

APPENDIX C

THE PLURAL WIVES OF JOSEPH SMITH

IN 1887 the Utah Church historian, Andrew Jenson, drawing upon the enormous file of secret manuscript material in the church library in Salt Lake City, compiled a list of twenty-seven wives of Joseph Smith. I have added to this list another twenty-one and have collected much additional material about Jenson's twenty-seven. The Genealogical Archives in Salt Lake City and the files of the *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine* were consulted to make the demographic data as accurate as possible.

One source of information for wives other than those listed by Jenson was the Nauvoo Temple Record for 1846. This lists thirty women who were sealed to the prophet "for eternity" and to various other men "for time." Since it is clear from other sources that twenty-two of the thirty women had been married to the prophet during his lifetime, it can be assumed that the remaining eight had also been.

These "proxy sealings," as they were called, were simply a repetition or solemnization of an earlier ceremony. It was felt that only within the temple could marriages "for eternity" truly be sanctified, but the temple had not been completed in Joseph Smith's lifetime.

The Nauvoo Temple Record list does not represent all of Joseph's wives, since several — like Nancy Marinda Hyde and Patty Bartlett Sessions — waited until the building of a temple in Utah before having their marriages to the prophet again solemnized. Others apparently never went through a second ceremony.

In later years in Utah, scores of women were sealed to Joseph Smith "for eternity" who had had no association whatever with him during his lifetime. No attempt has been made to include them here.

This list is probably not complete and includes several whose

relationship to Joseph is admittedly little more than presumptive. The thorough documentation provided below is necessitated by the stand of the Reorganized Church, which has always held the evidence that Joseph Smith ever practiced or sanctioned polygamy to be inconclusive. The first thirty-six wives are arranged in the approximate chronological order of their marriages to the prophet, and the remainder are listed alphabetically.

1. FANNIE ALGER

This was the first woman other than Emma Hale whose name was linked with Joseph Smith. The most detailed account of her is in an unpublished letter written to George S. Gibbs in 1903 by Benjamin F. Johnson, patriarch in the Utah Church and brother of two of Joseph's wives. Johnson was then eighty-five. It says in part:

In 1835, at Kirtland, I learned from my sister's husband, Lyman R. Sherman, who was close to the Prophet, and received it from him, "that the ancient order of Plural Marriage was again to be practiced by the Church." This, at the time did not impress my mind deeply, although there lived then with his family (the Prophet's) a neighbor's daughter, Fannie Alger, a very nice and comely young woman about my own age [Johnson was then seventeen], toward whom not only myself, but everyone, seemed partial, for the amiability of her character; and it was whispered even then that Joseph loved her. . . . And there was some trouble with Oliver Cowdery, and whisper said it was relating to a girl then living in his (the Prophet's) family; and I was afterwards told by Warren Parrish, that he himself and Oliver Cowdery did know that Joseph had Fannie Alger as wife, for they were spied upon and found together. . . .

Soon after the Prophet's flight in the winter of 1837 and 1838, the Alger family left for the West, and stopping in Indiana for a time Fannie soon moved to one of the cities there, and although she never left the state, she did not turn from the Church nor from her friendship for the Prophet while she lived. . . . Without doubt in my mind, Fannie Alger was, at Kirtland, the Prophet's first plural wife. . . . Fannie Alger, when asked by her brother and others, even after the Prophet's death, regarding her relations to him, replied: "That is all a matter of my own, and I have nothing to communicate." . . . her brother John, who resided and died in Southern Utah, to my knowledge, was by President Kimball in the temple at St. George introduced as the "brother of the Prophet Joseph's first plural wife."

A letter from Oliver Cowdery to his brother Warren A. Cowdery, dated Far West, Missouri, January 21, 1838, neatly corroborates the Johnson letter: "When he [Joseph Smith] was there we had some conversation in which in every instance I did not fail to affirm that what I had said was strictly true. A dirty, nasty, filthy affair of his and Fanny Alger's was talked over in which I strictly declared that I had never deserted from the truth in the matter, and as I supposed was admitted by himself." *

Andrew Jenson listed Fannie Alger as "one of the first" of Joseph's wives and stated that after his death she "married again in Indiana, and became the mother of a large family." † C. G. Webb, Joseph's grammar teacher in Kirtland, told W. Wyl in the 1880's that "Joseph's dissolute life began already in the first times of the church, in Kirtland. He was sealed there secretly to Fanny Alger. Emma was furious, and drove the girl, who was unable to conceal the consequences of her celestial relation with the prophet, out of her house." ‡

Fanny Brewer, who had gone to Kirtland in the spring of 1837, signed an affidavit in Boston on September 13, 1842 that said in part: "There was much excitement against the prophet on another account, an unlawful intercourse between himself and a young orphan girl residing in his family, and under his protection!" §

2. LUCINDA PENDLETON MORGAN HARRIS, wife of George W. Harris

Lucinda Harris, described by John C. Bennett in his *History of the Saints* as "a very pretty and intelligent woman," was born on September 27, 1801 in Virginia, a daughter of Joseph Pendleton. Her first husband was the famous anti-Masonic martyr William Morgan. Her second marriage, to George Washington Harris, had been noted in the *Arkansas Gazette* of January 12, 1831, which mistakenly described her new husband as a Mason. Andrew Jenson listed her as "one of the first" of the prophet's wives, and it seems likely that Joseph married her in

* This letter is in the Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

† *Historical Record*, Vols. V-VIII, pp. 233, 942.

‡ *Mormon Portraits*, p. 57.

§ John C. Bennett: *History of the Saints*, pp. 85-6.

1838 (when she was thirty-seven), for he was living at that time at the Harris home in Far West.* This circumstance would seem to corroborate the story of Mrs. Sarah Pratt, who said in an interview with W. Wyl: "Mrs. Harris was a married lady, a very great friend of mine. When Joseph had made his dastardly attempt on me [in 1842], I went to Mrs. Harris to un-bosom my grief to her. To my utter astonishment, she said, laughing heartily: 'How foolish you are! Why, I am his mistress since four years.'" †

When the Harris family moved to Nauvoo, they were given a lot directly across from the prophet and next door to that of Sarah Cleveland, another of Joseph's wives. ‡ B. W. Richmond, a stranger and guest in the Mansion House at the time of Joseph's death, noted "a lady standing at the head of Joseph Smith's body, her face covered, and her whole frame convulsed with weeping. She was the widow of William Morgan, of Masonic memory. . . . She is a short person, with light hair and very bright blue eyes, and a pleasant countenance." § George Harris either knew at the time — or learned later — of the relationship between his wife and the prophet, for he stood as proxy in the Nauvoo temple in January 1846 when Lucinda was sealed to Joseph Smith "for eternity."

3. PRESCINDIA HUNTINGTON BUELL, wife of Norman Buell, later the wife of Heber C. Kimball

Evidence of children born to Joseph Smith by women other than Emma is extremely scant except in the case of Prescindia Huntington Buell. Prescindia once stated to Mrs. Ettie V. Smith that "she did not know whether Mr. Buell or the Prophet was the father of her son." || This statement I regarded with due reserve until I discovered a photograph of the son, Oliver Buell, which showed an unmistakable likeness to other sons of Joseph, borne by Emma Smith. ¶

* *History of the Church*, Vol. III, p. 9.

† *Mormon Portraits*, p. 60.

‡ *History of the Church*, Vol. III, p. 362.

§ From an account based on Richmond's manuscript, which appeared in the *Chicago Times* and was reprinted in the *Deseret News*, November 27, 1875.

|| *Fifteen Years among the Mormons: being the narrative of Mrs. Mary Ettie V. Smith* (New York, 2nd ed. 1859), p. 34.

¶ See p. 301 and illustration.

Prescinda Huntington, said to have been "large, tall, grand and majestic in figure, dignified in manner," was born on September 7, 1810, and married Norman Buell at the age of seventeen. Before her baptism into the church on June 1, 1836, she had borne Buell two sons, George and Silas. Silas died very young, and a daughter, born on April 24, 1838 at Fishing River, Missouri, died in infancy.

Although there is some confusion about the birth date of Oliver, it is not significant in determining his parentage. Mrs. Buell told Augusta Crocheron, editor of *Representative Women of Deseret*, that Oliver was born in the spring of 1839 in Far West, Missouri. Joseph had lived in Far West through 1838 until his arrest on October 31. Norman Buell apostatized in the spring of 1839, and if Oliver was born at that time, it is at least conjectural that he left the church because he suspected the paternity of his son.

The Genealogical Archives in Salt Lake City list Oliver's birth as having taken place on January 31, 1840 in Clay County, New York, an error in place if not in date, since Clay County is in Missouri, not New York. Even if Oliver was born at this later date, however, Joseph might still have been the father, since he escaped from the Missouri sheriff near Far West on April 15, 1839.* Prescinda was still in Missouri at this time. She had visited Joseph twice when he was in Liberty jail. The second time, March 15, 1839, she had been forbidden to see him, and the prophet at once had written her a warm letter recommending that Buell go to Illinois "if he keep the faith," and making vague but meaningful allusions to coming revelations of great significance.†

The Huntington family left Far West on April 18, but Prescinda remained with Buell. "I felt alone on the earth," she later wrote of this period, "with no one to comfort me excepting my little son George, for my husband had become a bitter apostate, and I could not speak in favor of the church in his presence."‡ Since Joseph's journal entries make it clear that after his escape he was mingling with the last Mormon group

* See Hyrum Smith's account, *History of the Church*, Vol. III, p. 321n.

† *Ibid.*, Vol. III, pp. 285-6.

‡ *The Women of Mormonism* (ed. by Edward W. Tullidge, New York, 1877), p. 213.

to leave Far West, which included the Huntington family, it is quite possible that he spent some time with Prescindia.

Prescindia remained in Missouri until the fall of 1840. By this time Buell had become reconciled to the church, and the couple moved to Lima, Illinois. It was not until December 11, 1841 that the actual plural-marriage ceremony between Joseph and Mrs. Buell was performed. According to the Utah Church historian, Andrew Jenson, who provides this date, the ceremony was performed by Prescindia's brother, Dimick.

That the Huntington family looked upon young Oliver as the prophet's son is suggested by Oliver Huntington's diary entry of November 14, 1884: "Then I stood Proxy for the Prophet Joseph Smith in having sealed or adopted to him a child of my sister Presenda, *had while living with Norman Buell.*"* The ambiguous wording of the phrase I have italicized is significant, especially since there is no similar entry for any other of her children.

John C. Bennett knew of Mrs. Buell's marriage to Joseph, for he listed a Mrs. B***** as one of the prophet's spiritual wives. (Each asterisk stands for a letter.) Prescindia left Buell in 1846 to become one of the numerous plural wives of Heber C. Kimball,† to whom she bore two children.

4. NANCY MARINDA JOHNSON HYDE, wife of Orson Hyde

The stories linking Nancy Marinda Hyde's name to that of Joseph Smith disagree widely as to the date of the marriage or liaison. Born in Pomfret, Windsor County, Vermont, on June 28, 1815, Nancy later moved to Ohio, where she married Orson Hyde on September 4, 1834. The prophet lived for a time at the home of her father, John Johnson, in Hiram in 1832. According to Clark Braden, Nancy's brother Eli led the mob against Joseph in Hiram because he had been "too intimate with his sister Marinda, who afterwards married Orson Hyde. Brigham Young, in after years, twitted Hyde with this fact, and Hyde, on

* Vol. III, p. 236. For other references to Prescindia and Norman Buell in this diary see Vol. I, pp. 39, 44, 44a; Vol. II, pp. 16, 25, 46. A transcript of this diary is in the Utah State Historical Society Library.

† See the Nauvoo Temple Record. Prescindia was married to Joseph Smith "for eternity" and to Kimball "for time."

learning its truth, put away his wife, although they had several children." *

The Genealogical Archives in Salt Lake City show that Hyde did in fact take Nancy on July 31, 1857 and have her sealed "for eternity" to Joseph Smith. But this throws no light on when Nancy was actually married to Joseph Smith, if indeed a ceremony was performed at all during his lifetime.

John D. Lee, bodyguard to Joseph in Nauvoo, wrote in his autobiography: "Report said that Hyde's wife, with his consent, was sealed to Joseph for an eternal state, but I do not assert the fact." † William Hall, a Mormon convert between 1840 and 1847, wrote that Hyde was anxious to re-enter the church after his apostasy in 1839. "He returned and desired Joe Smith to reinstate him in his former office as one of the Twelve Apostles. The conditions imposed by Joe Smith some of us would consider a little tough. They were these: All the money he had so hardly earned had to be given up to Joe, and, also, his wife, as a ransom for his transgression, to obtain his former standing. Many jokes were cracked at his expense, and he was despised throughout the camp for his fickle-mindedness." ‡

Hall's account, if true, would indicate that Nancy Marinda Hyde became Joseph Smith's plural wife in April 1839, when Hyde was reinstated as an apostle. She was then twenty-four. It may be, however, that she was not taught polygamy until December 1841, when Hyde was on a mission to Palestine, and she was favored with a personal revelation ordering her to move into the rooms above the printing shop and to "hearken to the counsel of my servant Joseph in all things." § Ebenezer Robinson, who lived above the printing shop, was forced to leave his quarters. "That evening," he later wrote, "Willard Richards nailed down the windows and fired off his revolver in the street after dark, and commenced living with Mrs. Nancy Marinda Hyde, in rooms we had vacated in the printing office building, where they lived through the winter. His family was residing at the time in Massachusetts, and Elder Orson Hyde was absent on his mission to Palestine." ||

* *Public Discussion of the Issues between the Reorganized Church . . .*, p. 202.

† *Mormonism Unveiled*, p. 147.

‡ *The Abominations of Mormonism Exposed*, p. 113.

§ *History of the Church*, Vol. IV, p. 467.

|| *The Return*, Vol. II (October 1890), p. 346.

The fact that Robinson's account links Nancy's name with Richards' is confusing. But that she was involved in polygamy as early as 1842 is undeniable. Between 1835 and 1858 Nancy bore ten children. Two sons were born in Nauvoo who might possibly have had the prophet for a father: Orson Washington, born November 9, 1843, and Frank Henry, born January 23, 1845.

5. CLARISSA REED HANCOCK, wife of Levi W. Hancock

There is a tradition among some of the descendants of Levi Hancock that Mrs. Hancock was sealed to Joseph Smith in Nauvoo and that one of her sons may have been his child. Since there seems to be no printed or manuscript evidence to support this story, however, it must be taken with considerable reserve. It is of some interest, however, to note that one of Levi Hancock's sons, born on June 9, 1845 in Nauvoo, was named Levison, as though to distinguish his parentage from that of a preceding son, born on April 19, 1841 and named John Reed Hancock.* The latter might have been the child in question. Mrs. Hancock was born on December 18, 1814 in New Hampshire.

6. LOUISA BEAMAN, later the wife of Brigham Young

One of the best proofs that John C. Bennett had accurate information about Joseph's earliest wives is his statement that Miss L***** B***** was married to the prophet by Elder Joseph Bates Noble.† This is clearly Louisa Beaman, popularly believed to be Joseph's first plural wife, who was married to him on April 5, 1841. Noble himself later swore to an affidavit stating that he performed the ceremony on this date.‡ Erastus Snow also wrote: "My wife's sister, Louisa Beman, was his first plural wife, she being sealed to him by my brother-in-law, Joseph B. Noble, April 5, 1841." §

Louisa was born on February 7, 1815 in Livonia, New York, and was twenty-six on her marriage day. She became Brigham

* Genealogical Archives, Salt Lake City.

† *History of the Saints*, p. 256.

‡ For text see Joseph F. Smith, Jr.: *Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage*, p. 75.

§ *Historical Record*, Vol. VI, p. 232.

Young's plural wife on January 14, 1846 * and bore him two sets of twins. All four children died in infancy. She died on May 16, 1850 in Salt Lake City.

7. ZINA DIANTHA HUNTINGTON JACOBS, wife of Henry B. Jacobs, later the wife of Brigham Young

Zina Huntington has perhaps the most complicated record of all Joseph Smith's wives. She was born in Watertown, New York, January 31, 1821, and was married to Henry Bailey Jacobs on March 7, 1841.† Seven and one half months later, on October 27, 1841, she was married to Joseph Smith, with her brother Dimick officiating and her sister Fanny acting as a witness.‡ She was then twenty. Since her first child, Zebulon Jacobs, was born on January 2, 1842,§ she was therefore about seven months pregnant with Jacobs's child at the time of her marriage to the prophet. This was an awkward fact for Zina to face after her public admission in 1878 that she had been a plural wife of Joseph Smith.|| When interviewed by members of the Reorganized Church, she refused to tell the month or year of her marriage to Joseph. She admitted that Dimick had officiated at the ceremony and stated that Brigham Young repeated it on his return from England,¶ an odd assertion in view of the fact that Brigham Young had actually returned from England in June 1841, several months before the ceremony in October.

That there was a good deal of gossip about Zina Jacobs in Nauvoo is evidenced by the statements of John D. Lee and William Hall. The former wrote: "I then took a tour down through Illinois [winter of 1842]. H. B. Jacobs accompanied me as a fellow companion on the way. Jacobs was bragging about his wife, what a true, virtuous, lovely woman she was. He almost worshipped her. Little did he think that in his absence she was

* The Nauvoo Temple Record for this date states that she was married to Young "for time" and to Joseph Smith "for eternity."

† Record of Marriages, Hancock County, Book A, p. 40.

‡ *Historical Record*, Vol. VI, p. 233.

§ According to the *Latter-Day Saints Biographical Encyclopædia*.

|| See her quoted statement in *Latter-Day Saints Biographical Encyclopædia*, Vol. I, p. 698.

¶ Interview of John W. Wright with Zina D. H. Young, October 1, 1898, *Saints Herald*, Vol. LII, pp. 28-30.

sealed to the Prophet Joseph." * Hall wrote as follows: "A Mr. Henry Jacobs had his wife seduced by Joe Smith, in his time, during a mission to England. She was a very beautiful woman, but when Jacobs returned, he found her pregnant by Smith. Jacobs put up with the insult, and still lived with her." † There is no record other than this bald statement that Zina ever bore Joseph a child. If true, it must have died in infancy, for Zina's other two children were born long after Joseph's death. ‡

Zina left Jacobs in 1846 to marry Brigham Young. William Hall asserted that he had heard Young say publicly to Jacobs: "The woman you claim for a wife does not belong to you. She is the spiritual wife of brother Joseph, sealed to him. I am his proxy, and she, in this behalf, with her children, are my property. You can go where you please, and get another, but be sure to get one of your own kindred spirits." § Jacobs apparently accepted Young's decision as the word of the Lord, for he stood as witness in the Nauvoo temple in January 1846 when Zina was sealed to Brigham Young "for time" and to Joseph Smith "for eternity."

8. MARY ELIZABETH ROLLINS LIGHTNER, wife of Adam Lightner

Mary E. Rollins, born on April 9, 1818, a daughter of John Rollins, was thirteen years old when she first saw Joseph Smith, in Kirtland. "When I entered the room," she wrote in her autobiography, "he looked at me so earnestly I felt afraid and thought, 'He can read my every thought, and I thought how blue his eyes were.' After a moment he came and put his hands on my head and gave me a great blessing."

Mary went to Independence in 1831 and remained in Missouri, marrying a non-Mormon, Adam Lightner, August 11, 1835. They moved to Nauvoo in 1840 or 1841 and purchased a lot just below the prophet's home. Here she taught painting to Joseph's adopted daughter, Julia. She was then the mother of three children. Curiously, she makes no mention of her mar-

* *Mormonism Unveiled*, p. 132.

† *The Abominations of Mormonism Exposed*, pp. 43-4.

‡ Henry Chariton Jacobs, son of Henry Jacobs, was born on March 22, 1846. Later Zina bore Brigham Young a daughter.

§ *Abominations of Mormonism Exposed*, pp. 43-4. This is confirmed by T. B. H. Stenhouse in his *Rocky Mountain Saints*, pp. 185-6.

riage to Joseph in her autobiography (although such references may have been edited out), but on February 8, 1902, when eighty-four years old, she swore to an affidavit that said in part: "I was sealed to Joseph Smith, the Prophet, by commandment. In the spring of 1831, the Savior appeared and commanded him to seal me up to everlasting life, gave me to Joseph to be with him in his Kingdom, even as he is in the Father's Kingdom. In 1834 he was commanded to take me for a wife. I was a thousand miles from him. He got afraid. The angel came to him three times, the last time with a drawn sword and threatened his life. I did not believe. If God told him so, why did he not come and tell me? The angel told him I should have a witness. An angel came to me — it went through me like lightning — I was afraid. Joseph said he came with more revelation and knowledge than Joseph ever dare reveal. Joseph said I was his before I came here and he said all the Devils in Hell should never get me from him. I was sealed to him in the Masonic Hall, over the old brick store by Brigham Young in February 1842 and then again in the Nauvoo Temple by Heber C. Kimball. . . ."*

Adam Lightner refused to be baptized although he was friendly to the church. Some time after July 4, 1842 the Lightners moved to Pontusac. "The prophet felt very sad when he knew we were going to leave," Mary wrote, "and with tears running down his cheeks, he prophesied that if we left the Church we would have plenty of sorrow." It is possible that Mary's fourth son, born in 1843, was Joseph's child and that Adam Lightner's desire to move from Nauvoo came from suspicion or actual knowledge of the relationship between Joseph and his wife. He never joined the church, and did not take his wife to Utah until 1863, but Mary remained a faithful Mormon. She bore ten children, and died on December 17, 1913, at the age of ninety-five.

* The original of this statement is owned by Mrs. Nell Osborne of Salt Lake City. Extracts from Mrs. Lightner's autobiography appeared in the *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, Vol. XVII (1926), pp. 193 ff. I have fortunately obtained a complete copy. The Nauvoo Temple Record shows not only that Mary was sealed to Joseph Smith "for eternity" in 1846, but also that she was sealed to Brigham Young "for time." Her autobiography makes clear, however, that she remained with Lightner.

9. PATTY BARTLETT SESSIONS, wife of David Sessions

Patty Sessions, famous midwife in Nauvoo and Utah, was born on February 4, 1795 and was married to David Sessions on June 28, 1812. According to her private journal she was sealed to Joseph Smith on March 9, 1842, when forty-seven years old. "I was sealed to Joseph Smith by Willard Richards March 9, 1842, in Newel K. Whitney's chamber, Nauvoo, for time and all eternity. . . . Sylvia, my daughter, was present when I was sealed to Joseph Smith. I was after Mr. Sessions' death [about 1850] sealed to John Parry for time on the 27th of March 1852, Great Salt Lake City."

Joseph Smith's diary entry for March 9, 1842 confirms at least the fact that he spent part of the day with Willard Richards, whom Patty names as performing the ceremony and who was "temple recorder" at the time: ". . . in the afternoon continued the translation of the Book of Abraham, called at Bishop Knight's and Mr. Davis's, with the recorder, and continued translating and revising, and reading letters in the evening, Sister Emma being present in the office."* It is significant that John C. Bennett knew about Joseph's marriage to Mrs. Sessions. He lists Mrs. S***** as one of the prophet's spiritual wives in his *History of the Saints*. Mrs. Sessions lived to be almost ninety-nine, dying on December 14, 1893.

10. DELCENA JOHNSON SHERMAN, widow of Lyman R. Sherman

Delcena Johnson, sister of Almera and Benjamin Johnson, was born on November 19, 1806 in Westford, Vermont. Apparently she was married to Joseph Smith before June 1842. The unpublished letter of Benjamin Johnson to George S. Gibbs says in part: ". . . in visiting [June 1842] my sister, the widow of Lyman R. Sherman, who died a martyr to conditions of Far West, I found her with a former acquaintance, Sister Louisa Beeman, and I saw from appearances that they were both in his (the prophet's) care, and that he provided for their comfort. . . . The marriage of my eldest sister . . . to the Prophet was before my return to Nauvoo, and it being tacitly admitted, I asked no questions."

* *History of the Church*, Vol. IV, p. 548.

11. MRS. DURFEE

Sarah Pratt told W. Wyl in 1885 the following story: "There was an old woman called Durfee. She knew a good deal about the prophet's amorous adventures and, to keep her quiet, he admitted her to the secret blessings of celestial bliss. I don't think that she was ever sealed to him, although it may have been the case after Joseph's death, when the temple was finished. At all events, she boasted here in Salt Lake of having been one of Joseph's wives." * Since John C. Bennett listed a Mrs. D***** as one of Joseph's wives, it is highly probable that she was sealed to the prophet before June 1842, when Bennett was expelled. Joseph H. Jackson listed both Mrs. Durfee and Mrs. Sessions as "Mothers in Israel," whose duty it was to initiate younger women into the mysteries of plural marriage.†

12. SALLY ANN FULLER GULLEY, wife of Samuel Gulley

Sally Ann Fuller was born at Saratoga, New York, on October 24, 1815. The date of her marriage to Samuel Gulley is not known, but the Nauvoo Temple Record states that on January 29, 1846 she was sealed to Joseph Smith, Jr., "for eternity" and to Gulley "for time." Since John C. Bennett listed a Mrs. G***** as one of Joseph's wives, it is possible that he was referring to Mrs. Gulley. If so, it would seem that her marriage to Joseph Smith took place before Bennett's expulsion in 1842.

13. MRS. A**** S****, married to Joseph by Brigham Young.

14. MISS B***** [possibly Sarah Bapson]

These women, listed by John C. Bennett in his *History of the Saints*, remain as yet unidentified.

15. ELIZA ROXEY SNOW

Of all Joseph's wives, none testified to the fact of her marriage more frequently and with greater pride than the poetess Eliza R. Snow. Born on January 21, 1804, daughter of the well-to-do Campbellite Oliver Snow, she joined the Mormons in 1835. In the spring of 1836 she taught a girls' school in Kirtland and

* *Mormon Portraits*, p. 54.

† *Narrative of the Adventures and Experiences of Joseph H. Jackson* (Warsaw Illinois, 1844), p. 14.

lived at Joseph's home. Later in Nauvoo she again moved into his home, and on June 29, 1842, at thirty-eight, she became his wife. Her detailed autobiography remained unpublished in the Bancroft Library until 1944, when it appeared serially in the *Relief Society Magazine* in Salt Lake City. Of her marriage she wrote:

In Nauvoo I first understood that the practice of plurality was to be introduced into the church. The subject was very repugnant to my feelings — so directly was it in opposition to my educated feelings, that it seemed as though all the prejudices of my ancestors for generations past congregated around me. But when I reflected that I was living in the Dispensation of the fulness of times, embracing all other Dispensations, surely Plural Marriage must necessarily be included, and I consoled myself with the idea that it was far in the distance, and beyond the period of my mortal existence. It was not long, however, after I received the first intimation, before the announcement reached me that the "set time" had come. . . . I was sealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith for time and eternity in accordance with the *Celestial Law of Marriage* which God has revealed — the ceremony being performed by a servant of the Most High. . . .*

Brigham Young had performed the ceremony, and the fact of the marriage is neatly borne out by Joseph's diary entry for the date of the marriage, June 29, 1842: "Heard the recorder read in the Law of the Lord [the mysterious book that was said to have listed all the plural wives in Nauvoo]; paid taxes; rode out in the city on business with Brigham Young." †

There is a persistent tradition that Eliza conceived a child by Joseph in Nauvoo, and that Emma one day discovered her husband embracing Eliza in the hall outside their bedrooms and in a rage flung her downstairs and drove her out into the street. The fall is said to have resulted in a miscarriage. (This tradition was stated to me as fact by Eliza's nephew, LeRoi C. Snow, in the Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City.) Solon Foster, coachman for the prophet, was present in the Mansion House when the incident occurred. Years later he met Emma's sons, who were then publicly denouncing polygamy in Utah, and reproached them for their attitude: "Joseph, the night your mother

* See also her statement in the biography of her brother. Eliza R. Snow Smith: *Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow*, p. 68.

† *History of the Church*, Vol. V, p. 49.

turned Eliza R. Snow into the street in her night clothes you and all the family stood crying. I led you back into the house and took you to bed with me. You said, 'I wish mother wouldn't be so cruel to Aunt Eliza.' You called her aunt, because you knew she was your father's wife. He did not deny it." *

C. G. Webb further corroborated the story in an interview with W. Wyl:

Eliza Snow . . . used to be much at the prophet's house and "Sister Emma" treated her as a confidential friend. Very much interested in Joseph's errands, Emma used to send Eliza after him as a spy. Joseph found it out and, to win over the gifted young poetess, he made her one of his celestial brides. There is scarcely a Mormon unacquainted with the fact, that Sister Emma, on the other side, soon found out the little compromise arranged between Joseph and Eliza. Feeling outraged as a wife and betrayed as a friend, Emma is currently reported as having had recourse to a vulgar broomstick as an instrument of revenge; and the harsh treatment received at Emma's hand is said to have destroyed Eliza's hopes of becoming the mother of a prophet's son.†

After Joseph's death Eliza in 1846 was sealed to Brigham Young in the Nauvoo temple. She bore him no children. In later years she became one of the leading women in the West, and died on December 5, 1887.

16. SARAH ANN WHITNEY, later the wife of Heber C. Kimball

Sarah Whitney, daughter of Newel K. Whitney, was born on March 22, 1825, and was married to Joseph at seventeen. Her own sworn statement, giving the date as July 27, 1842, was published along with a confirming affidavit sworn by her mother, in Joseph F. Smith, Jr.: *Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage*. It is said that she was the first woman given in plural marriage "by and with the consent of both parents." Apparently it took a special revelation, however, to win their consent. "The revelation commanding and consecrating this union is in existence," wrote Orson F. Whitney, "though it has never

* Foster recounted this in a sermon in southern Utah that was heard by John R. Young. Young described it in a letter to Mrs. Vesta P. Crawford, who kindly consented to let me quote it here.

† *Mormon Portraits*, p. 58.

been published. It bears the date July 27, 1842, and was given through the Prophet to the writer's grandfather, Newel K. Whitney.* William Clayton and Joseph C. Kingsbury both knew of the marriage of Sarah Whitney to Joseph, and swore to this fact in separate affidavits.† Sarah in 1846 was sealed to Joseph Smith "for eternity" and to Heber C. Kimball "for time," in the Nauvoo temple. She bore Kimball several children.

17. SARAH M. KINSLEY CLEVELAND, wife of John Cleveland

Sarah Cleveland befriended Joseph and Emma Smith after the expulsion of the Mormons from Far West. Emma lived at the Cleveland home in Quincy, Illinois, while Joseph was in Liberty jail. After Nauvoo was settled, Joseph wrote to the Clevelands: "We have selected a lot for you, just across the street from our own, beside Mrs. Harris." ‡ Since Mrs. Cleveland was first counselor in the Relief Society, it seems probable that her marriage to Joseph took place shortly after the expulsion of Bennett in 1842, when Joseph married most of the leaders in that Society. She was then fifty-four years old.§

Andrew Jenson listed her as one of the prophet's wives, but gave no details. Sarah Pratt told W. Wyl that "Sarah Cleveland kept a kind of assignation house for the prophet and Eliza R. Snow." || When the Clevelands left Nauvoo, in May 1843, Mrs. Cleveland wrote a farewell letter to the *Times and Seasons* on May 1, thanking her friends and explaining that her husband had not succeeded in business as had been anticipated.

The Nauvoo Temple Record states that Sarah M. Kinsley was sealed to Joseph Smith "for eternity" and to John Smith "for time," in January 1846, but whether this means that Sarah left Cleveland and remained with John Smith I have been unable to discover.

* *Latter-Day Saints Biographical Encyclopædia*, Vol. I, p. 226.

† *Historical Record*, Vol. VI, pp. 225-6.

‡ *History of the Church*, Vol. III, p. 362.

§ According to the Genealogical Archives in Salt Lake City, she was born on October 20, 1788 in Massachusetts, daughter of Ebenezer and Sarah Kinsley.

|| *Mormon Portraits*, p. 90.

18. ELVIRA A. COWLES, later the wife of Jonathan H. Holmes

Andrew Jenson listed Elvira Cowles as one of Joseph's wives, saying that she was "afterwards the wife of Jonathan H. Holmes." Now, it happened that her marriage to Holmes, one of Joseph's bodyguard, took place in Nauvoo on December 1, 1842, with Joseph himself performing the ceremony.* If Jenson is correct, then Elvira must have been married to the prophet at an earlier date. Since she was treasurer of the Nauvoo Relief Society, it seems likely that this marriage occurred shortly after the Bennett expulsion in June 1842. Hers seems to be the only case where the prophet married a woman for "time and eternity" and then relinquished her "for time" to another man.

Austin Cowles, Elvira's father, and member of the High Council, bitterly opposed polygamy and joined the apostates who followed William Law out of the church in May 1844. He may have been embittered by Joseph's involvement with his daughter. Elvira was born in Massachusetts on November 23, 1813, and was probably twenty-nine at the time of her marriage to the prophet.

Holmes apparently knew of her relationship with Joseph, and willingly stood as proxy in January 1846 when Elvira's marriage to the prophet "for eternity" was solemnized in the newly completed Nauvoo temple.

19. MARTHA McBRIDE, later the wife of Heber C. Kimball

Martha McBride was born in Chester, New York, March 17, 1805. In 1869 she swore to an affidavit saying that she had been married to Joseph Smith in the summer of 1842.† She was then thirty-eight. The Nauvoo Temple Record states that in January 1846 she was married to Joseph Smith "for eternity" and to Heber C. Kimball "for time." She bore Kimball no children.

20. RUTH D. VOSE SAYERS, wife of Edward Sayers

Ruth Vose, daughter of Mark and Sally Vose, was born on February 26, 1808 in Boston. Andrew Jenson listed her as a

* The *Wasp*, December 10, 1842.

† For text of the affidavit see Joseph Smith, Jr.: *Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage*, p. 72. See also O. F. Whitney: *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, p. 432.

wife of Joseph Smith, but stated erroneously that she was married to Sayers "after the death of the Prophet." * According to the Genealogical Archives in Salt Lake City, she married Edward Sayers in St. Louis on January 23, 1841. When Joseph went into hiding on August 10, 1842, he lived for several weeks at the home of Edward Sayers outside Nauvoo,† and it seems probable that he married Mrs. Sayers at this time. She was then thirty-four. She died on August 18, 1884 in Salt Lake City.

21. **DESDEMONA WADSWORTH FULLMER**, later the wife of Ezra T. Benson

Desdemona W. Fullmer, daughter of Peter and Susanna Fullmer, was born in Pennsylvania on October 6, 1809. She was married to Joseph Smith some time during 1842, when thirty-three years old. She was known as a "quiet, unassuming, faithful woman." William Clayton, secretary to Joseph Smith, on February 16, 1874 swore to an affidavit asserting that in February 1843 Joseph "gave me to understand that Eliza R. Snow, Louisa Beman, Desdemona W. Fullmer and others were his lawful wives in the sight of heaven." ‡ Desdemona was officially sealed to the prophet in the Nauvoo temple in January 1846. In the same ceremony she married Ezra T. Benson "for time." She went to Utah in 1848 and died in Salt Lake City on February 9, 1886.

22. **EMILY DOW PARTRIDGE**, later the wife of Brigham Young

23. **ELIZA M. PARTRIDGE**, later the wife of Amasa Lyman

Emily and Eliza Partridge, daughters of the prosperous Mormon bishop Edward Partridge, lived in the home of Joseph Smith in Nauvoo after their father's death. In 1843, when they were married to the prophet, Emily was nineteen and Eliza twenty-three, the former having been born on February 28, 1824 and the latter on April 20, 1820, in Painesville, Ohio. Emily wrote the story of their marriages in 1887:

. . . the Prophet Joseph and his wife Emma offered us a home in their family, and they treated us with great kindness. We had been

* *Historical Record*, Vols. V-VIII, p. 1004.

† *History of the Church*, Vol. V, p. 90.

‡ *Historical Record*, Vol. VI, pp. 225, 234.

there about a year when the principle of plural marriage was made known to us, and I was married to Joseph Smith on the 4th of March, 1843, Elder Heber C. Kimball performing the ceremony. My sister Eliza was also married to Joseph a few days later. This was done without the knowledge of Emma Smith. Two months afterwards she consented to give her husband two wives, provided he would give her the privilege of choosing them. She accordingly chose my sister Eliza and myself, and to save family trouble Brother Joseph thought it best to have another ceremony performed. Accordingly on the 11th of May, 1843, we were sealed to Joseph Smith a second time, in Emma's presence, she giving her free and full consent thereto. From that very hour, however, Emma was our bitter enemy. We remained in the family several months after this, but things went from bad to worse until we were obliged to leave the house and find another home. Emma desired us to leave the city, but after considering the matter over, we decided to remain with our friends.*

In this connection Joseph's journal entry for May 11, 1843 is a curiosity: "Thursday. 11 — At six a.m. baptized Louisa Bee-man, Sarah Alley, and others. Eight a.m. went to see the new carriage made by Thomas Moore, which was ready for traveling. Emma went to Quincy in the new carriage. I rode out as far as the prairie." † Perhaps the carriage was intended as balm for Emma's outraged pride.

That Emma gave her consent was further sworn to by Lovina Smith Walker, daughter of Hyrum Smith, who stated in 1869: "I Lovina Walker . . . hereby certify, that while I was living with Aunt Emma Smith, in Fulton City, Fulton County, Illinois, in the year 1846, she told me that she, Emma Smith, was present and witnessed the marrying or sealing of Eliza Partridge, Emily Partridge, Maria and Sarah Lawrence to her husband, Joseph Smith, and that she gave her consent thereto." ‡ Eliza married Amasa Lyman after Joseph's death and bore him five children. Emily married Brigham Young in September 1844, at the age of twenty, and bore him seven children. She was Young's ninth wife. In January 1846, in the Nauvoo temple, the sisters were officially sealed to the prophet "for eternity" and to Lyman and Young "for time."

* *Ibid.*, Vol. VI, p. 240.

† *History of the Church*, Vol. V, pp. 385-6.

‡ *Historical Record*, Vol. VI, p. 223.

24. ALMERA WOODWARD JOHNSON, later the wife of Reuben Barton

Few of Joseph's wives have had the fact of their marriage so thoroughly documented as Almera Johnson. Daughter of Ezekiel Johnson, she was born in Vermont on October 12, 1812, and was thirty-one at the time of her marriage. Her own sworn statement says in part:

On a certain occasion in the spring of the year 1843, the exact date of which I do not now recollect, I went from Macedonia to Nauvoo to visit another of my sisters . . . at which time I was sealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith. . . . After this time I lived with the Prophet Joseph as his wife, and he visited me at the home of my brother Benjamin F. at Macedonia.*

Almera's brother Benjamin described the courtship of his sister in his letter to George S. Gibbs:

It was Sunday morning, April 3 or 4, 1843, that the Prophet proceeded to open to me the subject of plural marriage and eternal marriage, and he said that years ago in Kirtland the Lord revealed to him the ancient order of plural marriage, and the necessity for its practice, and did command that he take another wife, and that among his first thoughts was to come to my mother for some of her daughters. And as he was again required of the Lord to take more wives, he came now to ask me for my sister Almera. His words astonished me and almost took my breath. I sat for a time amazed, and finally, almost ready to burst with emotion, I looked him straight in the face and said: "Brother Joseph, this is something I did not expect, and I do not understand it. You know whether it is right, I do not. I want to do just as you tell me, and I will try to, but if I ever should know that you do this to dishonor and debauch my sister, I will kill you as sure as the Lord lives." And while his eyes did not move from mine, he said with a smile, in a soft tone: "But Benjamin, you will never know that, but you will know the principle in time, and will rejoice in what it will bring you."

. . . the Prophet, with Louisa Beeman and my sister Delcena, had it agreeably arranged with sister Almera, and after a little instruction she stood by the Prophet's side and was sealed to him as a wife, by Brother William Clayton; after which the Prophet asked me to take my sister to occupy room number "10," in his Mansion Home,

* Joseph F. Smith, Jr.: *Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage*, pp. 70-1.

during her stay in the city. But as I could not long be absent from my home and business, we soon returned to Ramus, where, on the 15th day of May, some three weeks later, the Prophet again came and at my house occupied the same room and bed with my sister, that the month previous he had occupied with the daughter of the late Bishop Partridge, as his wife. And at that time he sealed me to my first wife for eternity, and gave me my first plural wife, Mary Ann Hale, an orphan girl raised by my mother then living with us, who is still with me. . . .

Benjamin also signed an affidavit on March 4, 1870 giving the same facts, but more briefly and formally.* The fact of Joseph's visit to Almera is neatly corroborated by his own journal entry of May 16, 1843:

. . . started for Ramus . . . went to Benjamin F. Johnson's with William Clayton to sleep. Before retiring, I gave Brother and Sister Johnson some instructions on the priesthood. . . . Except a man and his wife enter into an everlasting covenant and be married for eternity, while in this probation, by the power and authority of the Holy Priesthood, they will cease to increase when they die; that is, they will not have any children after the resurrection. . . . †

After Joseph's death Almera married Reuben Barton and bore him five daughters, all of whom died young. Barton apostatized and Almera joined her brother in Utah in 1861. She lived to be eighty-four. ‡

25. LUCY WALKER, later the wife of Heber C. Kimball

None of Joseph's wives described her courtship with such ingenuous detail as Lucy Walker. She was born in Vermont on April 30, 1826, daughter of John and Lydia Walker. After the death of her mother she came in January 1842 to live at the prophet's home. "In the year 1842," she wrote later,

President Joseph Smith sought an interview with me and said, "I have a message for you. I have been commanded of God to take another wife, and you are the woman." My astonishment knew no bounds. This announcement was indeed a thunderbolt to me. He asked me if I believed him to be the Prophet of God. "Most assuredly

* See *Historical Record*, Vol. VI, p. 221.

† *History of the Church*, Vol. V, pp. 391-2.

‡ See her obituary, *Deseret News*, March 26, 1896.

I do," I replied. He fully explained to me the principle of plural or celestial marriage. Said this principle was again to be restored for the benefit of the human family. That it would prove an everlasting blessing to my father's house, and form a chain that could never be broken, worlds without end. "What have you to say," he asked. "Nothing." How could I speak or what could I say? He said, "If you pray sincerely for light and understanding in relation thereto, you shall receive a testimony of the correctness of this principle."

I thought I prayed sincerely, but was so unwilling to consider the matter favorably that I fear I did not ask in faith for light. . . . I was tempted and tortured beyond endurance until life was not desirable. . . . The Prophet discerned my sorrow. He saw how unhappy I was, and sought an opportunity of again speaking to me on that subject, and said, "Although I can not under existing circumstances, acknowledge you as my wife, the time is near when we will go beyond the Rocky Mountains and then you will be acknowledged and honored as my wife." He also said this principle will yet be believed and practiced by the righteous. "I have no flattering words to offer. It is a command of God to you. I will give you until tomorrow to decide this matter. If you reject this message the gate will be closed forever against you."

This aroused every drop of Scotch in my veins. For a few moments I stood fearless before him, and looked him in the eye. I felt at this moment that I was called to place myself upon the altar a living sacrifice — perhaps to brook the world in disgrace and incur the displeasure and contempt of my youthful companions. . . . I had been speechless, but at last found utterance and said: Although you are a Prophet of God you could not induce me to take a step of so great importance, unless I knew that God approved my course. I would rather die. . . ." He walked across the room, returned and stood before me with the most beautiful expression of countenance, and said "God Almighty bless you. You shall have a manifestation of the will of God concerning you; a testimony that you can never deny. I will tell you what it shall be. It shall be that joy and peace that you never knew."

Oh how earnestly I prayed for these words to be fulfilled. It was near dawn after another sleepless night when my room was lighted up by a heavenly influence. To me it was, in comparison, like the brilliant sun bursting through the darkest cloud. My soul was filled with a calm, sweet peace that "I never knew." Supreme happiness took possession of me, and I received a powerful and irresistible testimony of the truth of plural marriage, which has been like an anchor to the soul through all the trials of life. I felt that I must go out into

the morning air and give vent to the joy and gratitude that filled my soul. As I descended the stairs, President Smith opened the door below, took me by the hand and said: "Thank God, you have the testimony. I too have prayed." He led me to the chair, placed his hands upon my head, and blessed me with every blessing my heart could possibly desire. The first day of May 1843, I consented to become the Prophet's wife, and was sealed to him for time and all eternity, at his own house by Elder William Clayton.*

Lucy had just turned seventeen. Emma was absent on a shopping trip to St. Louis and was due to return on May 2, which may have explained Joseph's haste to have Lucy married to him by May 1.† Lucy admitted before a court in 1892 that Emma knew nothing of her marriage.‡ An entry in William Clayton's private journal, dated May 1, 1843, confirmed Lucy's story: "At the Temple. At 10 married Joseph to Lucy Walker." §

In 1845 Lucy married Heber C. Kimball. She bore him nine children. She always talked freely about her marriage to Joseph and once swore to an affidavit that told substantially the same story as the one detailed above. Here she said also that Emma "gave her consent to the marriage of at least four other girls to her husband, and . . . she was well aware that he associated with them as wives within all the meaning of all that word implies. This is proved by the fact that she herself, on several occasions, kept guard at the door to prevent disinterested persons from intruding, when these ladies were in the house." ||

26. HELEN MAR KIMBALL, later the wife of Horace K. Whitney

Helen Kimball was born on August 22, 1828 in Mendon, New York. Her father, Heber C. Kimball, gave her to Joseph Smith for a wife when she was fifteen years old.¶ Although in later

* Lyman O. Littlefield: *Reminiscences of the Latter-Day Saints* (Logan, Utah), 1888.

† *History of the Church*, Vol. V, p. 379.

‡ *Temple Lot Case*, pp. 371-5.

§ Quoted in Joseph F. Smith, Jr.: *Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage*, p. 55.

|| *Historical Record*, Vol. VI, p. 230. See also the Nauvoo Temple Record, January 1846. In the Nauvoo temple Lucy was sealed to Joseph Smith "for eternity" and to Kimball "for time."

¶ William Clayton swore in 1874 that Joseph took Helen Kimball for a wife in the spring of 1843. *Historical Record*, Vol. VI, p. 225.

years she wrote vigorously in defense of polygamy, she never mentioned her marriage to Joseph, and a revealing autobiographical sketch shows her early abhorrence of polygamy. "I had, in hours of temptation," she wrote, "when seeing the trials of my mother, felt to rebel. I hated polygamy in my heart." * Yet when she married Horace K. Whitney in the Nauvoo temple in February 1846 she allowed herself to be sealed to Joseph Smith "for eternity." She bore Whitney eleven children.

27. MARIA LAWRENCE, later the wife of Brigham Young

28. SARAH LAWRENCE, later the wife of Heber C. Kimball

Maria and Sarah Lawrence, daughters of Edward Lawrence, were born in Canada, Maria on December 18, 1823 and Sarah on May 13, 1826. Canadian-born William Law told W. Wyl in 1887:

Soon after my arrival in Nauvoo the two L— girls came to the holy city, two very young girls, fifteen to seventeen years of age. They had been converted in Canada, were orphans worth about \$8,000 in English gold. Joseph got to be appointed their guardian. . . . Emma complained about Joseph's living with the L— girls, but not very violently . . . she used to complain to me about Joseph's escapades whenever she met me on the street.†

The tradition was strong among Joseph's wives that the Lawrence sisters had been married with Emma's consent. Emily Partridge, who like Maria Lawrence lived at the prophet's home and also married Brigham Young, once wrote: "Emma about this time [spring of 1843] gave her husband two other wives — Maria and Sarah Lawrence." ‡

According to the Nauvoo Temple Record, Maria in January 1846 was officially sealed to Joseph Smith "for eternity" and to Almon W. Babbitt "for time." Apparently the marriage to Babbitt was dissolved almost at once, for in the same month she became the wife of Brigham Young. She bore him no children and died in Nauvoo. Sarah Lawrence's marriage to Joseph

* *Representative Women of Deseret*, p. 112.

† This interview appeared in the *Salt Lake Tribune* and was reprinted in Thomas Gregg: *The Prophet of Palmyra*, p. 508.

‡ *Woman's Exponent*, Vol. XIV, p. 38. See also the court testimony of Lucy Walker, *Temple Lot Case*, p. 371, and the affidavit of Lovina Walker, *Historical Record*, Vol. VI. p. 223.

Smith "for eternity" was solemnized in the Nauvoo temple in January 1846. In the same ceremony she was married to Heber C. Kimball "for time." She divorced Kimball in Salt Lake City on June 18, 1851, married again, and went to California.*

29. FLORA ANN WOODWORTH

Flora Woodworth, daughter of Lucian Woodworth, architect of the Nauvoo House, was born on November 17, 1826 in New York State. According to William Clayton, Joseph's secretary, she was married to the prophet in the spring of 1843.† She was then sixteen. Joseph once referred to her in his journal: "May 14, 1844. Prayed for Elder Woodworth's daughter, who was sick."‡ Andrew Jenson stated that "after the death of the Prophet she married again, but this union proved unhappy. She died in the wilderness on the journey westward at the time of the Exodus from Nauvoo." §

According to Julia Murdock Farnsworth, niece of the Julia Murdock adopted by Joseph Smith, the prophet had a plural wife named Flora Gove,|| and it is possible that this was the married name of Flora Woodworth, since she is not mentioned elsewhere.

30. RHODA RICHARDS, later the wife of Brigham Young

Rhoda Richards, eldest sister of Willard Richards, was born on August 8, 1784. "In my young days," she wrote, "I buried my first and only love, and true to that affiance, I have passed companionless through life; but am sure of having my proper place and standing in the resurrection, having been sealed to the Prophet Joseph, according to the celestial law, by his own request, under the inspiration of divine revelation." ¶ She also signed an affidavit affirming that she was married to Joseph in Nauvoo by her brother Willard on June 12, 1843.*** She was then fifty-nine. The ceremony was clearly a favor by Joseph to

* *Historical Record*, Vols. V-VIII, p. 976, and *Journal History*, MS., June 18, 1851.

† *Historical Record*, Vol. VI, p. 225.

‡ *History of the Church*, Vol. VI, p. 377.

§ *Historical Record*, Vols. V-VIII, p. 1009.

|| Mrs. Farnsworth before her death gave this information to Mrs. Vesta P. Crawford of Salt Lake City.

¶ *The Women of Mormondon*, pp. 421-2.

*** See Joseph F. Smith, Jr.: *Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage*, p. 75.

her brother, who was doubtless concerned over his sister's fate in the celestial kingdom. In the Nauvoo temple in January 1846 she was sealed to Joseph Smith "for eternity" and to Brigham Young "for time." She lived to be ninety-five.

31. HANNAH ELLS

Hannah Ells, daughter of Thomas and Hannah Ells, was born in New Castle, Northumberland, England, on March 4, 1813. According to Andrew Jenson, she was "a lady of culture and refinement, somewhat tall in stature." Jenson printed an affidavit by John Benbow that said in part:

Be it remembered that this 28th day of August, 1869, personally appeared before me, James Jack, a Notary Public . . . John Benbow . . . and upon his oath said that in the summer of 1843, at his home four miles from Nauvoo . . . President Joseph Smith taught him and his wife, Jane Benbow, the doctrine of celestial marriage, or plurality of wives. . . . And further that Hannah Ells Smith, a wife of the Prophet, boarded at his home two months during the summer of the same year. . . . And further, that President Smith frequently visited his wife Hannah at his house.*

Hannah Ells died in Nauvoo in 1844.

32. MELISSA LOTT, later the wife of Ira Jones Willes

Melissa Lott, daughter of Cornelius P. Lott, foreman of Joseph's farm, was born on January 9, 1824, and was nineteen when married to the prophet. Joseph's son wrote that she was a "tall, fine-looking woman with a dark complexion, dark hair and eyes — a good singer, quite celebrated in a local way." † Melissa swore to an affidavit stating that she was married to Joseph Smith on September 20, 1843 by Hyrum Smith in the presence of her parents. This marriage and the date were recorded in the family Bible, which is now in the Church Historian's Office in Salt Lake City. ‡ Joseph Smith's diary entry for September 20, 1843 clearly indicates that he spent the day

* *Historical Record*, Vols. V–VIII, pp. 222, 234, 961.

† "Memoirs of President Joseph Smith," *Saints Herald*, December 18, 1934, p. 1614.

‡ Joseph F. Smith, Jr.: *Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage* pp. 72, 55.

with the Lotts: "Wednesday, 20. Visited my farm, accompanied by my brother Hyrum."*

When testifying in the Temple Lot case, Melissa said: "I was married to Joseph Smith September 27, 1843. As nearly as I can remember or understand it the marriage ceremony was as follows, 'You both mutually agree to be each other's companion, husband, and wife, observing the legal rights belonging to this condition, that is, keeping yourselves wholly for each other, and from all others during your lives.' I married him under that ceremony, knowing at the time he had a wife living, his wife, Emma Smith." When asked by the prosecution: "Did he agree in that marriage ceremony to keep himself from his wife Emma, for you?" she replied: "I cannot tell you. You will have to ask him that question. . . . I don't think he made any promise of that kind. . . . There were no children born as a fruit of that marriage. I married Mr. Willis in the year 1849. There have been children as the fruit of that marriage." †

Melissa never referred to the fact that in February 1846 when she was officially sealed to Joseph Smith "for eternity" in the Nauvoo temple, she was also sealed to John M. Bernhisel "for time."

33. FANNY YOUNG MURRAY, wife of Roswell Murray

Fanny Young, sister of Brigham Young, was born on November 8, 1787. She married Robert Carr in 1803. After his death she married Roswell Murray in 1832. The story of her sealing to the prophet was told by Brigham Young:

I recollect a sister conversing with Joseph Smith on this subject: "Now, don't talk to me; when I get into the celestial kingdom, if I ever do get there, I shall request the privilege of being a ministering angel; that is the labor that I wish to perform. I don't want any companion in that world; and if the Lord will make me a ministering angel, it is all I want." Joseph said, "Sister, you talk very foolishly, you do not know what you will want." He then said to me: "Here, Brother Brigham, you seal this lady to me." I sealed her to him. This was my own sister according to the flesh.‡

* *History of the Church*, Vol. VI, p. 35.

† *Temple Lot Case*, p. 314.

‡ *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. XVI, pp. 166-7.

Andrew Jenson stated that the ceremony occurred on November 2, 1843. Fanny was then fifty-six. She died on June 11, 1859.

34. OLIVE GREY FROST, later the wife of Brigham Young

Olive Grey Frost, daughter of Aaron Frost and Susan Grey, was born in Maine on July 24, 1816. Jenson, who includes her in his list of Joseph's wives, does not mention the date of her marriage, but it was probably after April 12, 1843, since she was a missionary to England with her sister and brother-in-law, Parley P. Pratt, between the fall of 1840 and that date. She was then twenty-seven. Although happy and genial in disposition, she suffered from ill health, and died in Nauvoo on October 6, 1845. She had become the eleventh wife of Brigham Young in February 1845.* Mrs. Mary Ettie V. Smith stated that when the dead bodies of Joseph and Hyrum arrived in Nauvoo from Carthage, "Olive Frost went entirely mad." †

35. MARY ANN FROST, wife of Parley P. Pratt

The Nauvoo Temple Record states that in February 1846 Mary Ann Frost was sealed to Joseph Smith "for eternity," her husband, Parley P. Pratt, standing as proxy. This is the only reference I have found linking Mrs. Parley Pratt's name to that of the prophet, but since nearly all of the wives sealed to Joseph Smith in the Nauvoo temple had clearly been married to him during his lifetime, it may be assumed that Mrs. Pratt had also been.

Mary Ann Frost was born on January 11, 1809 at Groton, Vermont, and was married to Pratt on May 9, 1837. Since she was in England with Pratt from the fall of 1840 to April 1843, it is unlikely that she became a plural wife of Joseph Smith before the latter date. Her son, Moroni, born on December 7, 1844, may be added to the list of boys who might possibly have been sons of Joseph Smith.

[The remaining names are listed alphabetically rather than chronologically.]

* See the biography written by her sister, Mary Ann Pratt, *Historical Record*, Vol. VI, p. 235.

† *Fifteen Years among the Mormons*, p. 36.

36. OLIVE ANDREWS, later the wife of Brigham Young

Olive Andrews was born on September 24, 1818, in Livermore, Maine. According to the Nauvoo Temple Record, she was married to Joseph Smith "for eternity" and to Brigham Young "for time" in January 1846.

37. MRS. EDWARD BLOSSOM

Richard Rushton, former steward in the Mansion House, told W. Wyl the following story:

"Emma started for St. Louis. The going, purchasing and return occupied about a week. At night, after the departure of the 'elect lady,' the steward gave the keys to the prophet, and in the morning he as usual stepped lightly and rapped at the door of the bed-room. A voice, strange to his ear, yet of feminine softness, rather startled him in response with the words 'Come in.' He entered timidly, when lo and behold! there lay in Emma's bed and stead the beautiful and attractive young wife of Elder Edward Blossom, a high councilor of Zion, (afterwards exalted to the apostleship by Brigham Young). With a pair of laughing, glistening eyes and with a smile of happy sweetness, she spoke in soft and pleading accents: '*I suppose, Brother Rushton, I shall have to be Sister Emma to you this morning,*' as she gracefully handed the keys to him." Astonished and blushing, the faithful steward left the room to resume his duties, leaving the adulterous prophet and his charmer to themselves. The same thing was repeated each morning during the week Emma was away purchasing supplies for the prophet's hotel.*

It should be noted, however, that, contrary to Wyl's statement, no one by the name of Blossom was ever made an apostle. I have thus far been unable to find any other reference to either Edward Blossom or his wife.

38. ELIZABETH DAVIS, later the wife of Cornelius P. Lott

Elizabeth Davis was born on March 11, 1791, in Suffolk, England. According to the Nauvoo Temple Record, she was married to Joseph Smith "for eternity" and to Cornelius P. Lott "for time" in January 1846.

* *Mormon Portraits*, pp. 65-6

39. MARY HUSTON, later the wife of Heber C. Kimball

Mary Huston was born on September 11, 1818 in Jackson, Ohio. According to the Nauvoo Temple Record, in January 1846 she was married to Joseph Smith "for eternity" and to Heber C. Kimball "for time." She was later listed by Orson F. Whitney as one of the wives of Joseph Smith who married Kimball. She bore no children.*

40. VIENNA JACQUES

Vienna Jacques was born near Boston in 1788. She came to Kirtland in 1833, and Joseph Smith in a revelation on March 8 directed her to consecrate her property to the church and receive an inheritance in Missouri.† According to the Genealogical Archives in Salt Lake City, Vienna was sealed to Joseph Smith on March 28, 1858. Descendants of her neighbors in Salt Lake City hold, however, that the marriage took place while the prophet was alive. Miss Jacques, who apparently never married anyone else, lived to be over ninety.

41. CORDELIA CALISTA MORLEY, later the wife of Frederick W. Cox

Cordelia Morley, a daughter of Isaac and Hannah Morley, was born on November 28, 1823 in Kirtland, Ohio. According to the Nauvoo Temple Record, in January 1846 she was married to Joseph Smith "for eternity" and to Frederick W. Cox "for time." She was Cox's second wife, and bore him seven children.

42. SARAH SCOTT, later the wife of Heber C. Kimball

Sarah Scott was listed by O. F. Whitney as a wife of Joseph Smith who later married Heber C. Kimball. She had no children.‡

43. SYLVIA SESSIONS, later the wife of Heber C. Kimball

Sylvia Sessions, daughter of David and Patty Sessions, was born on July 31, 1818, and was probably about twenty-five or

* *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, pp. 430-2.

† *Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 90.

‡ *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, pp. 430-2.

six at the time of her marriage to Joseph Smith. Since the diary of her mother makes no mention of this marriage, it is possible that Patty was unaware of it. Andrew Jenson listed Sylvia as one of the prophet's wives, and Orson F. Whitney listed her as one of Joseph's wives who later married Heber C. Kimball.* Her marriage to Kimball is noted in the Nauvoo Temple Record for January 1846. There she was sealed to Joseph Smith "for eternity" and to Kimball "for time." Sylvia was married also to Ezekiel Clark, by whom she had one daughter, Martha Sylvia, and there is some evidence that she married a Windsor P. Lyon. She died April 13, 1882.

44. NANCY MARIA SMITH, later the wife of Heber C. Kimball

Orson F. Whitney listed Nancy Maria Smith as one of the wives of Joseph Smith who later married Heber C. Kimball. He listed also Nancy Maria Winchester as a former wife of the prophet who married Kimball. It is possible that they were one and the same person, but Whitney was in a position to know the truth and would not have been likely to have made such an error.†

45. JANE TIBBETS, later the wife of Elam Luddington

Jane Tibbets was born on August 27, 1804 at Gorham, Maine. According to the Nauvoo Temple Record, on January 17, 1846 she was sealed to Joseph Smith "for eternity" and to E. Luddington "for time."

46. PHEBE WATROUS, later the wife of Lucian Woodworth

Phebe Watrous was born on October 1, 1805 in Sharron, New York. According to the Nauvoo Temple Record, on January 19, 1846 she was sealed to Joseph Smith "for eternity" and to Lucian Woodworth "for time."

* See *Historical Record*, Vol. VI, p. 234, and *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, p. 432.

† See Frank Esshom: *Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah*, p. 1153, and *Salt Lake Telegram*, March 3, 1952, the obituary of her daughter.

‡ *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, pp. 430-2.

47. NANCY MARIAH WINCHESTER, later the wife of Heber C. Kimball

Nancy Mariah Winchester, according to the Genealogical Archives in Salt Lake City, was born on August 10, 1828 in Erie County, New York, a daughter of Stephen and Nancy Case Winchester. But Andrew Jenson, in listing her among the prophet's wives, states that her father was Benjamin Winchester. The date of her marriage to Joseph Smith has not been published, but if it took place in 1843 or 1844, she could not have been more than fifteen or sixteen. O. F. Whitney listed her among Kimball's wives,* and the Nauvoo Temple Record states that this latter marriage took place in January 1846, when she was sealed to Kimball "for time" and to Joseph Smith "for eternity."

48. SOPHIA WOODMAN, later the wife of Gad Yale

Sophia Woodman was born on August 25, 1795 in Sanburn, New Hampshire. According to the Nauvoo Temple Record, on January 27, 1846 she was sealed to Joseph Smith "for eternity" and to Gad Yale "for time."

Since the first printing of this book, students of Mormon polygamy have continued to uncover information about Joseph Smith's wives. Mrs. Mary B. Powell was shown a significant unpublished letter in the L.D.S. Church Historian's Office in Salt Lake City, written by Joseph Smith when in hiding in 1842. This was a request, in his own handwriting, to Newel K. Whitney to bring his daughter Sarah Ann to the cornfield to spend the night with him. A copy of Mrs. Powell's manuscript is in the Huntington Library. Stanley Ivins informed me that his researches indicated that Joseph Smith was "sealed" to 66 or 67 living women, and that after his death 149 dead women were sealed to him in temple ceremonies.

* See *Historical Record*, Vol. VI, p. 234, and *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, pp. 430-2.