Clayton wrote, the prophet told Emma "he would relinquish all [other] for her sake." He nevertheless told Clayton privately, who recorded immediately in his diary, that "he should not relinquish anything" (Clayton diary, 16 Aug. 1843, cited in Smith, 117).  

28. Spiritual wifery was a Swedenborgian concept whereby people who could not be lawfully united in this world might be enjoined in the afterlife. It was not expected that the union in question would be anything more than a spiritual connection; the notion that it should be consummated was especially disclaimed by Swedenborgians. Although "spiritual wifery" in Mormon usage much later came to be equated with promiscuous intercourse or "free love," this was not the contemporary Nauvoo meaning. "Polygamy," "spiritual wifery," "spiritual marriage," and "plural marriage" were all apparently interchangeable terms in Mormon and non-Mormon contexts during the early 1840s. Emily Dow Parridge, a plural wife to both Smith and later to Brigham Young, uses "spiritual wife" as a reference to herself and others: "spiritual wives, as we were then termed, were not very numerous in those days and a spiritual baby was a rarity indeed" (Emily D. P. Young, Autobiographical Sketch, 72).

Helen Mar Kimball Whitney, another of Smith's plural wives, added that in Nauvoo "spiritual wife was the title by which every woman who entered into this order [plural marriage] was called" (Whitney, 15). Heber C. Kimball, of the First Presidency in 1855, utilized that term in chiding the Saints for opposing the "spiritual wife doctrine the Priestly Order, which is of God" (Journal of Discourses, 26 vols. [London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854-66], 16 Oct. 1855: 125; hereafter in Journal of Discourses).

Joseph H. Jackson, for a brief period a close friend and confidante of Joseph Smith, added that "a spiritual wife is a woman, who by revelation is bound up to a man, in body, parts and passions, both for this life and for all eternity, whereas the union of a carnal wife and her husband ceases at death" (Jackson, 12:13).

days after Mr Smith going toward his Office Mrs Law stood in the door beckon to him more the once did not know whether she belonged to him went across to inquire yes please to walk in no one but herself in the house she drawing her Arms around him if you wont seal me to my husband Seal myself unto you he said stand away & pushing her Gently aside giving her a denial & going out. When Mr Law came home he Inquired who had been in his Absence she said no one but Br Joseph, he then demanded what had passed Mrs L then told Joseph wended her to be Married to him.” Journal of Alexander Neibaur, 24 May 1844, LDS Church Archives. See also Hyrum Smith’s statement in Nauvoo Neighbor, Extra, 17 June 1844, regarding Law’s adulterous conduct.) Yet at Law’s trial of excommunication, Jack (John) Scott, a Canadian convert, testified that to ameliorate conditions between William and Joseph (possibly because of the accusations that the Prophet had made advances to Jane) Law Joseph Smith had sealed William Law and his wife (Minutes of meeting, 18 April 1844, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Church Archives). Some early accounts allege that a permanent rupture resulted between Joseph and William when the Prophet attempted to take Jane Law as a “spiritual” wife (see Joseph H. Jackson, A Narrative of the Adventures and Experiences of Joseph H. Jackson in Nauvoo [Warsaw, Ill.: n.p., 1844], p. 21; Thomas Ford, History of Illinois [Chicago: S. C. Griggs & Co., 1854], p. 322; and Edward Bonney, The Bundish of the Prophet: A Tale of the Mississippi Valley [Chicago: Belford, Clarke & Co. 1881], p. 18). Regardless, it is known that Joseph Smith did ask for other men’s wives as part of an “Abrahamic test.” While he did “not want every man’s wife he asked for,” nevertheless, he was sealed for eternity to a few of them (Jedediah M. Grant discourse, 19 February 1854, Journal of Discourses, 2:234-13). Though Joseph, as reported in Neibaur’s journal, denied that he asked for Jane as a plural wife, William Law believed otherwise: “Joseph has lately endeavored to seduce my wife, and has found her a virtuous woman” (Law Diary, 13 May 1844). A possible explanation for this discrepancy is that Neibaur’s account (cited above), though reasonably accurate, is simply incomplete. Obviously Jane Law’s frustration over not being permitted to be eternally sealed to her husband might have prompted her to request eternal marriage to the Mormon leader (say, in late 1843), and as per Neibaur she was rebuffed. Subsequently, possibly to gratify and assure the Laws, Joseph might have finally agreed to seal the couple near Christmas 1843 (as per John Scott). Then later, just before or soon after the Laws’ excommunication, Joseph Smith might have sought to have Jane Law sealed to him in an attempt to keep her from following her apostate husband (as per Law’s diary and other published sources noted above). Bathsheba Smith, one of the apostate quorum who was conversant with all the ramifications of plural marriage in Nauvoo, believed that Jane Law was sealed to the Prophet (Bathsheba Smith Deposition, Eighth Circuit Court, 1892 Temple Lot Case, carbon copy of original, LDS Church Archives). “Q: Did you ever see him [Joseph Smith] out to church with any one except Emma as his wife? A: Yes sir. Q: Take them home with him, and so from church? A: Yes sir, I have seen them hanging on his arm. Q: Who have you seen hanging on his arm? A: Well, I have seen Mrs. Law, if you want to know. Q: William Law’s wife? A: Yes sir. Q: Was he married to her? A: You can’t prove it by me, for I was not present, but I believe it. Q: Did she not have a husband at that time? A: Yes sir. Q: Well, how could she be married to Joseph Smith if she had a husband living at that time? A: Well, I believe she was sealed to him for eternity.” In July 1867, John Hawley reported that Wilford Woodruff had said, “When Brigham Young got the records of the Church in his hands, after the death of Joseph Smith, he found by examination that... [William] Law’s wife and [Francis] Highys wife and [Lyman] Wights wife and [Robert D.] Fosters wife had all been Sealed to Joseph, as their husbands could not save them” (John Hawley, Autobiography, January 1885, p. 97, RLDS Library-Archives). Laws and embarrassed the First Presidency counselor by casting a shadow of doubt on his integrity as a church leader.

By January 1844 William’s anger, together with his distaste for secret polygamous relationships, brought him to a crucial point in his religious experience as a Latter-day Saint. However much he desired the sealing ordinance, and notwithstanding his alleged commitment to the latter-day Prophet, William claimed he could not assent to the implications of plural marriage. He did not insist on an infallible prophet, but his faith unequivocally required that the prophet admit error and be willing to change. He said: “If he [Joseph] sins is there no room for repentance, can not God forgive him, and can not we forgive him very often in a day.”

In his last encounter with Joseph Smith, on 8 January 1844,80 William boldly declared that polygamy “was of the Devil and that [Joseph] should put it down.” But when the Prophet insisted that his practice of the ancient order of marriage was by revelation, any remaining hope for a reconciliation was destroyed. Richard S. Law, William’s son, said his father, “with his arms around the neck of the Prophet, was pleading with him to withdraw the doctrine, of plural marriage...” [William] pleased for this with Joseph with tears

80 Joseph did, in fact, deny “sealing” the Laws, it would not have been based on Law’s lack of confession of adultery but because William would not accept the doctrine and practice of plural marriage. It is a well-known fact that the Mormon leader required all who were eternally married or sealed to accept the doctrine of “spiritual wives” or plural marriage (either in fact or in theory) before an eternal sealing could be effected. This, of course, Law could not bring himself to accept.

81 See William Law to Isaac Russell, 29 November 1840, LDS Church Archives, see pp. 78-80. A similar statement was advanced in the Nauvoo Expositor, 7 June 1844, p. 1.

82 The Diary of Joseph Smith, kept by Willard Richards, 8 January 1844, briefly notes that Joseph “had an interview with Wm Law in the street,” in front of William W. Phelps’s house, but gives no particulars of what transpired.

83 Diary of William Law, 8 January 1844. At a special meeting of the Nauvoo City Council, 3 January 1844, Bishop Daniel Curr stated that he and William Law had had a “conversation about stories afloat on spiritual wives. he [Law] thought it was from the devil.” — and we must put it down that he knew such a thing was in existence” (original Nauvoo City Council Minutes, 3 January 1844, LDS Church Archives).
commission of any kind in it. I sometimes (by request) assisted in drilling the men, having a little knowledge of military tactics. My Brother Wilson held a general’s commission from Governor Carlin, my brother was not a Mormon.35

On page 108 you speak of “swapping wives,” and state that you have it from one who knows. Now let me say to you that I never heard of it till I read it in your book. Your informant must have been deceived or willfully lied to you. Joseph Smith never proposed anything of the kind to me or to my wife; both he and Emma knew our sentiments in relation to spiritual wives and polygamy; knew that we were immovably opposed to polygamy in any and every form; that we were so subsequent events proved. The story may have grown out of the fact that Joseph offered to furnish his wife, Emma, with a substitute for him, by way of compensation for his neglect of her, on condition that she would forever stop her opposition to polygamy and permit him to enjoy his young wives in peace and keep some of them in her house and be well treated, etc.36

The great mistake of my life was my having anything to do with Mormonism. I feel it to be a deep disgrace and never speak of it when I can avoid it; for over forty years I have been almost entirely silent on the subject and will so continue after this. Accept my kind regards.

Wm. Law.

35Wilson Law converted to Mormonism at Nauvoo, Illinois, probably in 1842. For some reason, in his declining years, William Law insisted that his brother, Wilson, was never a Mormon. It is also apparent that William intentionally struck from his diary entries that suggested that Wilson had been a member of the Mormon Church. It is possible that William, himself, was confused regarding this matter or, perhaps, he publicly stated that his brother was not a Mormon as a courtesy since the Laws later regarded their association with Mormonism a stain on their characters. Notwithstanding these denials, see pp. 4, 149, 151-152.

36See Doctrine and Covenants 132:51-52.
Meeting was called and several Addresses delivered by the Prophet and others on some evils in the City, Several received a severe Exposure in the Church and out, of the latter was the Brother of R. D. Foster, he asked in the Con. a direct Answer he then asked Mr. Jos Smith if he meant him Bro J. S. asked why he thought so

[24] but he repeated the question and said if you will not hear me you soon shall hear from me. Did you allude to me? when Bro J. S. answered, you say it, and bid the Officers to take him and fine him] 5 or 10 Dlfr I forget which and his Bro R. D. Foster then spoke to justify him and clear him of Sensuer [censure], and after exchanging a few Words Bro J. S. told him to hold his Tongue or he would fine him too, thus it ended for the time, but the Reproof and Exposure which he and several others had received stirred up feelings that could not be suppressed, A few Weeks after this

[25] Our Prophet told us from the Stand, by the Wall of the partly build Temple that a Conspiracy was formed by the two Foster’s the Laws C. Highy and J H Jack- son against himself and all the Smiths by some of them it was declared that there should not be one of them in the Temple, now it was a few Weeks many Accusations and threats of this kind were uttered; all this the Prophet had had from Mr. Heaton and another, the testimony was credible, they had formed a Caucus and had invited others to join it but much of this was found to be the false Statement of the said

[26] Joseph H Jackson, [who] proved to be so corrupt and guilty as a Man could well be yet it was partly true I do not know to what extent; but this I do know, Jackson quickly left the Place, and Wm. Law his Brother Wilson Law the former one of the first Presidency, and the latter Major General of the Legion of the City, R. D. Foster and others reviled from the Church, saying that Joseph was fallen, the same as all the Apostates have said, such as Parthi, Cowdery, Harris and Russell &c; so they formed a Church of themselves appointed one as their Prophet or Head and held Meetings

[27] in the House of the Laws, got up all the Attitudinize they could especially from the Sisert against the Conduct of the Prophet, to publish to the World, they object to Doctrine of a Plurality of Wives and of God’s) I was present when the two Laws the Wfe W. & R. D. Foster were cut off from the Church. The feeling as to

their Conduct was very unanimous except that Bro. Marks did not raise his Hand against Sir Law, their Principle Charge against Joseph is that he has and seeks to obtain other Women or Wives and has taught the same to others who have done the same

[28] As to me I have evidence enough that Joseph is not fallen, I have seen him after giving at as I before said the origin of Masonry, organize the Kingdom of God on the Earth and am myself a Member of it in this I feel myself highly honored but I feel grieved that at this time of the greatest Light and the greatest Glory

[William Smith, the Nauvoo Stake president, was at least ambivalent over Joseph Smith’s introduction of plural marriage. William Law could not inducing Marks to come out in open opposition to the Prophet’s teachings on this subject as Law had induced Marks’ first counselor, Captain A. Cowdery, to do, but at this trial of William Law, et al., Judge [John] Scott notified that William Law had told him the day before several of them had made advances on June Law, which accused the Prophet denied but reported later acknowledged. Then Law said that to cover up had intended, Joseph Smith had sealed William Law and his wife. While the minutes indicate that Scott thought their life fairly well," Marks did not agree and, consequently, he could not vote against her. The Prophet was not in attendance at this important meeting; however, at a meeting of the Stake elders and others endowment, Joseph asked for a vote of the men and women to not allow William Law from the "Quorum." Though Bathsheba W. Smith did not indicate the member who did not as far vote against Law, it was probably Mrs. Mary Family alive in vote by "one member... called forth current remarks from the Prophet Joseph... After his explanation the vote was unanimous." Joseph’s "easiest remarks" and "explanations" that convinced the uninitiated degenerate were probably similar to his explanation of the situation to his German teacher, Alexander Nebinger. On 23 May 1844 William Law testified before the circuit court in Carthage where Joseph Smith had committed adultery (see, 36, 46), and the next day Joseph related to Nebinger what he considered were some of the root of Law’s animosity. "Mr. Wm. Law—wants to be friend to his Wife for Eternity Mr Smith said and would Inquire of the Lord, Answered no because Law was an Adulterous person. Mrs Law wanted to know why she could not be Married to Mr Law Ms S said would not wound her feeling by telling her, some days after Mr Smith going toward his Office Mr Law stood in the door beckoned to him more the once did Not know whether she beckoned to him went across to Inquire yes please to walk in no one but herself in the house she drew her Arms around him if you are not going by you to my husband Seal my self unto you, he said stand away & going for Joseph was Lie aide giving her a formal & going out, when Mr Law came home he Inquired who had been in his Abstinence, she said no one but the Judge, he then demanded what had passed[4] Mrs S then told Joseph wonder her to be Married to him."

Alexander Nebinger Journal, 24 May 1844, microfilm of holograph, Church Historical Department.) For [John] Scott’s testimony, see Liquid Stone transcript of 18 April 1844 trial in the Brigham Young Papers, Church Historical Department. Compare this with the Joseph Smith diary just to the same date to ascertain the fact that Joseph Smith was not present. For Bathsheba W. Smith’s statement on the proceedings at a meeting of those who had received their endowment, see "Recollections of the Prophet Joseph Smith," Juvenile Instructor 27 (1 June 1892):335. (See fn. 65.)

"Though Fielding is silent on the fact, his own sister Mercy Rachel had been sealed as a plural wife to the Prophet’s brother, Hyrum. (See fn. 13, preceding.)"

"The Kingdom of God was a shortened name of the secret title of the Council of Fifty. The full title of the organization, given in a revelation to the Prophet July 4, 1842, was "The Kingdom of God and His Laws with the Keys and powers thereof and judgment in the hands of His servants, Abinah Chitt." (Abraham H. Cannon Journal, 5:24, under date of 9 October 1844, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.) The date on which Fielding became a member cannot be determined precisely by available documentation, though he was probably present at the two council meetings held prior to the excommunication of the members whose names he lists."

Joseph Fielding was the 19th member of the Council of Fifty, as listed by Fielding in cols. 4 and 5. (See Fielding, Joseph Fielding 1841–1859 Journal. The first signature is under the date given on p. 149, and the latter signature is on p. 126.)"
APPENDIX

THE PROPHET OF PATRIA
THE REPORT OF PERSIA.
Law, William. Affadavit of William Law that/ Hyrum
Smith gave him to read a revelation by Joseph Smith, Jr.
authorizing polygamy. The original was in the possession
of Zenas H. Gurley and was loaned to Charles A. Shook. Shook
had a copy made, which was sworn to---this is the copy. In with
it is the letter, in Gurley's handwriting saying that he was
sending Smith the original.
APPENDIX OF WILLIAM LAW

Copied from an original document, December 25, 1809,_loaned me by Dr. Zones H. Gurley of Canton, Missouri. This document bears the official seal of Charles T. Douglas, Notary Public, La Fayette Co., Wisconsin.

At the time this affidavit was made William Law resided at Shullsburg, Wisconsin.
Elder Charles A. Shoek
Palmer St.
Dear Sir and Brother:

At your solicitation I enclose herewith the sworn statements of V. M. Leu, late of Shullsburg, Wis. Please return to me in due time by registered mail.

Sincerely yours,

J. H. Smith.
APPENDIX OF WILLIAM.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

I, the undersigned, being aware that many contradictory reports are in circulation as to the origin of Polygamy in the Mormon Church, make the following statements concerning polygamy and some other matters. In 1843 Hyrum Smith handed to me a writing to read, & to be returned to him. I took it home & upon reading found that it purported to be a revelation to Joseph Smith, authorizing polygamy in the Church. After reading it I went directly to Joseph Smith & showed him the document. He looked at it, & said it was all right. Said it was a great privilege granted to the High Priesthood. He spoke strongly in its favor. I remarked that it was in contradiction to the "Doctrine & Covenants." He said they were given when the Church was in its infancy, when they were babes, & had to be fed on milk, but now they were strong & must have meat. He seemed much disappointed in my not receiving the revelation. He was very anxious that I would accept the doctrine & sustain him in it. He used many arguments at various times afterwards in its favor. I suppose he dreaded my official influence in opposing & utterly rejecting the so called revelation as I was at that time a member of the First Presidency. Joseph told me that he had several wives sealed to him, & that they afforded him a great deal of pleasure. He kept some of them in his own house. He said his wife Emma had annoyed him very much about it, but he thought the revelation would cause her to submit respectfully, as it threatened her removal if she did not. Mrs. Smith complained to me about Joseph keeping his young wives in her house & elsewhere, & his neglect of her. She spoke freely about the revelation & its threat against her life &. She seemed to have no faith in it whatsoever. From what she said to me & from what I learned from other sources I have good reason to believe that Joseph & Hyrum Smith & others in the Church had been practicing polygamy for a long time before the revelation came forth, although it was vehemently denied from the public stand, & those who spoke of its existence were denounced as slanderers of the Church. But after the revelation came out, polygamy was rampant & the men who dared to speak against it was considered an apostate. Joseph Smith required every man & woman to believe in him, believe in all his revelations, believe in all his teachings, uphold & sustain him in every thing right or wrong, without any regard for the teachings
of Christ & his Apostles, as recorded in the Scriptures. Smith was opposed to the use of the Scriptures for I heard him say that "the time would come when it would be a curse to my family to have a Bible in their house." The teaching of Christ was in direct opposition to the teachings of the Smiths; they taught polygamy, stealing (robbing) the Gertiles, murder, swindling, lying & many other evils. I do not say that Joseph Smith murdered any one with his own hand, but I say this, that Joseph told me that he sent a man to kill Governor Boggs of Missouri. I have met the Governor in his own house, shot him through a window, wounding him severely, but failed to kill him. In looking over the whole field at that time, the past & the then present of the Church, I could see no God in it, but a great deal of Satan. Consequently I withdrew from it forever. And now, after more than forty years, I am thoroughly convinced that I was right, that it never was a Church of Christ, but a most wicked blasphemous humbug, gotten up for the purpose of making money. Had it been the Church of Christ, its ministers would have taught the Doctrine of Christ, would have taught the Gospel of Christ, which is the Gospel of Salvation, to them that believe, if the Gospel was Salvation to believers. In the days of the Apostles, it is Salvation to believers now, & always will be. And if so great a do we want. Paul said "though we or an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel let him be accursed." The Mormon Church has been running for more than fifty years and that has it done for the Cause of Christianity or Morality? Nothing that I know of but a great deal against both. It must be a bad tree to bear such evil fruit, evil all the way from the Kirtland Bank Swindle down to the present time, & yet I have no doubt thousands of honest virtuous people joined the Church not knowing (at the time) anything of the wicked teachings of the leaders, & thousands (probably in ignorance) still cling to the delusion.

After I withdrew from the Mormons, I held several public meetings in the city, told the people many things that I thought they ought to know. I warned them of the ruin they would bring upon themselves by obeying the unchristian teachings of the Smiths & others. I called on the Smithites to come forward & defend their cause, and have an open discussion of the questions at issue between us. But there was not a man to oper
his mouth in their defense. The fact was they had no ground to stand on. I next went to my friends & talked over the propriety of purchasing a Printing Press & publishing a Paper to be called the Nauvoo Expositor. We concluded to do so. We bought a Press, paper & and issued No. 1 of the Expositor. No. 2 we had printed on one side when the City Council & Joseph Smith, Mayor, ordered the destruction of the Press, which was done immediately by the breaking the press into pieces with sledges, throwing the type into the street & burning up the furniture, printing paper &.

This unlawful destruction of private property & infringement on the Sacred Freedom of the Press sealed their doom. It was more than the people would bear. — What followed is already well known to the Public.

After the Press was destroyed, my friends came to me & urged me to leave Nauvoo immediately for my personal safety. So on the second day after the destruction of the Press I with my family & some friends, left for Burlington, Iowa. This was in June 1844.

More than forty years have pass'd since the foregoing events transpired, therefore I may not have been able to give the precise words used in the conversations referred to, but the substance of what I have stated is positively true. I speak from actual knowledge.

I hope my testimony may be of use to those who are seeking after the truth, for truth's sake. It is much safer to trust in God, than in man. The wisdom of men may perish, but the wisdom & goodness of God endureth forever.

July 17th 1885. WM. Law.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 17th day of July, A.D. 1885. C.T. Douglas.

(SWAL) Notary Public.
This is to certify that Charles A. Shook, being duly sworn according to law, deposeth and saith that the foregoing is a verbatim copy of an affidavit bearing the signature of William Law and also the official seal of Charles T. Douglas, Notary Public, La Fayette Co., Wis., which affidavit is now the property of Mr. Zerod H. Curley of Canton, Missouri, and which was loaned to the deponent by the said Zerod H. Curley that he might make the foregoing copy.

Subscribed and sworn to before me at Palmer, Illinois, this 37th day of December, 1909.

This is to certify that A. L. Shout, being duly sworn according to law, deposeth and saith that he has compared the foregoing copy with an affidavit bearing the signature of a certain William Law and also the official seal of Charles T. Douglas, Notary Public, La Fayette Co., Wis., and that he has found said copy to be a correct transcription of the original.

Subscribed and sworn to before me at Palmer, Illinois, this 37th day of December, 1909.
Smith had decided to bring the matter before the Mormon populace so Joseph Smith would make a full disclosure of his private teachings and practices. However, it was about this time (26 May 1843) that Hyrum Smith (with the assistance of Brigham Young) became convinced that plural marriage had been divinely revealed to the Prophet. This unexpected turn of events estranged William from Hyrum as well as from Joseph.

William claimed he was shocked when the particulars of the law of plurality were explained to him. The marriage practice was especially embarrassing to him as he had publicly ridiculed such a fear a year before. He had spoken against John C. Bennett's licentiousness in 1842, assuring the Nauvoo populace that neither 'spiritual wifery' nor anything like it was condescended by Church leaders. Law's official introduction to plural marriage came from the Church Patriarch (July–August 1843): "Hyrum gave me a written revelation to me in his office, told me to take it home and read it, and then be careful with it, and bring it back again."

"[Jane] and I were just turned upside down by it," related William. "We did not know what to do."

With growing his public statements opposing plural marriage and his shock upon learning that the secret priesthood order was sanctioned by revelation, William Law's own diary for this period indicates that he later seriously entertained thoughts of entering the practice. This intention may well have been his desire to be eternally sealed to Jane since Joseph had used the acceptance of plural marriage (in theory or in practice) as a test for eternal marriage sealings. At any rate, Hyrum Smith claimed that Joseph's refusal to administer the sealing blessing to the Laws had initiated the rupture between the two men: "Law wanted to be sealed (to his wife) & Joseph told him which began the hard feeling." 12

12 Diary of William Law, 1 January 1844: "Fearful and terrible, ye most dissenting have been the scenes through which we have passed, during the last few months. Though our religious era we harkened to the voice of the Lord, more than to the written word of God, (for a short moment) even in contradiction to the Prophets and to the Coormonists of the most high; but his spirit prevailed and before the fearful sees was taken - we tax and learned that justness and truth, virtue and holiness, could alone bring in their sure reward."

13 "Ehre, "Eternal Marriage," 17 August 1843: Although William's official introduction to plural marriage (July–August 1843) he found a symphonie with Emmera Smith. The Law's fascination with polygamy that each person single was effectively multiplied as they mutually erected their feelings in private. Law's influence on Emma must have been significant because Joseph and Hyrum were verse to her his family had been in opposition to Joseph & the question" (Diary of William Clayton, 12 July 1844). Law's subsequent rejection of Emma's desires and opposition to plural marriage, but his irrational ambivalence regarding the practice.


15 "Law Interview," 30 March 1847, p. 6. On another occasion William Law reported: "I took it home and, after reading it, immediately showed it to Joseph Smith and showed him the document. He looked at it, and said it was all right. I remarked that it was in contradiction to the Doctrine and Covenance. He immediately overturned it in my not receiving the revelation. He was very anxious that I should accept the doctrine and sustain him in it. He used all the arguments in his favor, and, after a time, in his favor; "(1859, "Affidavit of William Law," cited in Shook, True Origin of Mormon Polygamy, p. 126.)
Wednesday 12th. A.M went to Temple office then to Prest. Js. walked with him, O.P.R. and J. Grant to my house & then to Temple P.M. at Prest Js recording Saunders Died at 1 ½ o clock
David Bettisworth a constable from Carthage came with a writ for Joseph, Hyrum, Phelps, Jno Taylor, L. Bennett and a number of others for riot, in breaking the press of the Nauvoo Expositor. After the officer got through reading the writ, Joseph referred him to this clause in writ "before me or some other justice of the peace of said County" saying we are ready to go to trial before Esqr. Johnson, for that was their privilege allowed by the Statute. The man said he should take them before Morrison the man who issued the writ and seemed very wrathly - Joseph asked him if he intended to break the law, for he knew the privilege of the prisoners and they should have it. Joseph called upon all present to witness that he then offered himself (Hyrum did the same) to go forthwith before the nearest justice of the peace, and also called upon them to witness whether the officer broke the law. Joseph (?) a write of Habeas Corpus which was taken out and served on Bettisworth. While this was going on and the Marshall summoning the Municipal Court - Hyrum related the whole history of the difficulty with Wm Law to the constable & a man with him - showing them what we believed on sealing of the covenant- that Law wanted to be sealed & J. told him he was forbid - which begun the hard
feelings. He talked about 2 hours, then J. came in & told about Jackson. About 5 the court assembled in the 70s Hall—much testimony was brought to the point & the Court discharged J. from the writ & assessed the costs to P.M. Higbee the complainant.
May 31. called at J. Smith 10 o'clock found took dinner, read

Gorman. After dinner met the Fox & Sax Indians, dancet their War Dany — called at Sr. J.S. met Mr. Bonne, Mr. Joseph told us the first call he had a Revival Meeting, his Mother, Sr. & Sisters got Religion. He wanted to get Religion too, wanted to feel & shou'd like the rest but could feel nothing, opened his Bible of the first Passage that struck him was if any man lack wisdom let his ask of God who giveth to all men liberally & upbraid him: Went into the woods to pray, knelt himself down, his tongue was closet cleaved to his roof — could utter not a word, felt easier after awhile — saw a fire toward heaven came near & nearer; saw a personage in the fire, light complexion, blue eyes, a piece of white cloth drawn over his shoulders, his right arm bear; after a while a other person came to the side of the first. Mr. Smith then asked, must I join the Methodist Church. No, they are not my People, they have gone astray, there is none that doth good, not one, but this is my Beloved Son harken ye hin, the fire drew higher, rested upon the tree, enveloped him — comforted I endeavored to arise but felt uncommon feeble — got into the house told the Methodist priest, said this was not a age for God to Reveal himself in Vision. Revelation has ceased with the New Testament. Told about Mr. Law — wished to be married to his wife for Eternity. Mr. Smith would inquire of the Lord, answered no because Law was a Adulterous person. Mrs. Law wanted to know why she could not be married to Mr. Law. Mr. S. said would not wound her feelings by telling her. Some days after, Mr. Smith going toward his office. Mrs. Law stood in the door, beckoned to him — the one did not know whether she beckoned to him, went across to inquire. Yes, please to walk in, no one but herself in the house, she drawing her arms around him, if you went seal me to my husband seal myself unto you, he said, stand away & pushing her gently aside giving her a denial & going out. Then Mr. Law came home he inquired who had been in his absence, she said no one but Dr. Joseph, he then demanded that had passed. Mrs. I then told Joseph wanted her to married to him ————- Read

Gorman, went to dinner; after dinner read again while 3 ock — —
May 21  [Illegible]  

[Illegible]  

Dr Joseph told us the first call he had a Revival Meeting his Mother Br Sister got Religion; he wanted to get Religion too wanted to feel & she about like the Rest but could feel nothing, opened his Bible & the first Passage that struck him was if any man lack wisdom let him ask of God who giveth to all men liberallity & upbraideth not went into the room to pray kneeled himself down his tongue was closet cleaveth to his roof - could utter not a word, felt easier after a while - [Illegible]  
a fire towards heaven came near & nearer saw a personage in the fire light complexion blue eyes a piece of white cloth drawn over his shoulders his right arm bear after a while a other person came to the side of the first Mr Smith then asked must I join the Methodist Church? No - they are not my People they all have gone astray there is none that doeth good or not one, but this is my Beloved son harken ye him, the fire drew higher Res tet upon the tree enveloped him
comforted Indesavoured to arise but fell
unnomen Seable - got into the house told the
Methodist priest, said this was not a age
for God to Reveal himself in Vision Revelation
has ceased with the New Testament
Told about Mr Wm Law a wished to be
Married to his Wife for Eternity Mr Smith said
would Inquire of the Lord Answer no because
Law was a Adulterous person Mrs Law
wanted to know why she could not be Married
to Mr Law Mr S said would not would her
feeling by telling her, some days after Mr Smith
going toward his Office Mrs Law stood in the
doors beckoned to him none the once did not
Know whater she beckoned to him went across
to Inquire yes please to walk in as one
but herself in the house, she drawing her
arms around him if you wont seal me
to my husband Seal myself unto you, he
Said stand away & pushing her Gently aside
giving her a denial & going out, when Mr
Law came home he Inquirath who had
been in his Absense, she said no one
but Mr Joseph, he then demanded what had passed
Mrs L then told Joseph warrant her to be Married
to him-------Read Cornan..............
William Law, Jane Law and Joseph Smith - see

1. Kenneth W. Godfrey, ... A Most Unlikely Quartet, pp. 15-16)
Jane Law:

D&C 132:51-52

pp. 176-177 WM. Law - Emma to have substitute for Joseph Smith etc. different interpretations of D&C - Its meaning remains a mystery

[see also Larry Foster]

(Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith, pp. 176-77)
climate etc. etc. and tell me where the Saints are going to settle if you know, would a first rate new horsepower for grinding and sawing be useful there is a new invention come out that is excellent. 61

Since by the time the Laws arrived in Nauvoo building lots in the lower part of the town were available for purchase from only Joseph Smith, William and his brother invested in the upper part of Nauvoo and on the outskirts of the new city. 62 While the financial interests of the Laws and the Prophet were in competition in 1842, Joseph encouraged them to become prosperous in ways not prejudicial to the Church. 63 Moreover, both parties maintained tolerably good relations because Joseph and William were in the Presidency. However, by 1843 the fundamental economic interests of the native Irishmen and the Mormon leader were in definite conflict. Brisk competition caused the Prophet to insist that the Saints purchase building lots from only the Church. 64 Although most recognized this as a sacrifice which would assist in liquidating Church debts, to William Law it sounded too much like opportunism and greed. In 1844 the Laws publicized their opposition to this "injunction" requiring the Saints to purchase from the Trustee-in-Trust. 65 And in later life William testily remembered that after their alienation he and his brother were effectively unable to sell their property. 66 Finally, William Law charged that Joseph Smith had introduced into the Church false doctrines (publicly) and corrupt practices (secretly), thereby perverting his "priestly authority" and "forfeiting the holy priesthood." 67 Specifically, the Irish convert manifested his repugnance to (1) "a plurality of Gods . . . . [i.e.] other gods as far above our God as he is above us [and] that he wrougut out his salvation in the flesh with fear and trembling the same as we do." 68

62The Laws bought did own a few lots in the lower part of town where their residences were located (blocks 129 and 149). There lots, together with fractional block 132 (where the present-day state) had been purchased from Joseph Smith. However, the great majority of their real property was farm ground located east of Nauvoo (500 acres) as well as a dozen full-sized buildings lots near the temple (Nauvoo Trustee Land Book, D. Church Archives).
64The Nauvoo Neighbor, 20 December 1843, reported that the Laws was engaged in the "business . . . when they move into Nauvoo, ... to consul President Joseph Smith, the trustee in trust, and purchase their lands of him. ... Extreme financial difficulties undoubtedly prompted the Laws to act promptly that "those who come here by my money and purchased without the church & council Must be out of it" ("Diary of Joseph Smith, kept by William Richards, 15 February 1843, Church Archives).
65Nauvoo Expositor, 7 June 1844, Resolution 16, p. 2.
66Laws interview, 30 March 1847, press. 63

68The Prophet began to take additional wives in Nauvoo in April 1841. By June 1844, when the Mormon leader was killed, as many as 150 men and women had received temple-related ordinances including the sanction, though secret, practice of plural marriage. 70 William's unwillingness in 1843 to accept the sub rosa practice of plural marriage especially worked a hardship on him. 71 As a member of the First Presidency of the Church, William Law had been selected by Joseph Smith to receive the "ancient order of the priesthood" (4 May 1842). The sacred nature of this order (the group was known by its members as the "quorum") was explicitly detailed upon reception, and the specially chosen initiates were placed under covenants of strict obedience. To receive the fulness of the "ancient order" was to be married eternally to one or more women and eventually be sealed up unto eternal life by the power of the priesthood. 72 The full implications of the order were not explained all at once, and plural marriage aspects do not appear to have been discussed in the meetings of the quorum. 73

William Law's initiation into the ancient order in 1842 did not coincide with his awareness of polygamy. 74 Yet, by the spring of 1843, the connection between the doctrine of sealing and a plurality of wives was becoming clearly evident to him. The First Presidency came to know that his file leader was involved in some kind of polygamous relationship. Moreover, based on their then-limited knowledge of the practice of plural wives of the William Law, Nauvoo Stake President William Marks, and Patriarch Hyrum
indicates that he later seriously entertained thoughts of entering into the practice. This intention may well have been related to his desire to be eternally sealed to Jane since Joseph had used the acceptance of plural marriage (in theory or in practice) as a test for eternal marriage sealings. At any rate, Hyrum Smith claimed that Joseph's refusal to administer the sealing blessings to the Laws had initiated the rupture between the two men:

"Laws wanted to be sealed [to his wife] & [Joseph] told him he was sealed—[which began the hard feeling]."

"Diary of William Law, 1 January 1844: "Fearful and terrible, my most dearest are having their scenes through which we have past, the last few months. Through our religious zeal we have received the teachings of man, more than in the wisdom of God; yes, (for a short moment) even in contradiction to the Commandments of the most high; but his spirit prevailed and before the fearful step was taken—\n
We saw and learned that truth and holiness, could alone bring us into the presence of God."

"Ethel, "Eternal Marriage." 1979. Although William's official introduction to plural marriage was from Hyrum Smith, he also said that Joseph had taught him the particular of the ancient practice. In a letter to his kin in the Kirkland Temple, "Joseph Smith and others had attempted to get him [William Law] into [plurality], and it was bad made him acquainted with many things about it."

"Diary of William Law, 12 June 1844. It is not clear whether or not William and Jane were ever sealed. Alexander Nathan, a close friend of the Prophet, said that "My Law used wife to be married to his wife for Emma; Mr. Joseph Smith said would inquire of the Lord. Answered no because Law was a adulterous person."

"Laws wanted to know why she could not be sealed to Mr Law Mr S said would not ruin their family by sealing her; some days after Mr Smith going toward his Office Mr Law stood in the door beckoned to him to enter the most did know where she belonged to her went across to locate ye please to walk in no one herself in the house. She drawing his Arms around if you would not see her and my husband Seal myself. You he laid away & pushing her Gently under giving her a detail & going out, when Mr Law who had been in his Office had he been accused of. She said no one be Joseph, he then demanded who had married [her] Mr Law and then told Joseph he had been to his home."

"Journal of Alexander Neiber, 24 May 1844, Church Archives. See also Hyrum Smith's statement in Nauvoo Neighbor, Feb. 1845, that the ">Joseph Smith had sealed Mrs. Law and her (Mason ofmering, 18 April 1844, Church Papers, Church Archives)."

"Joseph Smith asserted that a permanent marriage had been arranged by Joseph in 1843 when he attempted to take Jane Law as a "spiritual" wife (see Joseph H. Jackson, A Narrative of the Adven-

"Regardless, it is known that Joseph Smith did ask for other men's wives as part of an "Almaeone deal." And while "he did not want every man's wife as all for he," nevertheless, he was sealed for eternity to a few of them (Joseph C. Grattan, Joseph Smith, as reported in Nauvoo, Illinois, 1850, p. 371)."

"Ethel, "Eternal Marriage." 1995."

"Diary of William Law, 1 January 1844: "Fearful and terrible, my most dearest are having their scenes through which we have past, the last few months. Through our religious zeal we have received the teachings of man, more than in the wisdom of God; yes, (for a short moment) even in contradiction to the Commandments of the most high; but his spirit prevailed and before the fearful step was taken—\n
We saw and learned that truth and holiness, could alone bring us into the presence of God."

"Ethel, "Eternal Marriage." 1979. Although William's official introduction to plural marriage was from Hyrum Smith, he also said that Joseph had taught him the particular of the ancient practice. In a letter to his kin in the Kirkland Temple, "Joseph Smith and others had attempted to get him [William Law] into [plurality], and it was bad made him acquainted with many things about it."

"Diary of William Law, 12 June 1844. It is not clear whether or not William and Jane were ever sealed. Alexander Nathan, a close friend of the Prophet, said that "My Law wife to be married to his wife for Emma; Mr. Joseph Smith said would inquire of the Lord. Answered no because Law was a adulterous person."

"Laws wanted to know why she could not be sealed to Mr Law Mr S said would not ruin their family by sealing her; some days after Mr Smith going toward his Office Mr Law stood in the door beckoned to him to enter the most did know where she belonged to her went across to locate ye please to walk in no one herself in the house. She drawing his Arms around if you would not see her and my husband Seal myself. You he laid away & pushing her Gently under giving her a detail & going out, when Mr Law who had been in his Office had he been accused of. She said no one be Joseph, he then demanded who had married [her] Mr Law and then told Joseph he had been to his home."

"Journal of Alexander Neiber, 24 May 1844, Church Archives. See also Hyrum Smith's statement in Nauvoo Neighbor, Feb. 1845, that the ">Joseph Smith had sealed Mrs. Law and her (Mason ofmering, 18 April 1844, Church Papers, Church Archives)."

"Joseph Smith asserted that a permanent marriage had been arranged by Joseph in 1843 when he attempted to take Jane Law as a "spiritual" wife (see Joseph H. Jackson, A Narrative of the Adven-

"Regardless, it is known that Joseph Smith did ask for other men's wives as part of an "Almaeone deal." And while "he did not want every man's wife as all for he," nevertheless, he was sealed for eternity to a few of them (Joseph C. Grattan, Joseph Smith, as reported in Nauvoo, Illinois, 1850, p. 371)."

"Ethel, "Eternal Marriage." 1995."

Smith had decided to bring the matter before the Mormon populace so Joseph Smith would make a full disclosure of his private teachings and practices. However, it was about this time (26 May 1843) that Hyrum Smith (with the assistance of Brigham Young) became convinced that plural marriage had been divinely revealed to the Prophet. This unexpected turn of events estranged William from Hyrum as well as from Joseph. William claimed he was shocked when the particulars of the law of plurality were explained to him. The marriage practice was especially embarrassing to him as he had publicly ridiculed such a practice a year before. He had spoken against John C. Bennett's licentiousness in 1842, and being the Nauvoo populace that neither "spiritual wifery" nor anything like it was condoned by Church leaders. Law's official introduction to plural marriage came from the Church Patriarch (July—August 1843): "Hyrum gave it [the revelation] to me in his office, told me to take it home and read it, and then be careful with it, and bring it back again." "[Jane] and I were justified upside down by it," related William. "We did not know what to do."
AN INTERESTING TESTIMONY

By Elder Joseph W. McMurrin, one of the First Seven Presidents of the Seventy

Many testimonies concerning the teachings of Joseph Smith have been borne by those who were personally acquainted with the great modern Prophet. Those who can testify to having heard from the mouth of the Prophet the doctrines advanced by him are fast passing away. It will only be a few years when there will not be left a man upon the earth who can bear such a record. Many of the testimonies of those who were personally acquainted with the Prophet have been carefully preserved, and are now greatly prized. As time advances, these declarations will become more and more important.

The writer, by appointment from the Presidency of the Church, has for some weeks past been engaged in missionary work in the city of Boise, Idaho, where he came in contact with a gentleman, Mr. Richard S. Law, not connected with the Church, who has related a circumstance concerning the teachings of Joseph Smith that is of sufficient importance to be preserved. After listening to Mr. Law's statement, on a number of different occasions, it was incorporated in a letter by the writer of this article to a friend. Before mailing the letter, the contents were read to Mr. Law, in order that any mistakes might be corrected. The following is an extract from the communication referred to:

"Shortly after my arrival in Boise, I was introduced to a gentleman by the name of Richard S. Law. I was greatly surprised, also very much pleased, to learn that he is a son of William Law, who, in the early days of the Church, was a counselor to the Prophet Joseph Smith.

"Mr. Law is now seventy-seven years of age. He is, however, a well-preserved man, erect in bearing, active in his movements, and possessing a vitality that many a younger man lacks. He has a high forehead, blue eyes, and a very intelligent face. His manners are very pleasing, and, in conversation, he is agreeable and entertaining. I have enjoyed several conversations with the gentleman, during the few weeks that I have been located here. Among the various themes we have discussed, the topic in which I have been most interested has been plural marriage.

"Mr. Law was quite surprised to learn that Mr. Joseph Smith, the president of the Reorganized Church of Josephite Church, has often denied, and again recently denied, in an article in the North American Review, that his father, the Prophet Joseph, introduced the doctrine of plural marriage in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

"He is very pronounced in the statement that Emma Smith knew that her husband, the Prophet Joseph Smith, claimed to have received a revelation commanding him to teach the doctrine of plural marriage. He also asserts that this fact was well known to many of the people of Nauvoo.

MR. LAW'S TESTIMONY

"Mr. Law has related to us, and to others, the following circumstance:

"About the year 1842, he was present at an interview between his father and the Prophet Joseph. The topic under discussion was the doctrine of plural marriage. William Law, with his arms around the neck of the Prophet, was pleading with him to withdraw the doctrine of plural marriage, which he had at that time commenced to teach to some of the brethren. Mr. Law predicting that if Joseph would abandon the doctrine, 'Mormonism' would, in fifty or one hundred years, dominate the Christian world. Mr. Law pleaded for this with Joseph with tears streaming from his eyes. The Prophet was also in tears, but he informed the gentleman that he could not withdraw the doctrine, for God had commanded him to teach it, and condemnation would come upon him if he was not obedient to the commandment.

"During the discussion, Joseph was deeply affected. Mr. Richard S. Law says the interview was a most touching one, and was riveted upon his mind in a manner that has kept it fresh and distinct in his
but yesterday.

"Mr. Law also says, that he has no doubt that Joseph believed he had received the doctrine of plural marriage from the Lord. The Prophet's manner being exceedingly earnest, so much so, that Mr. Law was convinced that the Prophet was perfectly sincere in his declaration."

"The gentleman says his father believed that Joseph had become possessed of an evil spirit and had been deceived. He also claims that the foundation for his father's disaffection, and final withdrawal from the Church, was owing to the teaching of plural marriage to him by the Prophet Joseph Smith. He declares further that his mother was taught the same doctrine by the 'Mormon' Prophet."

"Mr. Law speaks in high terms of Joseph Smith, and says he was one of the most lovable men in his disposition and temperament he had ever met. While speaking with the utmost respect and affection of the Prophet Joseph as a man, he has no faith whatever in the Gospel as revealed through him in this dispensation."

"The matter herein presented was read to Mr. Law in the presence of two witnesses, and he acknowledged the same to be correct."

TESTIMONY OF THE WITNESSES

"We, the undersigned were present when Elder Kekurrin read the above statement to Mr. Richard S. Law. We heard him declare that the items therein mentioned are correct in every particular."

Melvin J. Ballard, Logan
L.E. Carter 326 Dooly Bldg.

The first witness was appointed by the Church as a missionary in that district, and resides in Logan, Utah.

The other witness, Mr. L.E. Carter, is a non-'Mormon', and became interested in Mr. Law's statement through the following circumstance: Mr. Carter has a friend, who is a member of the Reorganized Church, by the name of Edmund Ford, who had written him from Cutler, Iowa, a letter in which he attempted to prove that the Prophet Joseph never introduced the principle of plural marriage. Mr. Carter came to me and asked if I could answer the statements made by his friend. As Mr. Law was sitting in the hotel office, at the time, I introduced him to Mr. Carter, at the same time saying: "The testimony of a living witness to the fact that Joseph Smith did teach plural marriage, from one who has no connection with the 'Mormon' Church, will probably be more satisfactory than anything I could say. Mr. Law then repeated to Mr. Carter the substance of what I have written. Mr. Carter is fully convinced by the statement, made to him by Mr. Law, that Joseph Smith did introduce the doctrine of plural marriage in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."

The home of Mr. Richard S. Law is in San Francisco. He is interested in mining properties in Idaho, and has been in Boise for some weeks, waiting for the weather to moderate, in order that he may get into the mountains and commence work upon a mine recently purchased. He has been a practicing physician in former days, but for many years he has followed mining, and during these years he has traveled practically around the world.
The statement of the sons of Joseph is real and forcible to the rationally thinking portion of the Mormon Church. But while the force of the son’s argument is acknowledged, the teaching and practice of the father silence everything. When he secretly taught polygamy to be a divine institution, he was right, according to the ideas of the Saints; when he publicly denied it within the same hour, he was equally right in their estimation. Stripping this period of Mormonism of all the verbiage of the Tabernacle, banishing that faith which accepts all things, and looking at the facts of its history, Mormonism was at this time a fearful tumult of contradiction and very doubtful morality.*

One of the highest dignitaries of the Mormon Church at that period, William Law, the principal counselor of Joseph, writing to the Author, November 24, 1871, says:

"I have but a faint recollection of the certificate you speak of signed by a number of ladies; but I presume that most of them stated the truth, as they knew of no doctrine of the kind at that time, for it was denied most positively by Joseph and Hyrum, at even a later date. In 1843 I had not heard of such teaching. I believe now that John C. Bennett did know it, for he at that time was in the secret confidence of Joseph than perhaps any other man in the city. Bennett was a tool of Joseph for a time, but for some cause which I never know, Joseph cast him off. Perhaps there was jealousy in the matter."

"I think it was in 1843 that I first knew of the ‘plurality doctrine.’ I believe, however, it existed possibly as early as 1840. A great many, like myself, were considered not strong enough in the faith to swallow such a strong meat; so we were fed on milk, hoping that we should get...

* The evidence is so overwhelming that Joseph Smith introduced polygamy into the Mormon Church, and that the addition of more testimony seems superfluous; but if more were necessary, the distinct mention of polygamy in Governor Ford’s "History of Illinois" [pp. 323 and 327], written only a few years after the assassination, clearly demonstrates that polygamy did not originate, as it is asserted, with Brigham Young after he left Illinois.

It is very probable that the Reorganized Church of Latter-Day Saints,* over which Joseph Smith, junior, presides, will divide the discussion of polygamy, and tacitly, if not explicitly admitted, that the elder Joseph went astray in affairs of love. Wm. Marks, counselor to Joseph Smith, the son, knows full well that Joseph Smith, the father, was a polygamist. It is said that Joseph concealed to Marks, only a few days before his death, that polygamy was an error, authorized him to preach against it, and instanced that he himself would make confession of the error, and forfeit its further sanction. This he probably would have done had he lived.

The news of the "false and corrupt doctrine," the specious, is as follows:"

"The expression of the 'false and corrupt doctrine,' our strength after a time, and be able to appreciate the good gifts heaven has bestowed on you."

"The report of the 'false and corrupt doctrine.' Their mother knew all about it, and she knows, and she told it to her at first. Her assent, or the opposition of others, availed nothing. I begged of Joseph, and such as a man might plead for the loss of his best friend, to stop all these evils, and save the Church from ruin; but he seemed determined to rush on to utter destruction, and carry all with him that he could; and thus he met his doom.

In the "Times and Seasons," Vol. IV., p. 143, March 13th, 1843, appears the following:

"We are charged with advocating a plurality of wives, and common property. Now this is as false as the many other ridiculous charges which are brought against us. No sect has a greater reverence for the laws of matrimony or the rights of private property; and we do what others do not, we practice what we preach."

Four months after the date the revelation was given, and on February 1st of the following year, it is denied again, and an elder is excommunicated for teaching the "false and corrupt doctrine.""

As we have lately been credibly informed that an elder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, by the name of Hyrum Brown, has been preaching polygamy and other false and corrupt doctrines, in the county of Lapeer, State of Michigan, this is to notify him, and the Church in general, that he has been cut off from the Church for his infidelity; and he is further notified to appear at the special conference on the 6th of April next, to make answer to these charges.

(Signed) Jospeh Smith, Jr., and Hyrum Smith,

"Presidents of said Church."

A little more than three months before his death, Hyrum published the following letter:

"To the brethren of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, living on China Creek, in Hancock county, Greeting: Whereas Brother Richard Hewitt has called on me to-day to know my views concerning some doctrines that are preached in your place, and states to me that some of your elders say, that a man having a certain priesthood may have as many wives as he pleases, and that doctrine is taught here, I say unto you, that such man teaches false doctrines, for there is no such doctrine taught here, neither is there any such thing practiced here."

UNSECTARIAN TEACHING.

The Contention About It Going on in Ireland.

UNORDINARY OBLIGATIONS OF THE PRIESTS.

The Want the Spirituals.

Another Edition of the Public School Books is Said to Be in Preparation for the People—A Continuation of the Subject of Missions.

A Slave college has been in operation for some time, and has been widely publicized in Ireland. The government, after much discussion, has concluded to take up the question of the college, and to make it an object of the utmost importance. The college was opened in 1867, and has since then been in operation. It is situated in the county of Kilkenny, and is under the charge of the Rev. Mr. Smith. The college is supported by the government, and is intended for the education of the poor and the neglected. The government has been much pleased with the result of the college, and has decided to continue it for another year. The college is now in a flourishing condition, and is making good progress. The government is taking great interest in the college, and is doing all in its power to assist it.
BLOOD ATONEMENT AND THE

and it became the talk of the town that Joseph had made a proposition to Nancy Rigdon to become his wife, and that she refused him. A few days after the occurrence Joseph Smith came to my father's house and talked the matter over with the family, my sister, Mrs. Athalia Robinson also being present, who is now alive. The feelings manifested by our family on this occasion were anything but brotherly or sisterly, more especially on the part of Nancy, as she felt that she had been insulted. A day or two later Joseph Smith returned to my father's house, when matters were satisfactorily adjusted between them, and there the matter ended. After that Joseph Smith sent my father to Pittsburgh, Pa., to take charge of a little church that was there, and Ebenezer Robinson, who was then the Church printer, or at least had been such, as he was the printer of the paper in Kirtland, Ohio, and a printer by trade, was to go with him to print a paper there, and nine days before Joseph Smith was shot at Carthage we started, reaching Pittsburgh the day before he was killed.

Defendent further says: I have in my possession a paper called the Nauvoo Expositor, bearing date, Nauvoo, Illinois, Friday, June 7th, 1844, which said paper's printing plant was destroyed by the City Council at Nauvoo a night or two after that issue. There never was but one issue of this paper. Joseph Smith the Prophet was then Mayor of the City of Nauvoo. In the afternoon of the day on which the printing plant was destroyed, Henry Phelps, a son of W. W. Phelps, came down Main Street selling this paper, the Nauvoo Expositor, and everybody who could raise five cents bought a copy. In that paper the three following affidavits appeared, which I reproduce herewith.

AFFIDAVITS

I hereby certify that Hyrum Smith did (in his office) read to me a certain written document which he said was a revelation from God, He said that he was with Joseph when it was received. He afterwards gave me that document to read and I took it to my house and read it and showed it to my wife and returned it the next day. The revelation (so called) authorized certain men to have more wives than one at a time in this world and in the world to come. It said this was the law, and commanded Joseph to enter into the law. And also that he should administer to others. Several other items were in the revelation, supporting the above doctrines.

ORIGIN OF PLURAL MARRIAGE

State of Illinois.

Hancock County.

I, Robert D. Foster, certify that the above certificate was sworn to before me as true in substance, this fourth day of May, A.D. 1844.

Robert D. Foster, J. P.

I certify that I read the revelation referred to in the above affidavit of my husband. It sustained in strong terms the doctrine of more wives than one at a time in this world and in the next. It authorized men to have to the number of ten, and set forth that those women who would not allow their husbands to have more wives than one should be under condemnation before God.

Jane Law.

Sworn and subscribed before me this 14th day of May, A.D. 1846.

Robert D. Foster, J. P.

To all whom it may concern:

Forasmuch as the public mind has been much agitated by a course of procedure in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by a number of persons declaring against certain doctrines and practices therein (among whom I am one) it is but meet that I should give my reasons at least in part as a cause that hath led me to declare myself. In the latter part of the summer of 1844, the Patriarch Hyrum Smith did in the High Council, of which I was a member, introduce what he said was a revelation given through the Prophet, that he said Hyrum Smith did essay to read the said revelation in the said council; that according to his reading there was contained the following doctrines: 1st. The sealing up of persons to eternal life, against all sin save that of shedding innocent blood or of consenting thereto; 2nd. The doctrine of plurality of wives or marrying virgins; that David and Solomon had many wives, yet in this they sinned not, save in the matter of Utah. This revelation with others, evidence that the aforesaid heresies were taught and practiced in the Church, determined me to leave the office of first counselor to the President of the Church at Nauvoo, insomuch as I dared not teach or administer such laws. And further deponent saith not.

Austin Cowles.

State of Illinois.

Hancock County.

To all whom it may concern: I hereby certify that the above certificate was sworn and subscribed before me, this fourth day of May, A.D. 1846.

Robert D. Foster, J. P.

John W. Bigelon.

Sworn to before me this 18th day of July, 1905.

[Seal.] James Jack, Notary Public.
Jan 18 ordainet under the hands of Elder W. Richards & Elder John Taylor to be one of the Seventy=
[looks like 9br but probably is Fbr] [to] 11th the letter from my parents.
[1845]
[May 24 top stone of the Temple laid. X X
[At this point several pages of accounting occur and some writing in Hebrew which are not included in this text. They are written in both directions on the page.]
May 24 called at J: Smith 10 ocllk found [and cannot decipher the rest of the word] took dinner read German After Dinner met the Sax & Fox Indians Dance their Waar Danz = 24 called at Br J.S met Mr Ronnie=
Br Joseph tol: us the first call he had a Revival Meeting his mother
Br & Sisters got Religion. he wanted to get Religion too wanted to feel & [tho] shout like the Rest but could feel nothing opened his Bible of the first Passage that struck him was if any man lack wisdom let him ask of God who giveth to all men liberality & upbraidet not went into the Wood to pray kneelt himself down his tongue was closet.
cleavet to his roof [could lined out] utter not a word. Felt easier after awhile saw a fire towards heaven come near & nearer saw a personage in the fire light complexion blue eyes a piece of white cloth drawn over his shoulders his right arm bear after a while a other person came to the side of the first Mr Smith then asked must I join the Methodist Church = No = They are not my People. they have gone astray there is none that doeth good is no one. but this is my Beloved Son harken ye him. the fire drew nigher Rested upon the tree enveloped him [wm] comforted [indeavour=ed] to arise but felt uncomen feeble = got into the house told the Methodist priest. said this was
not a age for God to Reveal himself in Vision Revelation has ceased with the New Testament. Told about Mr Wm Law = wisht to be Married to his Wife for Eternity. Mr Smith Said would Inquire of the Lord. Answered no because Law was a Adulterous person. Mrs Law wandet to know why she could not be Married to Mr Law Mr S said would not wound her feelings by telling her. some Days after Mr Smith going towards his Office Mrs Law stood in the door beckoned to him more the once did not know whether she beckoned to him went across to Inquire Yes please to walk in no one but herself in the house, she drawing her Arms around him if you wont seal me to my husband Seal myself unto you. he Said stand away & pushing her Gently aside giving her a denial & going out. when Mr Law came home he Inquired who had been in his Absence, she said no one but Br Joseph, he then demandet what passed Mrs L then told Joseph wandet her to Married to him-----Read German went to Dinner after Dinner read again while 3 ock--

May 25 being engaged all day

26 Sunday saw him in the Morning Preachet about false Br
27 went to Carthage for trial
28 Saw Mr Smith at 9 ock Read while Dinner Dinet & then went up in the buggy to the Temple

June 2 saw Mr S all forenoon wife sick read German all forenoon
3 engaged city council
4 Read all forenoon
7 Read
8 city council Mr Pek stated Jacson wanted him to engage in the Bogus Bussness Refused. Joseph Smith would be the last man he would name it to

Sunday 9 Read all forenoon took Dinner with J