Transformation of Charisma in the Mormon Church:
A History of the Office of Presiding Patriarch,
1833-1979.

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in History.

by

Irene May Bates

1991
as "Second Elder." And the only instance of Hyrum being overruled by Joseph was in the case of plural marriage. As late as May 1843 Hyrum was not privy to any official, if secret, disclosures about plural marriage. When he became aware of rumors about the practice he preached against it by stating, "If an angel from heaven should come and preach such doctrine [you] would be sure to see his cloven foot and cloud of blackness over his head." The Prophet was disturbed by Hyrum's remarks and the following Sunday he issued a rebuttal, referring to the doctrine—however obliquely—in public for the first time. Hyrum was troubled and vowed to trap Brigham Young by confronting him with his own involvement. Instead, Brigham Young convinced Hyrum that it was indeed a revelation from God. Hyrum "went to Joseph and told him what he had learned, and renewed his covenant with Joseph, and they went heart and hand together while they lived. .." And it was Hyrum who insisted that the revelation on eternal and plural marriage be put in writing. Yet when Hyrum took it upon

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47 Ehat, p.59. Hyrum had two wives sealed to him in August, 1843, Catherine P. Smith and Mercy Thompson. See Danel Bachman, "Mormon Plural Marriages Before the Death of Joseph Smith." M.A. Thesis (Purdue University, 1975).

48 Ehat, p.71. As late as May 24, 1845, in The Prophet, a Mormon newspaper in New York, church leaders were issuing public denials of the practice of polygamy.
emerge later.

Wilford Woodruff wrote to Brigham Young in October, 1844, complaining that William, along with others on a mission in the East, had been "crowding their spiritual wife claims... until some of the strongest pillars were shaking..."\(^{82}\) (William Smith and George Adams had been advocating plural marriage indiscriminately during their stay in the East, and it had caused some dissaffection among the Saints). Yet appreciation was expressed also. Parley P. Pratt, just three months later in New York, wrote in the January 14, 1845 issue of The Prophet, "I highly approve of the course pursued by Elder Wm. Smith and the presiding officers in general in this region... they have preserved the church in union by the aid of the Spirit of God."\(^{83}\) Almost nine months later Parley would object to William being sustained as Patriarch because of his conduct in the East. One can only conjecture about the basis for the change in Parley P. Pratt's publicly-stated rosy view of William's activities there.

Just two weeks lack of delicacy typical of their environment.

\(^{82}\) Wilford Woodruff to Brigham Young, Boston, 9 and 14 October, 1844, Manuscript History of the Church, LDS Church Archives. Woodruff includes George Adams and Samuel Brannan in his complaint. Brannan had preferred a charge of slander against Elder John Hardy in Boston, for saying they had been "engaged in the spiritual wife business." Woodruff advised them to let the matter alone. The secrecy surrounding the practice of plural marriage led to many such problems.

prior to this editorial, Pratt had announced in The Prophet that the Church was to be reorganized into districts under the direction of the Twelve when "every elder etc. will be accountable for doctrine, labors and conduct." It would seem that efforts were being made to control any kind of independent action, seeking to accomplish conformity by introducing general institutional rules. Whether the reorganization was in any way related to William, though, can only be a matter for speculation.

It becomes quite clear, however, that William's outspokenness, his recalcitrance, his zealously, his stated conviction that the Smiths constituted the "royal family" of Mormonism, his insistence that the Church Patriarch be independent of hierarchical control, and his claim to visionary experiences, all conspired to alert Brigham Young and the

84 Parley P. Pratt, The Prophet, January 4, 1845. New York Public Library Newspaper Collection. This may be a veiled reference to William performing plural marriages without authorization. Earlier, The Warsaw Signal, May 19, 1844, reported on the trial of John Hardy in Boston wherein it was stated that William and George Adams "had preached the spiritual wife system and boldly proclaimed that a multiplicity of wives was a fact of their religion." Stanley Snow Ivins Notebook, No.1, New York Public Library. Yet Willard Richards wrote in a letter to Brigham Young from Nauvoo, "I heard Joseph tell Hyrum to let Adams alone, let Adams go back there and make all things right. That Parley has misapprehended some things and acted in the matter rather injudiciously." June 30, 1844, Manuscript History of the Church, LDS Archives.

85 William voiced his approval of Pratt's circular in a letter to The Prophet reproduced in the Times and Seasons, 6 (February 15, 1845):814. He said "the church has had to go through an entire revolution of things and those away from Nauvoo have had to guess their way... and if errors have been committed they have been of the head and not of the heart."
monogamous relationships, but there is no mention of the several plural wives whose names appear in other early documents. In 1883 he wrote William Smith on Mormonism at Lamoni, Iowa, in which he referred to plural marriage as a heresy and against the law of God. But this was published by the Reorganized Church, the members of which refused to concede Joseph Smith's involvement in the practice of polygamy. In this publication, however, William testified to the divine calling of his brother the Prophet. And he continued to preach the truthfulness of the restoration until he died at Osterdock, Iowa, in 1893.

In the meantime much had happened to the group that had rejected William Smith. For two years following his 1845 excommunication the Church was without both President and Patriarch. The Twelve, led by Brigham Young, ran the

128 In the High Council trial of John Bennett, May 25, 1842, Catherine Warren made allegations against William's propositions of "unlawful connexion." Nauvoo Miscellaneous Papers, LDS Church Archives. It is difficult to find documentation for William's several plural marriages. But the Abstract of the Temple Lot Suit at Lamoni, Iowa, includes depositions by Priscilla M. Staines and Mary Ann West, both of whom claim to have entered into plural marriage with William in Nauvoo. Mary Ann West mentions two other women, Mary Jones and Priscilla Morgridge, who were married to him as plural wives. Special Collections, University of Utah. He married Mary Jane Rollins on June 22, 1845, exactly one month after the death of his first wife, Caroline Grant. They were divorced two years later. He subsequently married Roxey Ann Grant, Eliza Sanborn, and Rosanna Surprise.

129 William Smith on Mormonism: This book contains a true account of the ORIGIN OF THE BOOK OF MORMON, a sketch of the History, Experience, and Ministry of Elder William Smith. The Story of the Golden Plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated. An Account of the Angel's Visit to Joseph Smith, by which means the Ancient Nephite Records were found and by him Translated... (Lamoni, Iowa: 1883).
H. Michael Marquardt

From: "Bill Shepard" <shep@speeddial.net>
To: "Irene M. Bailes" <irenem&m456@yahoo.com>
Cc: "H. Michael Marquardt"
Sent: Monday, December 11, 2000 5:25 PM
Subject: More on William Smith.

From Nauvoo. -- We learn that Patriarch Bill Smith has got into difficulty with his wife on account of his being too intimate with an English girl that lives in his family, and it is reported that his wife has left him:

On last Sunday week, Bill, from the stand, avowed that the Spiritual Wife System was taught in Nauvoo secretly -- that he taught and practised it, and he was not in favor of making any secret of the matter. He said that it was a common thing amongst the leaders and he for one was not ashamed of it. This bold declaration created quite a sensation amongst the Saints and Bill is in hot water in consequence of it. [Warsaw Signal, Vol. 2, No. 27 (3 September 1845): 2.]

12/12/00
H. Michael Marquardt

From:  "Bill Shepard" <shep@speedial.net>
To:    "Irene M. Bates" <irenemb456@yahoo.com>
Cc:    "H. Michael Marquardt"
Sent:  Tuesday, December 12, 2000 3:48 PM
Subject:  Another William Smith item.

ADAMS AND BRANNAN

The Mormons have disfellowshipped Elders Brannon and J. G. Adams. These scamps had carried the spiritual wife system to such lengths, and were so open and barefaced in their acts of seduction that the church was obliged to cut them off to save itself from ruin. Their crime was not the practice of the system, but the letting out of the secret. Brannon and Adams are also accused of pocketing too much of the church funds.

Bill Smith is about on a par with Brannon and Adams, and is guilty of all that can be laid to them. Why don't the Twelve cut him off?

Brannon is or was editor of the New York Prophet.
["ADAMS AND BRANNON!" Warsaw Signal, Vol. 2, No. 9 (30 April 1845): 2.]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual Record</th>
<th>FamilySearch™ Pedigree Resource File</th>
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<tr>
<td>William B. SMITH</td>
<td>Compact Disc #13 Pin #262955 (AFN: 2ZZD-PN)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Event(s):**

| Birth: 13 Mar 1811 | Place: Royalton, Windsor, Vermont |
| Death: 13 Nov 1893 | Place: Osterdock, Clayton, Iowa |
| Burial: 15 Nov 1893 | Place: Osterdock, Clayton, Iowa |

**Parents:**

| Father: Joseph Smith Senior | Disc #13 Pin #2629 |
| Mother: Lucy MACK | Disc #13 Pin #262948 |

**Marriage(s):**

| Spouse: Caroline Amelia GRANT | Disc #13 Pin #263146 |
| Marriage: 14 Feb 1833 | Place: Kirtland, Lake, Ohio |

| Spouse: Mary Ann WEST | Disc #13 Pin #263146 |
| Marriage: abt 26 Mar 1845 | Place: Nauvoo, Hancock, Illinois |

| Spouse: Mary Jane ROLLINS RAWLINGS | Disc #13 Pin #262993 |
| Marriage: 22 Jun 1845 | Place: Nauvoo, Hancock, Illinois |

| Spouse: Mary JONES | Disc #13 Pin #263147 |
| Marriage: abt Jul 1845 | Place: Nauvoo, Hancock, Illinois |

| Spouse: Priscilla MORGRIDGE Temple Sealing | Disc #13 Pin #263148 |
| Marriage: abt Aug 1845 | Place: Nauvoo, Hancock, Illinois |

| Spouse: Sarah Ann LIBBY Temple Sealing | Disc #13 Pin #263149 |
| Marriage: 20 Nov 1845 | Place: Nauvoo, Hancock, Illinois |

| Spouse: Hannah Maria LIBBY | Disc #13 Pin #263150 |
| Marriage: 26 Jan 1846 | Place: Nauvoo, Hancock, Illinois |

| Spouse: Rhoda ALKIRE | Disc #13 Pin #262966 |
| Marriage: 3 Dec 1846 | Place: Petersburg, Menard, Illinois |

| Spouse: Roxalana Ann or Roxie GRANT | Disc #13 Pin #262973 |
| Marriage: 18 May 1847 | Place: Altonia, Knox, Illinois |

| Spouse: Eliza Elsa Jane SANBORN | Disc #13 Pin #262967 |
| Marriage: 12 Nov 1857 | Place: Kirtland, Lake, Ohio |

| Spouse: Rosella GOYETTE | Disc #13 Pin #262972 |
| Marriage: 21 Dec 1889 | Place: Clinton, Clinton, Iowa |
Other Marriage Event(s):

Divorce: Place:
Divorce: Place:
Divorce: Place:
Divorce: Place:
Divorce: Place:
Divorce: Place:
Divorce: Place:
Divorce: Place:
Divorce: Place:
Divorce: Place:

Notes and Sources:
Notes: Available on CD-ROM Disc# 13
Sources: None

Submitter:
Harry D GAILEY
1216 - 19 1/2 Ave Rock Island, IL 61201

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man that says to the contrary is a damd liar . . . ." 124

Later, William Smith made the statement, in reference to this event, that he fled Nauvoo to save his life, claiming inhuman treatment, libel, other afflictions and annoyances; but primarily that he was compelled to sit in silence in a meeting while he was abused and humiliated in the presence of sixty armed men so that he had no recourse but to flee at the first opportunity. 125 He made essentially the same charges in 1855 when he wrote Brigham Young. 126

Another statement in connection with the police episode appears in William's letter of June 25, 1845, when he referred to things which precipitated the problem he said, "some have turned against me because I had the audacity to get married." 127 It may be proper at this point in discussing what William meant in his remark about marriage to suggest some possibilities. A Mary Ann West testified in the Temple Lot Case that she had married William Smith in Nauvoo as a plural wife with Brigham Young performing the

124 Letter of William Smith to Brigham Young, Nauvoo, June 25, 1845, located in the Historical Department of the Church.


126 Letter of William Smith, to Brigham Young, Springfield, May 8, 1855, located in Historical Department of the Church.

127 Letter of William Smith to Brigham Young, Nauvoo, Illinois, June 25, 1845, located in Historical Department of the Church.
ceremony, but she was uncertain of the marriage date. She variously suggested 1843, 1844, and that it was after his first wife died, which would have put it in 1845. She further testified that she lived with William for a very short time, but that during that time she witnessed his marriage to one Mary Jones with Brigham Young performing that ceremony also, and that William took "a young girl by the name of Priscilla Morgridge" in marriage afterwards.

L. O. Littlefield wrote Wilford Woodruff about Mary Ann West, identifying her as Mary Ann Covington, who had worked in the Times and Seasons office in Nauvoo. He said, "I was knowing, then, to the fact, from almost general report, that she was a plural wife of William Smith." Littlefield also said, "I heard it often spoken of in Nauvoo that Priscilla Mogrege was also another of the plural wives of William Smith."

Joseph Fielding Smith declared that a Priscilla M. Smith was a plural wife of William who lived in Utah, and two other plural wives of his also lived in Utah, their names being Sarah Libby and Hannah Libby. No marriage dates were


129 Ibid. The writer is unaware whether "Morgridge" or "Mogrege" is the correct spelling of the name.

130 Letter of L. O. Littlefield to Wilford Woodruff, Smithfield, Utah, March 21, 1892, located in the Historical Department of the Church.
supplied with these names.\textsuperscript{131}

Mary Audentia Smith Anderson listed an "Ida,_____
who was living in 1921, aged about 90 years," as a wife of
William, with no date of marriage.\textsuperscript{132}

This totals six women who, according to claims made,
could possibly have been married to William prior to his
first wife's demise May 22, 1845, or after that date and
before or after August 8, 1845. William subsequently
married four more women whose marriage dates can be given
or approximated. It will be shown that he married four
different women than those already mentioned on August 8,
1845, May 19, 1847, sometime in the 1850's and after 1889.
These last four wives, plus the six referred to and his first
wife, Caroline, make a grand total of eleven wives over a
period of about fifty-six years.

It is not to be inferred that William was married
to all the aforementioned women at the same time. It is
apparent that some of these women died before he married
others or that some left him. In the case of Mary Ann West
she testified that William left her, saying, "William B.
Smith divorced himself from me. I considered he did that
when he went away East."\textsuperscript{133}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{131}Joseph Fielding Smith, Blood Atonement and the
Origin of Plural Marriage (Salt Lake City: Deseret News
\item \textsuperscript{132}Mary Audentia Smith Anderson, Ancestry and Pos-
ternity of Joseph Smith and Emma Hale (Independence: Herald
\item \textsuperscript{133}Abstract, Temple Lot Case, op. cit., II, 380.
\end{itemize}
It is to be assumed that he was a polygamist, however, his denial in the Temple Lot Case notwithstanding.\textsuperscript{134} This becomes evident from the numerous statements cited. In a letter to his nephew, Joseph Smith III, in later years, after decrying polygamy and telling him that Young, Kimball, Tailor [sic], Snow, and Richards were practicing polygamy in Nauvoo, affirming that Joseph had taught it, etc., he said, "I well nigh became a convert to the doctrine."\textsuperscript{135}

Joseph Smith III said Lyman Wight's Texas colony went to pieces because of the introduction of polygamy and William's effort to establish a church at Binghampton, Illinois, failed "for a somewhat similar reason."\textsuperscript{136}

It is possible some of the charges of adultery levied against William by his fellow Strangites stemmed from his practice of polygamy before Strang himself openly advocated it.\textsuperscript{137}

\textsuperscript{134}Ibid., I, 98. William here states only that he did not "teach" or "preach" polygamy.

\textsuperscript{135}Letter of William Smith to Joseph Smith III, n.p., N.D., located in the Historian's Library, Auditorium, of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Independence, Missouri.
