search notes identify “Agness” as Agnes Smith, the Widow of Don Carlos Smith, whom, John C. Bennett stated was married to Joseph by Brigham.

I am inclined to accept not only the decryption and acronym, but suggest the whole might be expanded to read: “I, Brigham Young, was taken into the lodge room, where Joseph Smith was wedded and sealed to Agnes Coolbith Smith.”

Joseph Smith’s history records the following on this day: “ Truly this is a day of days . . . in which the God of heaven has begun to restore the ancient order of His kingdom.” . . .

This sealing to Agnes is the conceivable explanation for this otherwise cryptic entry.

This is the first contemporary record of a sealing for time and the first proxy sealing of this dispensation. This is Joseph’s sixth marriage, the first of many to take place in the Lodge Room with Brigham Young officiating as the sealer. This sealing takes place six months after the death of Don Carlos Smith.

On his deathbed Don Carlos asked Joseph to marry Agnes. Agnes was the first widow Joseph’s brother, this would be a strict Old Testament, Levirate marriage in harmony with the scripture found in Matthew 22:24. If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. Brigham Young sealed Agnes to Joseph Smith for time; after which Joseph Smith stood as proxy for his dead brother Don Carlos Smith when Brigham Young sealed Agnes to Don Carlos for eternity.

The sealing was a foreshadowing of what would occur five months later in the same room. When Joseph Smith would introduce the endowment.

This entry sets the pattern for (1) the screenings of husband and wives; and (2) the concealing of screenings and plural marriages in a cipher or code. William Clayton, Willard Richards, Erastus Snow, Wilford Woodruff and others occasionally encrypted their entries in some form of Taylor shorthand.

BOOK NOTICES

DOUG CAHOON


