

POST-1890 PLURAL MARRIAGE IN MEXICO
BETWEEN 1890 AND 1904

by

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marriages were performed primarily among those that had received their endowments while still in Nauvoo.

After the official announcement of the principle of plural marriage in August of 1852 and after the endowment house was built, the plural marriages that occurred between 1855 and 1890 were performed either in the endowment house or one of the temples that were finished and dedicated by that year. There were some plural marriages performed in the latter 1880's that did not occur in either the endowment house or one of the temples because of the persecution of the federal marshalls, such as the marriage that Alexander F. McDonald performed in the latter 1880's, but these were few and far between.⁷ This persecution occurred because of the opposition of the people in the United States to the Mormon people practicing plural marriage, because of the opposition and resistance of the Mormons to the laws passed against the Mormons that practiced the principle on the basis that the Edmund Law and the Edmund-Tucker Law were both unconstitutional because they, as a people, felt that these laws infringed upon their rights pertaining to the freedom of religion as guaranteed by the Bill of Rights. Some of the polygamists of Utah moved to Mexico prior to the time that the Manifesto was issued because of persecution.

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The principle of plural marriage was known of as early as 1831,¹ and in 1835 Joseph Smith had a plural wife by the name of Fannie Alger;² Jared Carter built another house with the intention of putting a plural wife in it, but Joseph Smith would not permit it.³ The subject was not spoken of in public during the Kirtland period or the Missouri period because of the people not being prepared for the teaching of the principle. During the Nauvoo Period, though, Joseph Smith began teaching the principle on an individual basis and taught it to Benjamin F. Johnson in the woods not far from his home.⁴ to members of the 12 apostles in the same manner as they returned from their various missions.⁵ There were some plural marriages performed outside of a temple in Nauvoo, most being to the apostles, Joseph Smith and a few select others. The number of plural marriages increased after the Nauvoo Temple was completed and some were performed in the out of doors between the time of the exodus from Nauvoo and the time that the endowment house was built and dedicated on 5 May 1855, but these plural

The basic feeling of the members of the Quorum of the Twelve in the early 1890's and into the latter 1890's is portrayed in many of the journal entries of Abraham H.

Cannon:

Oct 1st, 1890, "John Henry Smith: I cannot feel to say that the manifesto is quite right or wrong I cannot consent to cease living with my wives unless I am imprisoned."¹¹ And on Sept. 26th, 1890 the following entry appears: "There is considerable comment and fault-finding among some of the Saints because of a manifesto which Pres. Woodruff issued on the 24th inst., in reply to a statement made by the Utah commission that plural marriages were still authorized and celebrated, and that within the past year some 40 or more had been performed. Pres. W. denied this allegation, and said that such marriages were forbidden by the Church in this Territory, and he called upon the Saints to submit to the laws of the land in this particular. In his declaration, however, there is no renunciation of principle or abandonment of families recommended, as some fault finders make it to appear."¹²

Though the Church, in word, had to say public that a man had to choose one wife of all of his plural wives and live with that one wife only and not have any contact with