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The law of Illinois was clear on the status of matrimony: "Bigamy consists in the having of two wives or two husbands at one and the same time, knowing that the former husband or wife is still alive." Conviction could lead to a thousand dollar fine and send the guilty to the penitentiary for up to two years. For an unmarried woman, if convicted, she could be fined up to five hundred dollars and be imprisoned not more than a year.<sup>1</sup>

Note: Excerpts of newspaper articles from: <http://www.sidneyrigdon.com/dbroadhu>

## **THE WARSAW SIGNAL.**

DEVOTED TO POLITICS, AGRICULTURE, LITERATURE, COMMERCE, AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

Vol. 2. Warsaw, Illinois, May 19, 1841. No. 2.

### **APPOINTMENT.**

We have no disposition to complain of the official acts of Judge Douglass, for whom, as a man and an officer, we maintain the highest regard, but there is one act of his which receives our unqualified disapprobation; and we speak advisedly when we say that it is frowned on with indignity by nine-tenths of the substantial citizens of the county -- we speak of the appointment of Gen. BENNETT to be Master in Chancery. Whether from political motives or personal regard, it is certainly an act that has astonished the members of both parties, by its indiscretion. Bennett has but recently become an inhabitant of this state. He came here followed by evil report--he joins a sect and advocates a creed in which no one believes he has any faith -- his true character is not known to our citizens, nor have they any confidence in him -- under such circumstances we believe, and we are not alone in this belief, that Judge Douglass has committed an error in countenancing and encouraging such a man by the gift of a responsible office -- an office involving the rights, and in certain instances the liberties of freemen. We, for one, say, let the citizens of this county remonstrate against the appointment.

<sup>1</sup> *The Revised Laws of Illinois* (Vandalia: Printed by Greiner & Sherman, 1833), 198.

# THE WARSAW SIGNAL.

DEVOTED TO POLITICS, AGRICULTURE, LITERATURE, COMMERCE, AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

Vol. 2. Warsaw, Illinois, June 2, 1841. No. 4.

## Highly Important!!

**A New Revelation, from Joe Smith, the Mormon Prophet,  
for the especial benefit of the Editor of the "WARSAW SIGNAL."**

In our paper of week before last, we took occasion to express an honest opinion in relation to the Mormons, and some of their leaders -- an opinion which we believe is concurred in by nine-tenths of the community. No sooner, however, had our paper reached Nauvoo, than it caused the following highly important revelation to be forwarded us, from his holiness, the Prophet.

NAUVOO, Ill., May 26, 1841.

*Mr. Sharp, Editor of the Warsaw Signal:*

SIR: -- You will discontinue my paper; its contents are calculated to pollute me. And to patronize that filthy sheet, that tissue of lies, that sink of iniquity, is disgraceful to any moral man. Yours with utter contempt.

JOSEPH SMITH.

P. S. -- Please publish the above in your contemptible paper.

J.S.

Now, as one good turn deserves another, we annex below, for the benefit of the aforesaid Prophet, a revelation from our books, in this wise

Warsaw, ILL., June 2, 1841.

JOSEPH SMITH, Prophet, &c., &c.

**To Sharp & Gamble, DR.**

To one year's subscription to *Western World*, \$3.00.

Come, Josey, fork over, and for mercy's sake don't get a revelation that it is not

to be paid. For if thou dost, we will send a prophet after thee mightier than thou.

[Quotation marks and emphasis omitted.]

In concluding this subject, however, I will semi-state two or more cases, among the vast number, where Joe Smith was privately married to his spiritual wives—in the case of Mrs. A\*\*\*\* S\*\*\*\*, by Apostle Brigham Young; and in that of Miss L\*\*\*\*\* B\*\*\*\*, by Elder Joseph Bates Noble. Then there are the cases of Mrs. B\*\*\*\*, Mrs. D\*\*\*\*, Mrs. S\*\*\*\*, Mrs. G\*\*\*\*, Miss B\*\*\*\*, etc. etc.

(Bennett, *History of the Saints*, 256)

Dates:

Mrs. Agnes Coolbrith Smith [widow of Don Carlos Smith] January 6, 1842 **by Brigham Young**

Miss Louisa Beemam April 5, 1841 **by Joseph Bates Noble**

Mrs. Prescenda Huntington Buell [married] December 11, 1841 by Dimick Huntington

Mrs. D = ?

Mrs. Patty Bartlett Sessions [married] **March 9, 1842** by Willard Richards

Mrs. G = ?

Miss B = ?

### **Martha Brotherton**

Seventeen-year-old Martha Brotherton, with her older sister Elizabeth, and their parents, Thomas and Sarah, left Liverpool, England, on the ship *Tyrian*. They arrived at New Orleans on November 9, 1841.<sup>2</sup> Later the family moved to Nauvoo, and Martha received a patriarchal blessing from Hyrum Smith on February 23, 1842.

John C. Bennett requested Martha to make a public statement of her experience with church leaders. She did on July 13. Martha gave some background of her meeting with Apostles Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball at Joseph Smith's red brick store. At the store Martha saw William Clayton, whom she recognized in the tithing office.<sup>3</sup> The following conversation is reproduced from Martha's affidavit written in July 1842.<sup>4</sup> Brigham Young wanted Martha as a plural wife. This exchange probably took place in March of that year. Her affidavit is one of the

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<sup>2</sup> Conway B. Sonne, *Ships, Saints, and Mariners: A Maritime Encyclopedia of Mormon Migration 1830-1890* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), 190. See Paul B. Pixton, "The *Tyrian* and Its Mormon Passengers," *Mormon Historical Studies* 5 (Spring 2004):29-52.

<sup>3</sup> Clayton began to enter the amounts of tithes on February 10, 1842. William Clayton Journal, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

<sup>4</sup> Brotherton to Bennett, July 13, 1842, *Native American Bulletin* 1 (July 16, 1842), St. Louis, Missouri, emphasis omitted. Martha Brotherton's affidavit appeared in a number of Illinois newspapers and was published twice in New York City. See *New York Herald* 8 (July 25 and 27, 1842).

earliest published documents concerning the belief in a plurality of wives by leaders of the church. Martha said she sat down and wrote about her experience shortly after it took place.

Going upstairs with Heber C. Kimball to the second floor of the red brick store Martha found Brigham Young and Joseph Smith alone. She was introduced to the Prophet Joseph Smith (JS) by Brigham Young. Joseph offered Martha his seat after which Smith and Heber Kimball left the room leaving Martha alone with Apostle Young. Brigham Young (BY) arose, locked the door, closed the window, and drew the curtain. He then came and sat before Martha Brotherton (MB). The following is based on her memory of what took place that day:

BY: This is our private room, Martha.

MB: Indeed, sir, I must be highly honored to be permitted to enter it.

BY: Sister Martha, I want to ask you a few questions; will you answer them?

MB: Yes, sir.

BY: And will you promise not to mention them to anyone?

MB: If it is your desire, sir, I will not.

BY: And you will not think any the worse of me for it, will you, Martha?"

MB: No sir.

BY: Well, what are your feelings toward me?

MB: My feelings are just the same towards you that they ever were, sir.

BY: But, to come to the point more closely, have not you an affection for me, that, were it lawful and right, you could accept of me for your husband and companion?

MB: If it was lawful and right perhaps I might; but you know, sir, it is not.

BY: Well, brother Joseph has had a revelation from God that it is lawful and right for a man to have two wives; for as it was in the days of Abraham, so it shall be in these last days, and whoever is the first that is willing to take up the cross will receive the greatest blessings; and if you will accept of me I will take you straight to the celestial kingdom; and if you will have me in this world, I will have you in that which is to come, and brother Joseph will marry us here today, and you can go home this evening, and your parents will not know any thing about it.

MB: Sir, I should not like to do anything of the kind without the permission of my parents.

BY: Well, you are of age, are you not?

MB: No, sir, I shall not be until the 24th of May.

BY: Well, that does not make any difference. You will be of age before they know, and you need not fear. If you will take my counsel it will be well with you, for I know it to be right before God, and if there is any sin in it, I will answer for it. But brother Joseph wishes to have some talk with you on the subject, he will explain things, will you hear him?

MB: I do not mind.

BY: Well, I want you to say something.

MB: I want time to think about it.

BY: Well, I will have a kiss any how.

Brigham Young said he would bring Joseph Smith. Brigham unlocked the door, took the key, and left, relocking the door behind him. After Martha had been in the room alone for about ten minutes, Brigham returned with Joseph. The interview continued:

BY to JS: Well, sister Martha would be willing if she knew if was lawful and right before God.

JS: Well, Martha, it is lawful and right before God. I know it is. Look here, don't you believe in me? Well Martha, just go ahead and do as Brigham wants you to, he is the best man in the world except me.

BY: Oh then you are as good.

JS: Yes.

BY: Well, we believe Joseph to be a Prophet. I have known him near eight years, and always found him the same.

JS: Yes, and I know that this is lawful and right before God, and if there is any sin in it I will answer for it before God, and I have the keys of the kingdom, and whatever I bind on earth is bound in heaven, and whatever I loose on earth is loosed in heaven; and if you will accept of Brigham, you shall be blessed. God shall bless you, and my blessing shall rest upon you, and if you will be led by him you will do well; for I know Brigham will take care of you, and if he don't do his duty to you, come to me and I will make him; and if you do not like it in a month or two, come to me and I will make you free again; and if he turns you off I will take you on.

MB: Sir, it will be too late to think in a month or two after. I want time to think first.

JS: Well, the old proverb is, "Nothing ventured, nothing gained;" and it would be the greatest blessing that was ever bestowed upon you.

BY: Yes, and you will never have reason to repent it, that is, if I do not turn from righteousness, and that I trust I never shall, for I believe God who has kept me so long will continue to keep me faithful. Did you ever see me act in any way wrong in England, Martha?

MB: No, sir.

BY: No, neither can any one else lay any thing to my charge.

JS: Well, then, what are you afraid of? Come let me do the business for you.

MB: Sir, do let me have a little time to think about it, and I will promise not to mention it to any one.

BY: Well, look here, you know a fellow will never be damned for doing the best he knows how.

MB: Well, then, the best way I know of, is to go home and think and pray about it.

BY: Well, I shall leave it with brother Joseph, whether it would be best for you to have time or not.

JS: Well, I see no harm in her having time to think, if she will not fall into temptation.

MB: O, sir, there is no fear of my falling into temptation.

BY: Well, you must promise me you will never mention it to any one.

MB: I do promise it.

JS: Well, you must promise me the same.

MB: I promise.

JS: Upon your honor, you will not tell.

MB: No, sir, I will lose my life first.

JS: Well, that will do, that is the principle we go upon. I think I can trust you, Martha.

MB: Yes, I think you ought.

JS: She looks as if she could keep a secret.

Martha left the store and the next day, being Sunday, she sat down and wrote about the conversation. She shared it with her sister. Later rumor went around relating to the incident. Later Martha Brotherton's July statement would bring denials from both Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball. Martha wrote to her relatives in England. The *Millennial Star*, the church periodical, not knowing the private teachings in Nauvoo, wrote:

But, for the information of those who may be assailed by those foolish tales about the two wives, we would say that no such principle ever existed among the Latter-day Saints, and never will; this is well known to all who are acquainted with our books, the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants; and also all our periodicals are very strict and explicit on that subject, indeed far more so than the Bible.<sup>5</sup>

Reaction in the church from Martha's published recollection was negative against her integrity. Martha's brother-in-law John McIlwrick made a statement that Martha "is a deliberate liar." Her two sisters, Elizabeth and Mary, concurred. Brigham Young also made an affidavit stating, "I do hereby testify that the affidavit of Miss Martha Brotherton that is going the rounds in the politics and religious papers, is a base falsehood, with regard to any private intercourse or unlawful conduct or conversation with me."<sup>6</sup>

Shortly afterwards it was rumored that Joseph Smith privately asked Nancy Rigdon, a daughter of Sidney Rigdon, to become his (Smith's) spiritual wife. She declined, but Smith dictated a letter to her of a doctrinal nature. The letter by Joseph Smith contained ideas that were conducive to persuading a person to accept a religious principle, though it may be contrary to the accepted norm.

The following Epistle was written March [30-31] 1842 and read at the third Relief Society meeting held in Nauvoo, Illinois.

To the Hon., the President of the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo, Greeting:

Can the "Female Relief Society of Nauvoo" be trusted with some important matters that ought actually to belong to them to see to, which men have been under the necessity of seeing to, to their chagrin & mortification, in order to prevent iniquitous characters from carrying their iniquity into effect; such, as for instance, a man who may be aspiring after power and authority, and yet without principle,—regardless of God, man, or the devil, or the interest or welfare of man, or the virtue or innocence of woman?

Shall the credulity, good faith, and stedfast feelings of our sisters, for the cause of God or truth, be impos'd upon by believing such men, because they say they have authority from Joseph, or the First Presidency, or any other Presidency of the Church, and thus, with a lie on their mouth, deceive and debauch the innocent, under the assumption that they are authoriz'd from these sources? May God Forbid!

A knowledge of some such things having come to our ears, we improve this favorable opportunity, wherein so goodly a number of you may be inform'd that no such authority ever

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<sup>5</sup> "Apostacy," *Millennial Star* 3 (August 1842):74.

<sup>6</sup> Affidavit of Brigham Young, August 25, 1842, sworn and subscribed to on August 27, 1842, published in the broadside *Affidavits and Certificates, Disproving the Statements and Affidavits Contained in John C. Bennett's Letters. Nauvoo. Aug. 31, 1842*. Subsequently Brigham Young had Martha Brotherton sealed to him after her death, her younger sister Elizabeth being proxy for her, in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City. Apostle Joseph F. Smith performed the sealing. Salt Lake Temple and Endowment House Records, under date of August 1, 1870, Family History Library.

has, ever can, or ever will be given to any man, and if any man has been guilty of any such thing, let him be treated with utter contempt, and let the curse of God fall on his head, and let him be turned out of Society as unworthy of a place among men, & denounced as the blackest & the most unprincipled wretch; and finally let him be damned!

We have been informed that some unprincipled men, whose names we will not mention at present, have been guilty of such crimes. We do not mention their names, no knowing but what there may be some among you who are not sufficiently skill'd in Masonry as to keep a secret, therefore, suffice it to say, there are those, and we therefore warn you, & forewarn you, in the name of the Lord, to check & destroy any faith that any innocent person may have in any such character; for we do not want any one to believe any thing as coming from us, contrary to the old established morals & virtues & scriptural laws, regulating the habits, customs & conduct of society; and all persons pretending to be authoriz'd by us, or having any permit, or sanction from us, are & will be liars & base impostors, & you are authoriz'd on the very first intimation of the kind, to denounce them as such, & shun them as the flying fiery serpent, whether they are prophets, Seers, or revelators; Patriarchs, twelve Apostles, Elders, Priests, Mayors, Generals, City Councillors, Aldermen, Marshalls, Police, Lord Mayors or the Devil, are alike culpable & shall be damned for such evil practices; and if you yourselves adhere to any thing of the kind, you also shall be damned.

Now beloved Sisters, do not believe for a moment, that we wish to impose upon you, we actually do know that such things have existed in the church, and are sorry to say that we are obliged to make mention of any such thing, and we want a stop put to them; and we desire you to do your part, and we will do ours, for we wish to keep the commandments of God in all things, as given directly from heav'n to us, living by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord.

May God add his blessing upon your heads, and lead you in all the paths of virtue, piety & peace, that you may be an ornament unto those to whom you belong, and rise up and crown them with honors, & by so doing, you shall be crown'd with honor in heav'n and shall sit upon thrones, judging those over whom you are plac'd in authority, and shall be judg'd of God for all the responsibilities that we confer'd upon you.

At a more convenient and appropriate season, we will give you further information upon this subject.

Let this Epistle be had as a private matter in your Society, and then we shall learn whether you are good masons.

We are your humble Servants in the Bonds of the New & Everlasting Covenant."—  
Signed by

Hyrum Smith	Joseph Smith, President
Heber C. Kimball	of the church of Jesus Christ
Willard Richards	of Latter Day Saints
Vinson Knight	Brigham Young, Prest. of the
	Quorum of the Twelve

P. S. If the Lord be God, serve him; but if baal, then serve him.

(Copied into "A Record of the Organization, and Proceedings of the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo, Illinois," 86-88, recorded at the end of September 28, 1842 meeting.)

William Clayton wrote in his journal in June 1843, that Joseph Smith “said [Robert B.] Thompson professed great friendship for him but he gave way to temptation & he had to die. Also bro [Vinson] Knight he gave him one but he went to loose conduct and he could not save him. Also B.Y. [Brigham Young] had transgressed his covenant & he pled with the Lord to spare him this end & he did so, other wise he would have died. B. [Brigham Young] denied having transgressed.”

(William Clayton Journal, entry of June 23, 1843, typed copy. Robert B. Thompson died on August 27, 1841 and Vinson Knight died on July 31, 1842.)

### **Special Conference, April 7, 1842**

At a special conference held on April 7, Hyrum Smith "spoke in contradiction of a report in circulation about Elder Kimball, B. Young, himself, and others of the Twelve, alledging that a sister had been shut in a room for several days, and that they had endeavored to induce her to believe in having two wives."<sup>7</sup> How accurate the rumor was we do not know. It did mention Brigham Young and the idea of believing that men could have two wives. That the sister was "shut in a room for several days" was certainly an exaggeration.

### **Joseph Smith talked to Miss Nancy Rigdon**

George W. Robinson, son-in-law of Sidney Rigdon, explained what he heard and knew in relation to Nancy Rigdon going to meet Joseph Smith at the residence of Mrs. Marinda Hyde at the *Times and Seasons* printing office. Miss Rigdon received a letter from Smith that was hand carried by Willard Richards.

She [Nancy Rigdon] accordingly went, and Smith took her into another room, and locked the door, and then stated to her that he had had an affection for her for several years, and wished that she should be his; that the Lord was well pleased with this matter, for he had got a revelation on the subject, and God had given him all the blessings of Jacob, &c. &c., and that there was no sin in it whatever; but, if she had any scruples of conscience about the matter, he would marry her privately, and enjoined her to secrecy, &c. &c.

She repulsed him, and was about to raise the neighbors if he did not unlock the door and let her out; and she left him with disgust, and came home and told her father [Sidney Rigdon] of the transaction; upon which Smith was sent for. He came.

She told the tale in the presence of all the family, and to Smith's face. I was present. Smith attempted to deny it at first, and face her down with the lie; but she told the facts with so much earnestness, and the fact of a letter being present, which he had caused to be written to her, on the same subject, the day after the attempt made on her virtue, breathing the same spirit, and which he had fondly hoped was destroyed,—all came with such force that he could not

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<sup>7</sup> "Conference Minutes," *Times and Seasons* 3 (April 15, 1842):763.



withstand the testimony; and he then and there acknowledged that every word of Miss Rigdon's testimony was true. Now for his excuse, which he made for such a base attempt, and for using the name of the Lord in vain, on that occasion. He wished to ascertain whether she was virtuous or not, and took that course to learn the facts!!!

(Extract of letter, George W. Robinson to James Arlington Bennet, July 27, 1842 in Bennett, *History of the Saints*, 246, emphasis omitted.)

### **Joseph Smith sent a letter to Nancy.**

The letter was in the handwriting of Willard Richards and delivered to her by Richards. Letter of Joseph Smith to Miss Nancy Rigdon, circa April 11, 1842:

Happiness is the object and design of our existence, and will be the end thereof, if we pursue the path that leads to it, and this path is virtue, uprightness, faithfulness, holiness, and keeping all the commandments of God. But we cannot keep all the commandments without first knowing them, and we cannot expect to know all, or more than we now know unless we comply with or keep those we have already received. That which is wrong under one circumstance, may be, and often is, right under another. God said, thou shalt not kill, -- at another time he said, thou shalt utterly destroy. This is the principle on which the government of heaven is conducted -- by revelation adapted to the circumstances in which the children of the kingdom are placed.

Whatever God requires is right, no matter what it is, although we may not see the reason thereof till long after the events transpire. If we seek first the kingdom of God, all good things will be added. So with Solomon -- first he asked wisdom, and God gave it him, and with it every Desire of his heart, even things which might be considered abominable to all who understand the order of heaven only in part, but which, in reality, were right, because God gave and sanctioned by special revelation. A parent may whip a child, and justly too, because he stole an apple; whereas if the child had asked for the apple, and the parent had given it, the child would have eaten it with a better appetite, there would have been no stripes -- all the pleasures of the apple would have been received, all the misery of stealing lost. This principle will justly apply to all of God's dealings with his children.

Everything that God gives us is lawful and right, and 'tis proper that we should enjoy his gifts and blessings whenever and wherever he is disposed to bestow; but if we should seize upon those same blessings and enjoyments without law, without revelation, without commandment, those blessings and enjoyments would prove cursings and vexations in the end, and we should have to lie down in sorrow and wailings of everlasting regret. But in obedience there is joy and peace unspotted, unalloyed, and as God has designed our happiness, and the happiness of all his creatures, he never has, he never will institute an ordinance, or give a commandment to his people that is not calculated in its nature to promote that happiness which he has designed, and which will not end in the greatest amount

of good and glory to those who become the recipients of his law and ordinances. Blessings offered, but rejected, are no longer blessings, but become like the talent hid in the earth by the wicked and slothful servant -- the proffered good returns to the giver, the blessing is bestowed on those who will receive and occupy; for unto him that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundantly; but unto him that hath not or will not receive, shall be taken away that which he hath, or might have had.

Be wise to-day, 'tis madness to defer,  
Next day the fatal precedent may plead;

Thus on till wisdom is pushed out of time. Into eternity. Our heavenly father is more liberal in his views, and boundless in his mercies and blessings, than we are ready to believe or receive, and at the same time is more terrible to the workers of iniquity, more awful in the executions of his punishments, and more ready to detect every false way, than we are apt to suppose him to be. He will [be] enquired of by his children -- he says, ask, and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, but if ye will take that which is not your own, or which I have not given you, you shall be rewarded according to your deeds, but no good thing will I withhold from them who walk uprightly before me, and do my will in all things, who will listen to my voice, and to the voice of my servant whom I have sent, for I delight in those who seek diligently to know my precepts, and abide by the law of my kingdom, for all things shall be made known unto them in mine own due time, and in the end they shall have joy.

(Original letter in the handwriting of Willard Richards not extant. From John C. Bennett, Letter [No. 6], August 3, 1842, "To the Editor of the Journal," *Sangamo Journal* 10 [August 19, 1842]:2, Springfield, Illinois.)

The Nauvoo High Council in May 1842 was investigating cases of iniquity in Nauvoo. Wilford Woodruff wrote in his journal:

27th The first Presidency The Twelve & High Council & virtuous part of the Church are making an exertion abot these days to clense the Church from Adulterors fornicators & evil persons for their are such persons crept into our midst. The high council have held a number of meeting of late & their researches have disclosed much iniquity & a number been Cut off from the church. I met with the High Council to day on the trial of L. O. Littlefield Joel S Miles & Darwin Chase. The two former were cut of for Adultery & the case of D Chase was put of till tomorrow.

28th The case of D. Chase was tryed & he restored to fellowship by the majority of own[ly?] 1 vote.

(*Wilford Woodruff's Journal* 2:177, May 27-28, 1842)

Willard Richards recorded in the Book of the Law of the Lord under the date of May 26, 1842 the following:

Thursday 26 [Joseph Smith at the] Masonic Lodge in the A.M. Dr John C. Bennet[t] confessed the charges preferred again[s]t him concerning females in Nauvoo. & was forgiven[.] Joseph [Smith] plead in his behalf.—Dr Bennet[t] was notified the day previous [May 25] that the first Presidency. Twelve & Bishops had withdrawn fellowship from him & were about to publish him. but on his humbling himself & requesting it the withdrawal was withheld from the paper. [*Times and Seasons* issue of June 1]

(Book of the Law of the Lord, 124 as cited in *Journals, Volume 2*:63)

From the Nauvoo High Council Minutes:

May 20th 1842. Council met at the ~~Store of Joseph Smith~~ Lodge Room

Charge against Chancy L Higbee by George Miller For unchaste and unvirtuous conduct with the widow Miller and others. Plead not guilty. Two were appointed to speak on each side Viz-- (6) George W. Harris (7) Thos Grover (8) Aaron Johnson (9) Newel Knight.

The defendant Plead for an adjournment as he was not ready for trial for the want of his evidence.

The council decided that his reasons were not sufficient for an adjournment and proceeded to trial.

Three witness testified that he had seduced them and at different times been guilty of unchaste and unvirtuous conduct with them and taught the doctrine that it was right to have free intercourse with women if it was kept secret &c and also taught that Joseph Smith authorized him to practise these things &c.

On motion of President Hyrum Smith

[p. 2:]

Resolved, That he (Chancy Higbee) be expelled from the Church and the same be made publick through the medium of the "Times and Seasons."

2nd Charge against Robert D. Foster by Nathan F Knight for unchristianlike conduct in not being willing to settle with me honorably for work that my son did for him and for a ten dollar bill that he had of my son which said bill was counterfeit but he refused to give it up and my son was deprived of the privilege of taking it back and exchanging it where he got it. Pl[e]ad not guilty One were appointed to speak on each side Viz (11) Leonard Soby and (12) Joshua Smith Pro tem.

The charge was not sustained On motion Resolved, That he be acquitted After which the parties were reconciled Adjourned till Saturday the 28th at President Hyrum Smith's office at 1 O'clock

Hosea Stout Clerk

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May 24th 1842 The High Council met according to apointment at the Lodge Room

1st The te[s]timony of Mrs Sarah Miller and Miss Margaret and Matilda Neymans were taken relative to the charge against Chancy Higbee and others showing the manner of iniquity practised by them upon female virtue & the unhallowed means by which they accomplished their desires

Adjourned till to morrow at 12 o'clock

H Stout

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May 25th 1842 The Council met according to adjournment

1st Charge against against John Hodson by H. G. Sherwood For unlawfully detaining from Harriet Parker, her house and premises, done in her behalf.

The defendant did not appear. The charge was fully sustained On motion Resolved That he be disfellowshipped until he make satisfaction to H. G. Sherwood and restore the house to Harriet Parker

2nd Charge against Mrs Catherine Warren by George Miller for unchaste and unvirtuous conduct with John C. Bennett and others

[p. 3:]

The defendant confessed to the charge and give the names of several others who had been guilty of having unlawful intercourse with her stating that they taught the doctrine that it was right to have free intercourse with women and that the heads of the Church also taught and practised it which things caused her to be led away thinking it to be right but becoming convinced that it was not right and learning that the heads of the church did not believe nor

practise such things she was willing to confess her sins and did repent before God for what she had done and desired earnestly that the Council would forgive her and covenanted that she would hence forth do so no more.

After which she was restored to fellowship by the unanimous vote of the Council.

3 On motion Council adjourned till ~~tomorrow~~ Friday the 27th inst at 12 O'clock at this place

Hosea Stout Clerk

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May 27th 1842 Council met according to adjournment

1st Charge against Lyman O Littlefield by Geo Miller For improper and unvirtuous conduct and for teaching false doctrine. Plead not guilty Two were appointed to speak on each side Viz. (1) Saml Bent (2) James Allred (3) Lewis D. Wilson and (4) Wilford Woodruff

The charge was fully sustained. On motion Resolved, That he be disfello[w]shipped untill he made satisfaction to this Council.

2 Charge against Darwin Chace by Geo Miller For improper and unvirtuous conduct and for teaching false doctrine. Plead not guilty Two were appoi[j]ted to speak on the case Viz (5) David Fulmer and George W. Harris.

The defendant plead for an adjournment for the want of evidence On motion Resolved, That this case be adjourned till tomorrow at 1 o'clock at this place

[p. 4:]

3rd Charge against Joel S. Miles by George Miller For improper and unvirtuous conduct and for teaching false doctrine. Plead not guilty. Two were apointed to speak on the case, Viz. (7) Thos Grover and (8) Aaron Johnson. The charge was fully sustained On motion Resolved that he be disfellowshipped ~~untill~~

Adjourned till tomorrow at 1 O'clock at this place

Hosea Stout Clerk

May 28th 1842. Council met according to adjournment

1st Charge against Justus Morse by George Miller For unchaste and unvirtuous conduct with the daughter of the Widow Neyman &c. &c. ~~Charge was sustained~~

~~The defendant did not appear before the Council but upon being cited to appear before the Council he ordered his name to be struck off of the Church Book as he did not wish to stand a trial~~

Two were appointed to speak on the case Viz. (9) Newel Knight and (10) William Huntington.

Charge was sustained On motion of President Austin Cowles, Resolved, That he (the defendant) be disfellowshipped

2nd The Charge against Darwin Chace (of the 27th inst) was taken up according to adjournment. Charg[e] not sustained

The President decided that he should be restored to full fellowship ~~which was carried by a majority of 8 to 4. After which the case spoken on by different ones of the Council to show further light on the subject and showing reasons why they did not accede to the Presidents decisions.~~

~~The President again called on the council to sanction his decision which was done unanimously.~~ Which was carried unanimously

Which was carried unanimously

3 On motion Adjourned till Saturday the 4th of June at \*\* o'clock at Hiram Smith's office

Hosea Stout Clerk

Testimony given before the High Council:

[PDF Page 1]

Testimony of Sarah Miller before the High Council  
of the church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in the  
City of Nauvoo May 24<sup>th</sup> 1842.— Agnst Chauncy Higby.

Some two or three weeks since, in consequence of  
Bro Joseph Smiths teachings to the singers, I began to be alarmed  
concerning myself, & certain teachings which I had recevd  
from Chauncy L. Higby, & questioned him about his teaching, for  
I was pretty well persuaded from Joseph[’s] public teachings that  
Chaney had been telling falsehood.— but Chauncy said that

~~that~~ Joseph Now taught as he did th[r]ough necessity, on account of the prejudices of the people, & his own family particularly as they had not become ~~full~~ believers in the doctrine.— I then became satisfied that all of chaunceys teaching had been false [erased word], & that he had never been authorized by any one in authority to make any such communication to me. Chancy L. Higbys teaching & conduct were as follows. When he first came to my house ^soon^ after the spical conferene this spring, darwin chase was with him ^Chancy^ he comnced joking me about my getting married & & [sic] wanted to know how long it had been ~~for~~ since my husband died<sup>8</sup> — and he soon removed his seat near me & began his seducing insinuations by saying it was no harm to have sexual intercourse with women if they would keep it to themselves. & continued to urge me to yield to his desires, & urged me vehemently. & said he & Joseph were Good friends & he teaches me this doctrine. & allows me such privilgs & there is no harm in it & Joseph Smith says so.— I told him I did not believe it, & had heard no such teching frm Joseph. Nor frm the stand but that it was wicked to commit adultry, &c. Chauncy said that did not mean Single women, but Married women: & continued to press his instructions & arguments until after dark, & until I was inclined to believe, for he called God to witness of the truth, & was so solemn and confident, I yielded to his temptations, having received the stronget assure from him that Joseph app[r]ovd it & would uphold me in it.

[p. 2]

He also told me that many others were following the same coure of conduct As I still had some doubts near the close of our interview I <agn> suggested my fear that I had done wrong & should loose the confidence of the brthrn when he assurd me that it was right & he would bring a witness ~~a witness~~ to confirm what he had taught.

When he came again William Smith<sup>9</sup> came with him

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<sup>8</sup> James David Miller died in Nauvoo on August 30, 1839, at the age of 26, leaving Sarah Searcy Miller to raise their four children. Sarah Searcy Miller married second, John Hopwood Blazzard on November 23, 1843. Three years later, her own *eleven* year-old daughter, Martha Ann Miller, also married the 43 year-old John Hopwood Blazzard, on March 30, 1846 (born September 22, 1834 in Case, Montgomery, IL). This is the youngest girl in a pedogamous marriage I have found. By the time Martha Miller was 24, she had married another three Mormon men (James Henry Marsh, Isaac John Hill, and James P. Brown), all at least two decades older than herself.

<sup>9</sup> The *Nauvoo Neighbor*, May 29, 1844, p. 3, deletes William Smith from p. 2 of Sarah Miller's testimony:

& told me that the doctrine which Chauncy Higby had taught me was true. & that Joseph believd the doctrine. I still had doubts & replied that I had understood that Higby had had [sic] recently been baptized & that Joseph when he confirmd him told him to quit all his iniquitous practices. Chauncy Said it was not for such things ~~things~~ that he was baptized for <chauncy exited from the room> & William Smith said that he would take all the sin to himself. – for there was no sin in it. before Chauncy left the house he said do you think I would be baptized for such a thing & then go into it so soon again. Chauncy Higby said that it would never be known. I told him that it might be told in bringing forth [pregnancy]. Chauncy said there was no Danger <& that> Dr Bennt understood it & would come & take it away if there was any thing.  
Sarah Miller

Hancock Co } To wit – Then appeard Sarah Miller to  
State of Illinois } sign of the above instrument : & made  
City of Nauvoo } oath that the above declaration, is true  
before me. Geo W Harris \_\_ (Esq?)  
Nauvoo May 24, 1842                      Alderman of Nauvoo City

[Sideways]  
Sarah Miller  
Chauncy Higby

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He also told me that many others were following the same course of conduct As I still had some doubts, near the close of our interview, I again suggested my fears that I had done wrong, and should loose the confidence of the brethren, when he assured that it was right, and he would bring a witness to confirm what he had taught. When he come again, I still had doubts, I told him I understood he, (Higbee,) had recently been baptized, and that Joseph, when he confirmed him, told him to quit all his iniquitous practices, - Chauncey said it was not for such things that he was baptized for, do you think I would be baptized for such a thing and then go into it so soon again ? Chauncey Hibebe, said it would never be known, I told him it might be told in bringing forth. Chauncey said there was no danger, and that Dr. Bennet [sic] understood it, and would come and take it away, if there was any thing.



Testimony of Miss ^Maria^ Champlin before the High Council of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints May 27<sup>th</sup> 1842-

All that I know ^one week ago last Sabbath^ L & C rode out ^and was out ~~untill~~ until 10 I\_\_\_ Rachel & Ellen Kingsly – Rachel & Littlefield came back in an hour before - ^this they[?]^ started about dusk – rode – did not say what they were going for – to take a ride. I thought there conduct was imprudent, She said some things to me which L. has said to her – such as somethings as were going on up here – referring to the heads of the church. Did not see them there at any other time: ^\_\_ were there the Sunday before^ I have not seen Joel D. Miles particularly know nothing of his improper conduct. Kinglseys are not member of the church – they say they came up here to join the church but in consequence of the conduct and proceedings of some in the church they would not. Polly Mecham. Mrs L & C came to the Champlins ^on foot^ in the afternoon ^between 4 & 5^ rode out & came back ^about 10 o clock^ ~~last sunday~~ – was there a week ago last sundy tarried until dark and then went away – I heard him speak concening some terrible things going on in town, did not say what they were ~~Kingsleys are not membrers of the church—came up here to~~

Champlin – I was at home when they came there I should think about 5 o clock – read newspaper – about dusk talked about having a ride – went out – we went to bed – Rachel came home about 10 o clock – and said Ellen she was afraid was thrown from her horse and ~~her~~ & L. went away again to seek them – ^the four^ returned sometime after and Littlefield & Chase tarried about one hour afterwards.

Wm Champlin. Knew nothing particular to Kingsleys character only hearsay not in Pa. they lived 15 or 20 miles from us - I did not see you conduct yourself only like a gentleman – did not see any thing ill.

[p. 3? – missing p. 2 in PDF?]

walked out on the Prairie – did not see you after you had been gone a few minutes – could not see far – there is two houses – none a great ways off – gone about an hour – did not hear you say where you was gone If you were out on prairie people could see – Did not think it was prudent- they said they had been acquainted formerly – that you had married a sister in law. Saw you last [summer?] – rode on horse back returned & went to prairie – there are houses in sight – think you were gone untill about 10 o clock. There is one house on the way to the prarie – Rachel said you told her of oncie[?] of the proceedings carried on in the city – and said you told her Joseph disapprobated it – said nothing about Chase – Did not thing [sic] any thing about

your conduct being bad when you came in – when you went out on the prairie I did

Champlin – I thought they behaved well till after they started with the intention of talking a wile – rode two on a horse - a man and a woman on each horse, From the statement of Rachel to me respecting what L. had said – she drew the conclusion that there was wickedness practised in Nauvoo and that Joseph put men up to it and then took means to discover it and disapprove it The girls first proposed to ride out. That Joseph was taking means to find out who was carrying on thus and \_\_\_\_ men to make it known – Joseph would persuade men to do unlawful acts and then expose them – this was what you said to her – Rachel Kingsleys girls did not bear a good character in Pa. nor in Mo.

Not acquainted with Kingsleys girls

[PDF Pages 5 and 6]

Testimony of Melinda Lewis before the High Council of the Church of Jesus

I saw Darwin Chase at Widow Fullers and that is all that ~~sh~~ I did know about him. I do not know Joel S. Miles, don't know that I ever heard his name before. I am not acquainted with Widow Fullers house at all I saw Chancey Higby at Widow Fullers frequently just before dark and one time I went in and saw him there I thought he had not rights to be there. I saw Chase there saw Jno C Bennett there last summer. Saw several strangers there did not know them – did not see Backenstos there – I have see[n] L O Little field go over the fence and she and him stand and talk a good many times – have never seen Wm Smith there – do not know Thatcher Do not know of any other men visiting there – heard reports of Widow Miller know nothing of Clothiers ~~Caroline Butler~~

Caroline Butler

I have frequently seen Darwin Chase & Chancy Higby go to Widow Fullers frequently – have seen Joel S. Miles go there – have seen L. C. [sic- O?] Littlefield go in there – A man from Carthage was there a few weeks ago – (Barriss's wife's testimony) – Barriss's wife was there – did not tell his name – was a widower – two nights before she was married Barriss wife said they sat up pretty much all night. Do not know Justus Morse nor Shindles wife was frequently with widow

fuller – Neymans girls was frequently there don't know any particulars

Ellen Edwards – Lives on the same Block with Caroline Butler – about ¼ mile from Fullers – not acquainted with Darwin Chase nor Joel S. Miles went in one night ^went in without knocking as she frequently did – went to tarry[?]^ and saw fo\_\_ \_\_ there once[?] was Chancy Higby – saw no improper conduct – new years week – Don't know Justus Morse

[p. 2]

I know J. C. Bennett – never saw him there – not acquainted with Clothiers only one of the girls – seen her at the meeting several times – Not acquainted with Ghee's – am acquainted with Margaret Neyman don't know where they live – I live at my fathers – never heard Margeret say any thing about Bennett of Higbee. ———

Mary Hardman – Not much acquainted with widow Fuller have seen Darwin Chase – not acquainted with Joel S. Miles . acquainted with J C. Bennett – went with Eleen [sic] Edwards to widow Fullers saw Chancy Higbee & Darwin Chase – did not know the others

Melinda Lewis

I am very suspicious of Mrs Barriss but do no know any thing positive – is now working on the island with a man who is not her husband – have seen them frequently walking together his name is Richard Sheldon – She is frequently visiting with Widow Fuller and tarries all nights – her husband is sick Sheldon is a single man – and is at work for Barriss

I and sister Lewis went one night (Wednesday) to sister Fullers and stopped [?] at the door – she would not admit us in – we felt grieved because we knew our husbands were supply[ing] her with fuel &c we talked to her – somewhat aggravating – but for her good – pulled a curtain sideways that was hanging over a crack in the door Our Sister had been before us and rapped at the door – could not gain admittance – and soon after a man was seen to go into the house on the Saturday after Chancy Higbee & Lyman O. Littlefield had as before squire Hiles [?] for rapping at the door &c – he bound us over to keep the peace for three months. time is out tomorrow – Said it was her custom to not open the door when she had company she did not want any one to know who she kept company with

C. Butler testified she saw with regard to sister Barriss and said that

was the reason they had object to her becoming a member of the Female Relief Society –

[PDF Pages 7-8]

Testimony of Catherine Fuller ^Warren^ before the High Council of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in the City of Nauvoo May 25<sup>th</sup> 1842. Against John C. Bennett & others

Nearly a year ago I became acquainted with John C. Bennett, after visiting twice and on the third time he proposed unlawful intercourse, being about one week after first acquaintance. He said he wished his desires granted I told him it was contrary to my feelings he answered there was others in higher standing than I was who would conduct in that way, and there was not harm in it. He said there should be no sin upon me if there was any sin it should come upon himself. I told him I was not guilty of such conduct and thought it would bring a disgrace[?] on the church If I should become pregnant he said he would attend to that. I understood that he would give medicine to prevent it. Sometime last winter ^I became alarmed at my conduct and told him I did not wish his company any longer^ he told me that the heads of the church were conducting in that manner ^and referenced[?] Joseph's name^ and he thought as he had no good wife[?] as they had, I think this happened last October, He said that Joseph taught and conducted in the above manner, He also was with Mrs Shindle now living beyond Ramus. and also with the two Miss Nymans Hxxx. I do not know that he kept[?] company with any others neither did I hear him say he had. I have also had unlawful connexion with Chauneey Higbee and George W. [or M.?] Thatcher. C. Higbee taught this same doctrine as was taught by ^J C^ Bennett and that Joseph Smith taught and practised those things, but he stated that he did not have it from Joseph but he had this information from Dr. John C. Bennett. He Chancey L. Higbee has gained his object about 5 or 6 times. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~<sup>10</sup> has also been to my house on the 27<sup>th</sup> of last month being the day I was married and proposed unlawful connexion but I refused and told him that it was contrary to the teaching of Joseph on the stand. He answered that Joseph was obliged to teach to the contrary on the stand to keep down prejudice and keep peace at home First W. Smith insisted very much that I should not marry and proposed to supply me with food &c if I should remain unmarried and grant his requests Chaney Higbee also made

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<sup>10</sup> Although heavily crossed out, the name is about the right length to be that of William Smith, the few letters that are visible correspond with his name, William was one of this circle of men who seduced women in Nauvoo, and William was in Nauvoo at the time, having just begun to edit *The Wasp* on April 16, 1842. In addition, further down in the paragraph the name of "W. Smith" appears faintly.

~~propositions to keep me with food if I would submit to his designs~~

[p. 2]

Darwin Chase has also been at my house – sometime last winter as made propositions for unlawful connexion he did not urge much – I did not yeild to him.

Liman O. Littlefield has also been at my house – and made similar propositions and taught the same doctrines as those already referred to – He did not gain his designs – because I saw I was ruining myself and bringing disgrace upon the church This took place about the last of January or first of February. He came several times in the space of a few weeks

Joel S. Miles has also been at my house and made propositions for unlawful intercourse and taught similar doctrine to that taught by Bennett. He accomplished his designs twice. He came several times but has not been lately. ~~The above transactions~~ ^This^ took place sometimes in January.

George W. Thatcher has been at my house twice, sometime in the middle of February but not since that time – he had ^unlawful^ intercourse with me twice he said the heads of the church wear teaching and practising such Black things, and he had as good rights as they had. Sometime about a year ago last ^summer^ as I have been informed ^Mrs Bosworth^ went to the house of ~~Mrs~~ ^Alfred^ Brown but the door was fast – I thought they were not at home but happening to look over the door where a clapboard was off, I saw Dr. J. C. Bennett and Mrs Brown sitting very close together

John C. Bennett was the first man that seduced me – no man ever made the attempt before him

J. B. Backenstos has also been at my house – was introduced by Chancy Higby – made request similar as above – gave me two dollars – He accomplished his designs only once – has been there two or three times since. This happened in the fore part of this winter–

[PDF Page 9]

Testimony of Catherine Fuller –

L. O. Littlefield had been at my house, and made propositions to have unlawful intercourse – he urged hard\_ this was about the last of January or first of February – had been 3 or 4 times in course of 2 or 3 weeks\_ he urged doctrine such as the following – namely – that there was no harm in having unlawful intercourse – that others conducted in the same way – there there [sic] should be no sin come upon her – if there was any it

should come upon himself; that the heads of the church were practising the same things – named Joseph Smith – he urged this doctrine – was there about the first of February about 8 in the evening

Caroline Butler – went & rapped at Widow Fullers door- could not gain admittance – a sister had been before us and between the time that sister was there and the time we went a man was seen to go into the house.

This was on the Wednesday – on the saturday after L. O Littlefield & C. Higby summoned us before squire Hills for rapping at the door & c – who bound us to keep the peace 3 months

On motion by Pres Marks – it was resolved by the Council that L. O. Littlefield be expelled from the Church untill he makes full satisfaction

[PDF Page 10]

Widow ~~Fuller~~ or Warren — againt Darwin Ch[ase]

don't know what the main cause  
of it was until [?] for \_\_\_il,  
Ju[ne?] – came in sat down by the side  
of me. began to behave indelcut. I told  
him to behave himself. he said their was  
no harm in it – came with Chauncy Hig[bee]  
\_\_\_\_\_: - in the evening – Said his friends are ou[t?]  
in an unwarrantable manner – Mairs teachd  
each other. put his hands on me. I thought  
by his words [& looks?] &c. he desird or intended  
unlawful intercourse – walked to my home  
with Sister Thompson from Meeting

Matilda Nyman Darwin Chase preposd to have  
illicit intercourse with me, but did not urge it  
hard. taught the same doctrine as others but  
Did not use the name of Joseph.

before High Council May 28 1842}

Chauncey Higbee taught the same doctrine as was taught by Bennett and that Joseph Smith practised such conduct but he did not have it from Joseph but he had it from Dr Bennett  
Wm Smith has also been at my house and proposed unlawful connexion but I refused because I had come to the determination to break off such conduct as I saw I was ruining myself,

Darwin Chase has also been at my house sometime last winter made propositions as above but did not urge much – I did not yeild to him

Liman O. Littlefield has also been at my house – made similar propositions – taught the same doctrines as the above but did not accomplish his object because I saw I was ruining myself and bringing disgrace upon the church. This happened on the last of January or first of February. He came several times in the space of a few weeks

Joel S. Miles has also been at my hosue – made propositions similar, and taught the same doctrine and accomplished his object, - sometime in January came several times but has not been lately.

About the middle of Feby Thatcher was at my house – came twice – has not been since.

Suppose Dr Bennett has gained his object 10 or 12 times  
— C. Higbee ————— 5 or 6 times  
— Joel S. Miles ————— 2 times

John C. Bennett was the first man that seduced me – no man ever made the attempt before him  
~~XXXXXXXXX insisted very much that I would not marry — and proposed if I would grant his desires he would furnish me with food &c~~  
Cigbee [sic] also promised to Keep me and supply me with food

Matilda Nyman. C Higby. John C. Bennt . Willim Smith S.  
Justus Moss [Morse]. Darwin Chase. taught. —  
Margret Nyman says Dr Bentt has been at Davis [? - Darwins?]. last July –  
John C. Bennt & Channy Higby – seduce.

May 28. Fellowship with drawn fom [sic] Justus Moss  
Alexander McRay . came in & testified that he had  
withely in farm[?] of Chany Higby.\_ Channy wanted 2  
stand[?] testify against Nyman at Davis[?]. I think her  
name was ^Margret^ Jane. Nyman.— Hugh White.

Matilda Nyman Says Widow Fuller is guilty of the same  
Dr Bennet was with her. I went to take a  
walk . C. Higby brought him there. She says she  
always has been his friend & always will be.  
& told us there was no harm & provided us  
both to subject[?].— Saw Bennet in the act  
with Sis Fuller. — Bennt[?] Married Wm  
Warren— I was with C Higby and the same  
time Margret. —

Miss Maajor[?] – has moved out of Sa\_\_\_\_[?]  
by farm blongs to the \_\_\_\_ty[?] & signified  
she was gulty. —————  
Widow Fuller said She had a gold wath [sic] sent  
to her. by the name of Warren. But James[or Jane's?] got  
it instead of Chany.

Mr Gee lived above our house Bennt called  
almost every Day. Mr Gee would send  
his little Girl away till Bennt left—

Chauncy Higby is cut off from the chuch [sic].

[Upside down]

Testimony of Sarah Miller before the High Council of Nauvoo (May 24. 1842)

[PDF Page 13]

Testimony of Matilda Nyman before the High council of the Church of Jesus  
Christ of Latter day Saints in the city of Nauvoo, May the 21.  
1842 Against Chancy Higby

During this Spring Chancy L Higby kept company with me  
from time to time, and as I have since learned Wickedly, deceitfully  
and with lies in his mouth, urged me vehemently to yeald to [his]  
desires, that there could be no wrong in having sexual in



=tercourse with any female that would keep the same to herself, Most villianously and lieingly Stating that he had been so instructed by Joseph Smith and that there was [no] sin where there was no accuser -, also vowing he would Marry me. Not succeeding, he on one occasion, brought one in Authority in the Church, who affirmed that such intercourse was tolerated by the heads of the Church, I have since found him also to be a lieing conspirator against female virtue & chastity, having never received such teachings from the heads of the church ; but I was at the time partially influenced to believe in consequence of the source from whom I received it, I yealded and became subject to the will of my sedu =cers[sic] Chancey L. Higby— And having since found out to my satisfaction that a number of wicked men have con =spired to use the Name of Joseph Smith, or the heads of the Church, falsely & wickedly, to enable them to gratify their lusts, thereby destroying female innocence & virtue I repent before god & my brethren and ask forgiveness.

I further testify that I never had any personal acquaintance with Joseph Smith, & never heard him teach such doctrines as Higby, sta[t]ed either directly or indirectly —Matilda J. Nyman

Hancock Co} To wit: Nauvoo city, May 24, 1842. Then personaly appeared State Illinois} Before me, Geo. W. Harris, alderman of said city, Matilda J. Nyman the signer of this instrument & testified under oath that the above decaration[sic] was true. Geo W Harris Ald

[PDF Page 14]

Catherine Fuller- Joel S. Miles has been at my house Sometime in January – made propositions of illicit Intercourse – said their was no harm in it\_ that the heads of the church were practising such things &c accomplished his designs twice – had not been at her house for the past three weeks

Caroline Butler – has seen Joel S. Miles go there.

[PDF Page 15]

Nauvoo May 21<sup>st</sup> 1842  
Testimony of Margaret Nyman before the High

Council of the Church of Jesus Christ of latter day Saints  
in the City of Nauvoo

Some time during the Month [of] March last, Chancey Higby came to my Mothers house, early one evening and proposed a walk to a Spelling School, My Sister Matilda and myself accompanied him but Changing our design on the way we stopped at Mrs Fullers, during the evenings interview- he, (as I have Since learned \_) with wicked lies proposed that I should yeald \_ To his desires and indulge in Sexual intercourse with him, Stating that Such intercourse might be freely indulged in, and was no Sin, that any respectable female Might indulge in Sexual intercourse and there was no sin in it, provided the person so indulging, keep the same to herself, for there could be no Sin when there was no accuser - and most Clandestinly with wicked lies persuaded me to yeald, by using the Name of Joseph Smith, and as I have Since learned totally ~~wxxx~~ false and unauthorized. and in consequence of those arguments I was influenced to yeald to My Sedu=cer, Chancy L. Higby.

I further state that I ~~had xxx~~ ^have no personal^ acquaintance with Joseph Smith, and never heard him teach such doctrines as stated by Chancy Higby, either directly or indirectly. I heartily repent before god, Asking the forgiveness of My Brethren.        Margaret J Nyman

County of Hancock} Nauvoo. May 21t 1842  
State of Illinois} To wit. Then personally appeard before me  
City of Nauvoo} George W. harris, Alderman for the  
                    City of Nauvoo ^Margaret J. Nyman, the signer of the above in trument^  
                    testified under oath  
                    that the above declaration is true  
                    Geo. W Harris Ald

[PDF Page 16]

Catherine Fuller. States that Darwin Chase has been at her house sometime in winter – made proposals to have unlawful intercourse – said it was no harm\_

Melinda Lewis\_ States that she once saw Darwin Chase

and another in Widow Fullers house at night

Caroline Butler - has frequently seen Darwin Chase  
go to Widow Fullers

Maria Champlin – saw Chase with Littlefield ~~one night~~  
~~xxx~~ last sabbath-came to Kingsleys about 5 o clock - about  
dusk rode out with one of the Miss Kingsley's to the prairie-  
returned about 10 o clock – some time after L. O. Littlefield  
had returned – tarried about one hour after- said that Joseph  
tried to persuade men to act wickedly and then exposed them.  
Polly Mecham – saw Darwin Chase with L. O. Littlefield,  
come to Kingsleys last sabbath – on foot- spoke  
concerning terrible things going on in Nauvoo –

Darwin Chase was rebuked, after he had partially  
confessed. Moved by the Prest that Bro Chase retain  
his standing &c

[EXTRA PAGE]

Polly Masheres

Littlefield Chase come about sun set. to Bro cham  
plins. sundy week. staid till 10 o clock  
week last sundy staid till.

Bro champlin knows nothing materiel more than stated  
come 4 or 5 o klok about dusk talked about [giving?] ride —

[Sideways]  
Summary  
of  
Testimony against  
Darwin Chase

NOTICE.

The subscribers, members of the First Presidency of the church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day  
Saints, withdraw the hand of fellowship from General John C. Bennett, as a christian, he having  
been labored with from time to time, to persuade him to amend his conduct, apparently to no  
good effect.

JOSEPH SMITH,  
HYRUM SMITH,

WM. LAW.

The following members of the Quorum of the Twelve concur in the above sentiments.

BRIGHAM YOUNG,  
HEBER C. KIMBALL,  
LYMAN WIGHT,  
WILLIAM SMITH,  
JOHN E. PAGE,  
JOHN TAYLOR,  
WILFORD WOODRUFF,  
GEORGE A. SMITH,  
WILLARD RICHARDS.

We concur in the above sentiment.

N.K. WHITNEY,  
V. KNIGHT,  
GEORGE MILLER,

Bishops of the above mentioned Church.  
Nauvoo, May 11th, 1842.

(Notice, *Times and Seasons* 3 [June 15, 1842]:830)

The above should be compared with the handwritten notice written by Willard Richards and partly signed. There are three “signatures” in the hand of Richards which three of the apostles did not sign.

and signed - the following document was read and

## Notice

The Subscribers, Members of the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, withdraw the bonds of fellowship from Gen. John C. Bennett, as a Christian, he having been labored with from time to time, to persuade him to amend his conduct, apparently to no good effect.

Nauvoo May 11. 1842

The following members of the Quorum of the Twelve agree in the above sentiment to severance.

Joseph Smith  
Hyrum Smith  
Wm. Law.

Brigham Young  
Seber C. Kimball  
Laman Wight  
John Taylor  
Willford Woodruff  
William Richards  
John E. Page  
William Smith  
Geo. A. Smith  
~~Samuel B. Reed~~

We concur in the above sentiment

A. R. Whitney }  
T. Knight } Bishops of  
George Miller } the above  
mentioned  
Church

### Withdrawal from the Church:

May 17th, 1842.

Bro. JAMES SLOAN, -- You will be so good as to permit General Bennett to withdraw his name from the Church Record, if he desires to do so, and this with the best of feelings towards you and General Bennett.

JOSEPH SMITH.

In accordance with the above I have permitted General Bennett to withdraw his membership from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, this 17th day of May, 1842, -- the best of feelings subsisting between all parties,

JAMES SLOAN,  
General Church Clerk and Recorder.

(John C. Bennett, Letter [No. 1], June 27, 1842, "To the Editor of the Journal," *Sangamo Journal* 10 [July 8, 1842], Springfield, Illinois, quotation marks omitted)

Include Bennett's resignation as mayor of Nauvoo. May 17, 1842 – copy – , original in Church History Library

Minutes of Nauvoo City Council:

Resolved by the City Council of the City of Nauvoo, that the resignation of the office of Mayor of this City, by John C. Bennett, which has been presented & Read by the City Recorder, be, and the same hereby is unanimously Accepted.

Passed May 19th 1842. Joseph Smith, Vice Mayor, & President, Pro Tempore. James Sloan, Recorder.

(John S. Dinger, ed., *The Nauvoo City and High Council Minutes* [Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2011], 84-85)

Resolved. by the City Council of the City of Nauvoo, that this Council tender a Vote of Thanks to Gen[era]l John C. Bennett, for his great Zeal in having good & wholesome Laws adopted for the Government of this City, & for the faithful discharge of his Duty while Mayor of the same.

Passed May 19th 1842. Joseph Smith, Mayor. James Sloan, Recorder.

(Dinger, *The Nauvoo City and High Council Minutes*, 86)

At Nauvoo City Council, May 19, 1842, recorded in the Book of the Law of the Lord:

After the Election [for Mayor of Nauvoo] Joseph [Smith] spoke at some length concerning the evil reports which were abroad in the city concerning himself— & the nec[e]ssity of counteracting the designs of our enemies. . . .

Dr John C. Bennet[t]. Ex mayor, was then called upon by the Mayor [Joseph Smith] to state if he knew ought against him.— When Dr. Bennet[t] replied "I know what I am about. & the heads of the church know what they are about. I expect: I have no difficulty with the heads of the church. I publicly avow

that any one who has said that I have stated that General Joseph Smith has given me authority to hold illicit intercourse with women is a Liar in the face of God. Those who have said it are damned Liars: they are infernal Liars. He never <eithe[r]> in public or private gave me any such authority or license, & any person who states it is a Scoundrel & a Liar. I have heard it said that I should b[e]come a Seckond [Second] Avard by withdrawing from the church, & that I was at variance with the heads <& should use an influence against them> because I resigned the office of Mayor: This is false, I have no difficulty with the heads of the church & Intend to continue with you. & hope the time may come when I may be restored to full confidence. & fellowship. & my former standing in the chu[r]ch. & that my conduct may be such as to warrant my restoration.— & should the time ever come that I may have the opportunity to test my faith it will then be known wheth[e]r I am a traitor or true man.”

Josep[h]. will you please state definitely whether you know any thing again[s]t my character either in public or private?

Answer by Gen Bennet[t], "I do not. in all my intercourse with General Smith. in public & in private he has been strictly virtuous."

Joseph then made some pertinent remarks before the council concerning those who had been guilty of circulating false reports &c & said “Let one twelve months see if Bro Joseph is not call[e]d for to go to every part of the city to keep them out of their groves & I turn the keys upon them from this hour if they will not repent & stop their lyings & surmisings. Let God curse them. & let their tongu[e]s cleave unto the roofs of their mouth.

(Book of the Law of the Lord, 122-23; *Journals, Volume 2*:58, 60-61)

[The following affidavit is from *The Wasp*, June 25, 1842]

STATE OF ILLINOIS, }  
City of Nauvoo. }

Personally appeared before me, Daniel H. Wells, an Alderman of said city of Nauvoo, John C. Bennett, who being duly sworn according to law, deposeth and saith: that he never was taught any thing in the least contrary to the strictest principles of the Gospel, or of virtue, or of the laws of God, or man, under any circumstances, or upon any occasion either directly or indirectly, in word or deed, by Joseph Smith; and that he never knew the said Smith to countenance any improper conduct whatever, either in public or private; and that he never did teach to me in private that an illegal, illicit intercourse with females was, under any circumstances, justifiable; and that I never knew him so to teach others.

JOHN C. BENNETT.

Sworn to, and subscribed, before me, this 17th day of May, A. D. 1842.

DANIEL H. WELLS,  
Alderman.

See earlier letter published in the *Millennial Star*, 1842

Letter of William Clayton:

To John C. Bennett, Mayor of the City of Nauvoo.

Respected Sir,—

I have complaints to make, against the following individuals, for selling spirituous liquors, contrary to the laws of this city, viz.:—John McIlwrick and Ebenezer Jennings. John McIlwrick, for retailing whisky to Margaret Robinson, on the twenty-first of April, 1842. Witnesses,—Alice Martin and Lucy Clayton.

Ebenezer Jennings, for retailing whisky, on the seventeenth of March, 1842. Witness,—Mary Hardman.

I am sorry to see the drunkenness that has of late manifested itself in our city, and for one would rejoice to see it put to an end. Cases are almost daily occurring; but, for want of time, I am not able to obtain the necessary evidence. The above cases are collected, merely to show to the individuals concerned, that people are aware of their transgression of the laws; and if the law is put in force upon them, I am in hopes that it will serve as a warning and restraint for the future.

Yours, with respect,

William Clayton.

Nauvoo City, May 9, 1842.

(Bennett, *History of the Saints*, 95, emphasis omitted)

Stephen Markham wrote disparaging comments about John C. Bennett and Nancy, insinuating that they "were guilty of unlawful and illicit intercourse with each other."<sup>11</sup> Sidney Rigdon countered this by stating that "Markham is not to be believed, that his word for truth and veracity is not good."<sup>12</sup> The statement by Markham was so unreliable that the *Wasp* reported, "We are authorized to say, by Gen. Joseph Smith, that the affidavit of Stephen Markham, relative to Miss Nancy Rigdon, as published in the handbill of affidavits, was unauthorized by him: the certificate of Elder Rigdon relative to the letter, being satisfactory."<sup>13</sup> The handbill was authorized by Smith who made no affidavit regarding his conduct with Nancy Rigdon. Concerning the letter to his daughter, Sidney Rigdon made his own statement:

I am fully authorized by my daughter, Nancy, to say to the public through the medium of your paper, that the letter which has appeared in the *Sangamo Journal*, making part of General Bennett's letters to said paper, purporting to have been written by Mr. Joseph Smith to her, was unauthorized by her, and that she never

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<sup>11</sup> Affidavit of Stephen Markham, August 29, 1842, published in the broadside *Affidavits and Certificates, Disproving the Statements and Affidavits Contained in John C. Bennett's Letters. Nauvoo. Aug. 31, 1842.*

<sup>12</sup> Certificate of Sidney Rigdon, September 3, 1842, *Sangamo Journal* 10 (September 23, 1842).

<sup>13</sup> *The Wasp* 1 (September 3, 1842):2, Nauvoo.



said to Gen. Bennett or any other person, that said letter was written by said Mr. Smith, nor in his hand writing, but by another person, and in another persons' [sic] hand writing. . . . I would further state that Mr. Smith denied to me the authorship of that letter.<sup>14</sup>

### **Affidavit of George W. Robinson**

Nauvoo, September 3, 1842.

Having been acquainted with Stephen Markham, of the city of Nauvoo, for many years, I can safely say that his character for truth and veracity is not good, and that I could not believe him under oath; and that I am personally knowing to his lying, and that his character in general in general is that of a loafer, disturber of the peace, liar, &c.; and that he did come into the house of Sidney Rigdon, as stated in his affidavit, and that Dr. Bennett and Miss Rigdon were present, as well as myself, and that Miss Rigdon was then sick, and Dr John C. Bennett was the attending physician; and I do further state that no such conversation or gestures as said Markham states, took place or came under my observation; and I do further believe that said Markham did invent, concoct, and put in circulation, said stories with a malicious design and intent to injure the character of Miss Rigdon, and more particularly for the use of the Elders, who are going out preaching to rebut Dr. Bennett's statements; and further this deponent saith not. George W. Robinson.

Sworn to before me, L. R. Chaffin, a Justice of the Peace, within and for the county of Hancock, and State of Illinois, this ninth day of September, 1842. Lewis R. Chaffin, J. P.

(Bennett, *History of the Saints*, 252, emphasis omitted)

### **June 18, 1842 Official Excommunication from the Church**

Extract from Patty Sessions Journal, not extant, date of June 18, 1842:

“on the 18<sup>th</sup> she says Joseph spoke concerning Dr. Bennett and cut him off the Church.”

(From “Patty Sessions,” *Woman’s Exponent* 13 [November 1, 1884]:86)

Letter of John C. Bennett, June 27, 1842:

...

On Saturday, the 18th of June, I was excommunicated from this holy sect.

...

(John C. Bennett, Letter [No. 1], June 27, 1842, “To the Editor of the Journal,” *Sangamo Journal* 10 [July 8, 1842], Springfield, Illinois, quotation marks omitted)

Wilford Woodruff writes in his journal:

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<sup>14</sup> Rigdon to Editor, August 27, 1842, *The Wasp* 1 (September 3, 1842):4. Also printed in *Affidavits and Certificates*.

Joseph the seer arose & spoke upon Several subjects. Among other subjects he spoke his mind in great plainness concerning the iniquity & wickedness of Gen[eral] John Cook Bennet[t], & exposed him before the public.

(Wilford Woodruff's Journal 2:179, entry of June 18, 1842)

NAUVOO, ILL., June 27, 1842.

MR. EDWARDS: -- In your paper of the 23d you alluded to the "Trouble among the Mormons," and expressed a desire or hope that "the schism is incurable," and I assure you that it is really so. The holy Joe fears the consequences of my disclosures, and has threatened to take my life, and has ordered some of his Danite band to effect the murder clandestinely -- but *he shall be exposed*. If he murders me others will avenge my blood, and expose him; If I live, I will do it to the entire satisfaction of all. Just suspend your judgment for a few days until you see my *expose* in the "Sangamo Journal" of next week, or the week following, over my own name. In haste.

Yours, respectfully  
JOHN C. BENNETT.

(*Hawk Eye*, June 30, 1842, Burlington, Iowa, above not proofed)



TRUTH CRUSHED TO EARTH WILL RISE AGAIN. -- BRYANT.

Vol. I. - No. 11. Nauvoo, Hancock Co., Sat., June 25, 1842. Whole No. 11.

[letter of Joseph Smith, June 23, 1842 proofed]

TO THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS, AND  
TO ALL THE HONORABLE PART OF COMMUNITY:

It becomes my duty to lay before the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and the public generally, some important facts relative to the conduct and character of Dr. JOHN C. BENNETT, who has lately been expelled from the aforesaid church; that the honorable part of community may be aware of his proceedings, and be ready to treat him and regard him as he ought to be regarded, viz: as an impostor and base adulterer.

It is a matter of notoriety that said Dr. J. C. Bennett, became favorable to the doctrines taught by the elders of the church of Latter Day Saints, and located himself in the city of Nauvoo, about the month of August 1840, and soon after joined the church. Soon after it was known that he had become a member of said church, a communication was received at Nauvoo, from a person of respectable character, and residing in the vicinity where Bennett had lived. This letter cautioned us against him, setting forth that he was a very mean man and had another wife and two or three children in McConnelsville, Morgan county, Ohio; but knowing that it is no uncommon thing for good men to be evil spoken against, the above letter was kept quiet, but held in reserve.

He had not been long in Nauvoo before he began to keep company with a young lady, one of our citizens; and she being ignorant of his having a wife living, gave way to his addresses, and became confident, from his behavior towards her, that he intended to marry her; and this he gave her to understand he would do. I, seeing the folly of such an acquaintance, persuaded him to desist; and, on account of his continuing his course, finally threatened to expose him if he did not desist. This, to outward appearance, had the desired effect, and the acquaintance between them was broken off.

But, like one of the most abominable and depraved beings which could possibly exist, he only broke off his publicly wicked actions, to sink deeper into iniquity and hypocrisy. When he saw that I would not submit to any such conduct, he went to some of the females in the city, who knew nothing of him but as an honorable man, & began to teach them that promiscuous intercourse between the sexes, was a doctrine believed in by the Latter-Day Saints, and that there was no harm in it; but this failing, he had recourse to a more influential and desperately wicked course; and that was, to persuade them that myself and others of the authorities of the church not only sanctioned, but practiced the same wicked acts; and when asked why I publicly preached so much against it, said that it was because of the prejudice of the public, and that it would cause trouble in my own house. He was well aware of the consequence of such willful and base falsehoods, if they should come to my knowledge; and consequently endeavored to persuade his dupes to keep it a matter of secrecy, persuading them there would be no harm if they should not make it known. This proceeding on his part, answered the desired end; he accomplished his wicked purposes; he seduced an innocent female by his lying, and subjected her character to public disgrace, should it ever be known.

But his depraved heart would not suffer him to stop here. Not being contented with having disgraced one female, he made the attempt upon others; and, by the same plausible tale, overcame them also; evidently not caring whose character was ruined, so that his wicked, lustful appetites might be gratified.

Sometime about the early part of July 1841, I received a letter from Elder H. Smith and Wm Law, who were then at Pittsburg, Penn. This letter was dated June 15th, and contained the particulars of a conversation betwixt them and a respectable gentleman from the neighborhood where Bennett's wife and children resided. He stated to them that it was a fact that Bennett had a wife and children living, and that she had left him because of his ill-treatment towards her. This letter was read to Bennett, which he did not attempt to deny; but candidly acknowledged the fact.

Soon after this information reached our ears, Dr. Bennett made an attempt at suicide, by taking poison: but he being discovered before it had taken effect, and the proper antidotes being administered, he again recovered; but he very much resisted when an attempt was made to save him. The public impression was, that he was so much ashamed of his base and wicked conduct, that he had recourse to the above deed to escape the censures of an indignant community.

It might have been supposed that these circumstances transpiring in the manner they did, would have produced a thorough reformation in his conduct; but, alas! like a being totally destitute of common decency, and without any government over his passions, he was soon busily engaged in the same wicked career, and continued until a knowledge of the same reached my ears. I immediately charged him with it, and he admitted that it was true: but in order to put a stop to all such proceedings for the future, I publicly proclaimed against it, and had those females noticed to appear before the proper officers that the whole subject might be investigated and thoroughly exposed.

During the course of investigation, the foregoing facts were proved by credible witnesses, and were sworn and subscribed to before an alderman of the city, on the 15th ult. The documents containing the evidence are now in my possession,

We also ascertained by the above investigation, that others had been led by his conduct to pursue the same adulterous practice, and in order to accomplish their detestable designs made use of the same language insinuated by Bennett, with this difference, that they did not hear me say any thing of the kind, but

Bennett was one of the heads of the church, and he had informed them that such was the fact, and they credited his testimony.

The public will perceive the aggravating nature of this case: and will see the propriety of this exposure. Had he only been guilty of adultery, that was sufficient to stamp disgrace upon him because he is a man of better information, and has been held high in the estimation of many. But when it is considered that his mind was so intent upon his cruel, and abominable deeds, and his own reputation not being sufficient to enable him to do it, he must make use of my name in order to effect his purposes, an enlightened public will not be astonished at the course I have pursued.

In order that it may be distinctly understood that he willfully and knowingly lied, in the above insinuations, I will lay before my readers an affidavit taken before an alderman of the city, after I had charged him with these things:

STATE OF ILLINOIS, }  
City of Nauvoo. }

Personally appeared before me, Daniel H. Wells, an Alderman of said city of Nauvoo, John C. Bennett, who being duly sworn according to law, deposeth and saith: that he never was taught any thing in the least contrary to the strictest principles of the Gospel, or of virtue, or of the laws of God, or man, under any circumstances, or upon any occasion either directly or indirectly, in word or deed, by Joseph Smith; and that he never knew the said Smith to countenance any improper conduct whatever, either in public or private; and that he never did teach to me in private that an illegal, illicit intercourse with females was, under any circumstances, justifiable; and that I never knew him so to teach others.

JOHN C. BENNETT.

Sworn to, and subscribed, before me, this 17th day of May, A. D. 1842.

DANIEL H. WELLS,  
Alderman.

—  
The following conversation took place in the City Council, and was elicited in consequence of its being reported that the Doctor had stated that I had acted in an indecorous manner, and given countenance to vices practiced by the Doctor, and others:

May 19, 1842,

—  
Dr. John C. Bennett, ex-Mayor, was then called upon by the Mayor to state if he knew aught against him; when Mr. Bennett replied: "I know what I am about, and the

heads of the Church know what they are about I expect. I have no difficulty with the heads of the church. I publicly avow that any one who has said that I have stated that General Joseph Smith has given me authority to hold illicit intercourse with women is a liar in the face of God, those who have said it are damned liars; they are infernal liars. He never, either in public or private, gave me any such authority or license, and any person who states it is a scoundrel and a liar. I have heard it said that I should become a second Avard by withdrawing from the church, and that I was at variance with the heads and should use an influence against them because I resigned the office of Mayor; this is false. I have no difficulty with the heads of the church, and I intend to continue with you, and hope the time may come when I may be restored to full confidence, and fellowship, and my former standing in the church; and that my conduct may be such as to warrant my restoration and should the time ever come that I may have the opportunity to test my faith it will then be known whether I am a traitor or a true man."

Joseph Smith then asked: "Will you please state definitely whether you know any thing against my character either in public or private?"

Gen. Bennett answered: "I do not; in all my intercourse with Gen. Smith, in public and in private, he has been strictly virtuous.["]

WILSON LAW,	N. K. WHITNEY,
HIRAM KIMBALL,	ORSON SPENCER,
BRIGHAM YOUNG,	JOHN TAYLOR,
WILLARD RICHARDS,	JOHN P. GREEN,
HEBER C. KIMBALL,	GUST. HILLS,
W. WOODRUFF,	G. W. HARRIS,
GEORGE A. SMITH,	

JAMES SLOAN, City Recorder.

May 19th 1842.

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After I had done all in my power to persuade him to amend his conduct, and these facts were fully established, (not only by testimony, but by his own concessions,) he having acknowledged that they were true, and seeing no prospects of any satisfaction from his future life, the hand of fellowship was withdrawn from him as a member of the church, by the officers; but on account of his earnestly requesting that we would not publish him to the world, we concluded not to do so at that time, but would let the matter rest until we saw the effect of what we had already done.

It appears evident, that as soon as he perceived that he could no longer maintain his standing as a member of the church, nor his respectability as a citizen, he came to the conclusion to leave the place; which he has done; and that very abruptly; and had he done so quietly, and not attempted to deceive the people around him, his case would not have excited the indignation of the citizens, so much as his real conduct has done. In order to make his case look

plausible, he has reported, "that he had withdrawn from the church because we were not worthy of his society;" thus instead of manifesting a spirit of repentance, he has to the last, proved himself to be unworthy the confidence or regard of any upright person, by lying, to deceive the innocent, and committing adultery in the most abominable and degraded manner.

We are credibly informed that he has collocated with some of our former wicked persecutors, the Missourians, and has threatened destruction upon us; but we should naturally suppose, that he would be so much ashamed of himself at the injury he has already done to those who never injured, but befriended him in every possible manner, that he could never dare to lift up his head before an enlightened public, with the design either to misrepresent or persecute; but be that as it may, we neither dread him nor his influence; but this much we believe, that unless he is determined to fill up the measure of his iniquity, and bring sudden destruction upon himself from the hand of the Almighty; he will be silent, and never more attempt to injure those concerning whom he has testified upon oath he knows nothing but that which is good and virtuous.

Thus I have laid before the Church of Latter Day Saints, and before the public, the character and conduct of a man who has stood high in the estimation of many; but from the foregoing facts it will be seen that he is not entitled to any credit, but rather to be stamped with indignity and disgrace so far as he may be known. What I have stated I am prepared to prove, having all the documents concerning the matter in my possession, but I think that to say further is unnecessary, as the subject is so plain that no one can mistake the true nature of the case.

I remain yours, respectfully,  
JOSEPH SMITH.

Nauvoo, June 23, 1842.

[The above letter was also printed in *Times and Seasons* 3 (July 1, 1842)]

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[Below not proofed]

McCONNELSVILLE, Morgan Co. O.  
March 2, 1841.

*Dear Sir* -- By your request I have made inquiries into the history of John Cook Bennett, and am enabled to give you the following facts which may be relied on as correct.

"When a young man his character stood fair, he studied medicine with his uncle, Dr.



Samuel P. Hildreth, of Marietta, Washington county, O. It is believed he has a diploma, and also recommendations from some of the principal Physicians of that place; he started out with fair prospects, and married a daughter of Col. Joseph Barker, near Marietta. Bennett and his wife united with the Methodist Church, and he became a local preacher. It was soon manifest that he was a superficial character, always uneasy, and moved from place to place; at different times lived in Barnesville, Maconnelsville, Malta, Wheeling, Va., Colesville, Pennsylvania and Indiana; it is not presumed that less than twenty towns has been his place of residence at different times; he has the vanity to believe he is the smartest man in the nation; and if he cannot at once be placed at the head of the heap, he soon seeks a situation; he is always ready to fall in with whatever is popular; by the use of his recommendations he has been able to push himself into places and situations entirely beyond his abilities; he has been a prominent personage in and about colleges and universities, but had soon vanished; and the next thing his friends hear of him he is off in some other direction; at one time he was a prominent Campbellite preacher.

"During many years his poor, but confiding wife, followed him from place to place, with no suspicion of his unfaithfulness to her; at length however, he became so bold in his departures, that it was evident to all around that he was a sore offender, and his wife left him under satisfactory evidence of his adulterous connections; nor was this his only fault; he used her bad otherwise. Mrs. Bennett now lives with her father; has two children living, and has buried one or two. Dr. Bennett has three brothers-in-law living in this place, who, if they were disposed, could give all the particulars; but I dislike to urge them; I did apply to one which I thought the most likely, but he seemed reluctant to give it; but referred me to the person who has given me the foregoing; but he not being a connexion [connection], has not been particular in following him in all his peregrinations; but is, no doubt correct, so far as given; -- it has been Dr. Bennett's wish that his wife should get a bill of divorcement, but as yet she has not; nor does my informant know that she contemplates doing so; -- in fine, he is an imposter, and unworthy of the confidence of all good men." \* \*

Through motives of delicacy, we withhold the names of our informants, and other correspondents; but hold ourselves in readiness, at all times, to substantiate by abundant testimony, all that has been asserted, if required, as the documents are all on hand.

GEORGE MILLER.



Letter of John C. Bennett, June 27, 1842:

...

On Saturday, the 18th of June, I was excommunicated from this holy sect.

...

(John C. Bennett, Letter [No. 1], June 27, 1842, "To the Editor of the Journal," *Sangamo Journal* 10 [July 8, 1842:2, Springfield, Illinois])

# THE WASP. --- EXTRA.

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Nauvoo, Illinois, Wednesday, July 27, 1842.

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## BENNETTIANA; OR, THE MICROSCOPE WITH DOUBLE DIAMOND LENSES.

*The baser the coward the bigger the bluster.*

[Note: the first page and a half of this Extra contain anti-Bennett copy  
re-printed from *The Wasp* of [July 23, 1842](#)].

[In Minutes of the City Council, July 20, 1842. N. K. Whitney signed it on July 21, 1842.  
See *History of the Church* 5:68.]

### AFFIDAVIT OF THE CITY COUNCIL.

We the undersigned, members of the city council of the City of Nauvoo, testify that John C. Bennett was not under duress at the time he testified before the city council May 19th, 1842 concerning Joseph Smith's innocence, virtue, and pure teaching -- his statements that he has lately made concerning this matter are false, -- there was no excitement at the time, nor was he in anywise threatened menaced or intimidated, his appearance at the city council was voluntary, he asked the privilege of speaking, which was granted, after speaking for some time on the city affairs, Joseph Smith asked him if he knew any thing bad concerning his public, or private character; he then delivered those statements

contained in the testimony voluntarily, and of his own free will, and went of his

We do further testify that there is no such thing as a Danite Society in this city nor any combination, other than the Masonic Lodge, of which we have any knowledge.

WILSON LAW GEO A. SMITH,  
JOHN TAYLOR, GEO W. HARRIS,  
W. WOODRUFF, N. K. WHITNEY,  
VINSON KNIGHT, BRIGHAM, YOUNG,  
H. C. KIMBALL, CHARLES C, RICH,  
JOHN P. GREEN, ORSON SPENCER,  
WILLIAM MARKS,

Subscribed, and sworn to, by the persons whose names appear to the foregoing affidavit, this 20th day of July, A. D. 1842; except N. K. Whitney, who subscribed and affirmed to the foregoing this day, before me  
DANIEL H. WELLS,  
Justice of the Peace, within and for Hancock County, Illinois.

Daniel H. Wells, Esq., is an old resident in this place, and is not a Mormon.

#### **AFFIDAVIT OF HYRUM SMITH.**

On the seventeenth day of may, 1842, having been made acquainted with some of the conduct of John C. Bennett, which was given in testimony under oath before Alderman G. W. Harris, by several females, who testified that John C. Bennett endeavored to seduce them and accomplished his designs by saying it was right; that it was one of the mysteries of God, which was to be revealed when the people was strong enough in the faith to bear such mysteries -- that it was perfectly right to have illicit intercourse with females, providing no one knew it but themselves, vehemently trying them from day to day, to yield to his passions, bringing witnesses of his own clan to testify that [there] was such revelations and such commandments, and that it was of God; also stating that he would be responsible for their sins, if their was any; and that he would give them medicine to produce abortions, providing they should become pregnant. One of these witnesses, a married woman that he attended upon in his professional capacity, whilst she was sick, stated that he made proposals to her of a similar nature; he told her that he wished her husband was dead, and that if he was dead he would marry her and clear out out with her; he also begged her

permission to give him medicine to that effect; he did try to give him medicine, but he would not take it -- on interrogating her what she thought of such teaching, she replied, she was sick at the time, and had to be lifted in and out of her bed like a child. Many other acts as criminal were reported to me at the time. On becoming acquainted with these facts, I was determined to prosecute him, and bring him to justice. -- Some person knowing my determination, having informed him of it, he sent to me Wm. Law and Brigham Young, to request an interview with me and to see if [there] could not be a reconciliation made. I told them I thought there could not be, his crimes were so heinous; but told them I was willing to see him; he immediately came to see me; he begged on me to forgive him, this once, and not prosecute him and expose him, he said he was guilty, and did acknowledge the crimes that were alleged against him; he seemed to be sorry that he had committed such acts, and wept much, and desired that it might not be made public, for it would ruin him forever; he wished me to wait; but I was determined to bring him to justice, and declined listening to his entreaties; he then wished me to wait until he could have an interview with the masonic fraternity; he also wanted an interview with Br. Joseph; he wished to know of me, if I would forgive him, and desist from my intentions, if he could obtain their forgiveness; and requested the privilege of an interview immediately. I granted him that privilege as I was acting as master *pro. tem.* at that time; he also wished an interview first with Br. Joseph; at that time Brother Joseph was crossing the yard from the house to the store and met Dr. Bennett on the way; he reached out his hand to Br. Joseph and said, will you forgive me, weeping at the time; he said Br. Joseph, I am guilty, I acknowledge it, and I beg of you not to expose me, for it will ruin me; Joseph replied, Doctor! why are you using my name to carry on your hellish wickedness? Have I ever taught you that fornication and adultery was right, or polygamy or any such practices? He said you never did. Did I ever teach you any thing that was not virtuous -- that was iniquitous, either in public or private? He said you never did. Did you ever know anything unvirtuous or unrighteous in my conduct or actions at any time, either in public or in private? he said, I did not; are you willing to make oath to this before an Alderman of the city? he said I am willing to do so. Joseph said Dr. go into my office, and write what you can in conscience subscribe your name to, and I will be satisfied -- I will, he said, and went into the office, and I went with him and he requested pen ink and paper of Mr. Clayton, who was acting clerk in that office, and was also secretary *pro. tem.* for the Nauvoo Lodge U. D. Wm. Clayton gave him paper, pen and ink, and he stood at the desk and wrote the following article which was published in the 11th No. of the Wasp; sworn to and subscribed before Daniel H. Wells, Alderman, 17th day of May, A. D. 1842; he called in

Br. Joseph, and read it to him and asked him if that would do, he said it would, he then swore to it as before mentioned; the article was as follows:

STATE OF ILLINOIS, }  
CITY OF NAUVOO. }

Personally appeared before me, Daniel H. Wells, an Alderman of said city of Nauvoo, John C. Bennett, who being duly sworn according to law, deposeth and saith: that he never was taught any thing in the least contrary [sic] to the strictest principles of the Gospel, or of virtue, or of the laws of God, or man, under any occasion either directly or indirectly, in word or deed, by Joseph Smith; and that he never knew the said Smith to countenance any improper conduct whatever, either in public or private; and that he never did teach to me in private that an illegal illicit intercourse with females was, under any circumstances, justifiable, and that I never knew him so to teach others.

JOHN C. BENNETT.

Sworn to, and subscribed, before me, this 17th day of May, 1842.

DANIEL H. WELLS,  
Alderman.

During all this intercourse, I was present with him, and there was no threats used, nor harshness, every thing was as pacific as could be under existing circumstances. I then immediately convened the Masonic lodge, it being about four o'clock P. M. He then came into the lodge and charges of a similar nature were preferred against him. He admitted they were true, in the presence of about sixty in number. He arose and begged the privilege of speaking to the brethren; he acknowledged his wickedness; and begged for the brethren to forgive still longer, and he called God and angels to witness that he never would be guilty of the like crimes again-he would lay his hand on the Bible and swear that he would not be guilty of such crimes. He seemed to be very penitent and wept much; his penitence excited sympathy in the minds of the brethren, and they withdrew the charge for the time being, until he could be heard on other charges which had been preferred against him by members of the Pickaway Lodge, of Ohio, through the communications of the Grand Master, A. Jonas. After this we found him to be an expelled mason, in consequence of his rascally conduct from the Pickaway Lodge, in Ohio; the circumstances and documents were mentioned in the 11th No. of the Wasp, signed by George Miller, Master of Nauvoo Lodge, under dispensation, and reads as follows:

NOTICE.

*To all whom it may concern, GREETING.--*

Whereas John Cook Bennett, in the organization of the Nauvoo Lodge, under dispensation, palmed himself upon the fraternity as a regular Mason, in good standing; and satisfactory testimony having been produced before said Lodge, that he, said Bennett, was an expelled Mason, we therefore publish to all the Masonic world, the above facts, that he, the said Bennett, may not impose himself upon the fraternity of Masons.

All Editors who are friendly to the fraternity of free and accepted ancient York Masons will please insert the above.

GEORGE MILLER.

Master of Nauvoo Lodge,  
Under Dispensation.

Still after all this we found him guilty of similar crimes again, and it was found to our satisfaction that he was conspiring against the peace and safety of the citizens of this state -- after learning these facts we exposed him to the public; he then immediately left the place abruptly; threatening to drink the hearts blood of many citizens of this place. Previous to this last disclosure, the hand of fellowship was withdrawn from him, May 11th, 1842, by the first presidency, six days previous to the time he pretended to withdraw from the church, which you will see published in the Times and Seasons, June 15th, 1842, I was also present at the time when he gave this testimony before the City Council, as printed in the Times and Seasons, July 1st, 1842, on page 841 which reads as follows:

Dr. John C. Bennett, ex-Mayor, was then called upon by the Mayor to state if he knew aught against him; when Mr. Bennett replied: "I know what I am about, and the heads of the church know what they are about I expect. I have no difficulty with the heads of the church. I publicly avow that any one who has said that I have stated that General Joseph Smith has given me authority to hold illicit intercourse with women is a liar in the face of God, those who have said it are damned liars; they are infernal liars. He never, either in public or private, gave me any such authority or license, and any person who states it is a scoundrel and a liar. I have heard it said that I should become a second Avarad by withdrawing from the church, and that I was at variance with the heads and should use an influence against them because I resigned the office of Mayor; this is false. I have no difficulty with the heads of the church, and I intend to continue with you, and hope the time may come when I may be restored to full confidence, and fellowship, and my former standing in the church; and that my conduct may be such as to warrant my restoration-- and should the time ever come that I may have an opportunity to test my faith it will then be known whether I am a traitor or a true man."

Joseph Smith then asked: "Will you please state definitely whether you know any thing against my character either in public or private?"

Gen. Bennett answered: "I do not; in all my intercourse with Gen. Smith, in public and in private, he has been strictly virtuous.

*Aldermen.* WILSON LAW,  
N. K. WHITNEY, JOHN TAYLOR,  
HIRAM KIMBALL, BRIGHAM YOUNG,  
ORSON SPENCER, JOHN P. GREEN,  
GUST. HILLS, H. C. KIMBALL,  
G. W. HARRIS. W. WOODRUFF  
*Councillors* GEO. A. SMITH.  
WILLARD RICHARDS.

JAMES SLOAN Recorder.

May 19th 1842.

I know he was not under duress at the time for his testimony was given free and voluntarily, after requesting the privilege of the council to speak (which was granted him,) on matters pertaining to the city ordinances, while speaking, or before he took his seat, he was requested by the Mayor of the city, Joseph Smith, to state to the council if he knew aught against him; and he replied according to the above.

I also know that he had no private intercourse with Joseph in the preparation room on the 17th day, as he stated in his letter as printed in the Sangamo Journal, for the lodge was convened on that day, and I had the keys of the doors in my possession from 7 o'clock A. M. until 6 o'clock P. M. and it was when the lodge called off for refreshment during recess, that I had the interview with him, at which time he wrote the affidavit and subscribed it in my presence, and I was with him during the whole time from his first coming to me, until he signed it and until the lodge convened again at 4 o'clock.

HYRUM SMITH.

Sworn to, and subscribed, before me July 23, 1842.

GEO. W. HARRIS, Alderman of the city of Nauvoo.

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## AFFIDAVIT OF WM. LAW.

As. John C. Bennett has become our open enemy, and is engaged in circulating falsehoods of the blackest character, I deem it duty to make the following statement of facts:

John C. Bennett states in the Sangamo Journal that the withdrawal of the hand of fellowship by the first Presidency, and the Twelve, was after he had withdrawn from the church. I presume the notice of our withdrawal was not published till after he withdrew, but that does not prove his statement true, for I hereby testify that I signed the article in question several days before he withdrew. I believe it was on the evening of the 11th day of May, some four or five days afterwards I had some conversation with J. C. Bennett and intimated to him that such a thing was concluded upon, which intimation I presume led him to withdraw immediately. I told him we could not bear with his conduct any longer -- that there were many witnesses against him, and that they stated that he gave Joseph Smith as authority for his illicit intercourse with females. J. C. Bennett declared to me before God that Joseph Smith had never taught him such doctrines, and that he never told any one that he (Joseph Smith) had taught any such things, and that any one who said so told base lies; nevertheless, he said he had done wrong, that he would not deny, but he would deny that he had used Joseph Smith's name to accomplish his designs on any one; stating that he had no need of that, for that he could succeed without telling them that Joseph approbated such conduct.

These statements he made to me of his own free will, in a private conversation which we had on the subject; there was no compulsion or threats used on my part; we had always been on good terms, and I regretted exceedingly that he had taken such a course. He plead with me to intercede for him, assuring me that he would turn from his iniquity, and never would be guilty of such crimes again.-He said that if he were exposed it would break his mother's heart-that she was old, and if such things reached her ears it would bring her down with sorrow to the grave. I accordingly went to Joseph Smith and plead with him to spare Bennett from public exposure, on account of his mother. On many occasions I heard him acknowledge his guilt, and beg not to be destroyed in the eyes of the public, and that he would never act so again, "So help him God." From such promises, and oaths, I was induced to bear with him longer than I should have done.



On one occasion I heard him state before the city Council that Joseph Smith had never taught him any unrighteous principles, of any kind, and that if any one says that he ever said that Joseph taught such things they are base liars, or words to that effect. This statement he made voluntarily; he came into the council room about an hour after the council opened, and made the statement, not under duress, but of his own free will, as many witnesses can testify.

On a former occasion he came to me and told me that a friend of his was about to be tried by the High Council, for the crime of adultery, and that he feared his name would be brought into question. -- He entreated me to go to the council and prevent his name from being brought forward, as, said he, "I am not on trial, and I do not want my mother to hear of these things, for she is a good woman."

I would further state that I do know from the amount of evidence which stands against J. C. Bennett, and from his own acknowledgments, that he is a most corrupt, base, and vile man; and that he has published many base falsehoods since we withdrew the hand of fellowship from him.

About the time that John C. Bennett was brought before the Masonic Lodge he came to me and desired that I would go in company with B. Young, to Hyrum Smith, and entreat of him to spare him -- that he wished not to be exposed -- that he wanted to live as a private citizen, and would cease from all his folly, &c. I advised him to go to Texas, and when he returned, if he would behave well we would reinstate him. He said he had no means to take him to Texas, and still insisted on B. Young and myself to intercede for him.

WM. LAW.

Sworn to, and subscribed before me a Justice of the Peace, within and for the county of Hancock, State of Illinois, July 20th 1842.

DANIEL H. WELLS.

STATE OF ILLINOIS, }  
COUNTY OF HANCOCK. }

I hereby certify that on the 17th day of May last John C. Bennett subscribed and swore to the affidavit over my signature of that date, and published in the Wasp,



after writing the same in my presence, in the office where I was employed in taking depositions of witnesses. The door of the room was open and free for all or any person to pass or repass. After signing and being qualified to the affidavit aforesaid, he requested to speak with me at the door; I followed him out-he told me some persons had been lying about him and showed me a writing granting him the privilege to withdraw from the church, and remarked that the matter was perfectly understood between him and the heads of the church; and that he had resigned the Mayor's office and should resign the office he held in the Legion, but as there was a court martial to be held in a few days Joseph Smith desired that he would wait until that was over.

I was in the City Council on the 19th day of May last-I there heard him say what has been published concerning the teachings of Joseph Smith, and of his own course. I afterwards met him in company with Col. Francis M. Higbee, he then stated that he was going to be the candidate, (meaning candidate for the Legislature) and Joseph and Hyrum Smith were going in for him: said "you know it will be better for me not to be bothered with Mayor's office, Legion, Mormon, or any thing else." During all this time if he was under duress, or fear, he must have had a good faculty for concealing it, for he was at liberty to go and come when and where he pleased, so far as I am capable of judging. I know that I saw him in different parts of the city, even after he had made these statements, transacting business as usual, and said he was going to complete some business pertaining to the Mayor's office; and I think did attend to work on the streets.

I was always personally friendly with him, after I became acquainted with him. I never heard him say any thing derogatory to the character of Joseph Smith, until after he had been exposed by said Smith, on the public stand in Nauvoo.

DANIEL H. WELLS

July 22, A. D. 1842.

Sworn to, and subscribed before me a Justice of the Peace, in and for the City of Nauvoo, in said county, this 22d day of July, 1842.

GUSTAVUS HILLS, (L. S.)  
J. P. & Alderman.

The whole of these affidavits are given by gentlemen of the first respectability,

of unquestionable character, and of known reputation and veracity, and can of course be relied upon; and what light do they represent Bennett in, but that of a perjured wretch, a useless vagabond, and a mean, vascillating, unprincipled villain, and a disgrace to human society; and if their testimonies, and the testimony of the City Council, cannot be relied upon, then indeed are we in a poor case; -- corrupt, fallen, and dishonored, -- But John C. Bennett is not the man to prove us so; we must have different testimony to his, and that of his partners in crime, to convict us of evil.

As John C. Bennett and the Sangamo Journal have called upon several persons, in this city, to come out and make disclosures, relative to the things about which they have been writing; they have responded to the call, and publish the following:

### **CERTIFICATES.**

MR. EDITOR --

Sir, From a perusal of the St. Louis papers, I find from an article signed J. C. Bennett, stating that all who are friends to Mr. Joseph Smith he considers his enemies. As a matter of course then, I must be one, for I am and have been for a long time the personal friend of Joseph Smith; and I will here say that I have never yet seen or known any thing against him that I should change my mind. It is true many reports have been and are put in circulation by his enemies for political or religious effect, that upon investigation are like the dew before the morning sun, vanish away, because there is no real substance in them.

Could Dr. Bennett expect any man acquainted with all the circumstances, and matters of fact which were developed both here and from abroad, respecting his conduct and character, previous to his leaving this place, for one moment to believe him -- I answer NO! he could not. And all his affidavits, that came from any person entitled to credit, (I say entitled to credit, because some there are who are not entitled to credit, as Dr. Bennett very well knows) are in amount nothing at all, when summed up, and render no person worthy of death or bonds.

F. M. Higbee's knowledge concerning the murder of a prisoner in Missouri, I am authorized to say, by F. M. Higbee that he knows of no such thing -- that no prisoner was ever killed in Missouri, to the best of his knowledge. And I also bear the same testimony, that there never was any prisoner killed there, neither were we ever charged with any such thing, according to the best of my

recollection. ELIAS HIGBEE.  
July 22, 1842.

This is to certify that I do not know of the murder of any prisoner in Missouri, as above alluded to. F. M. HIGBEE.  
July, 22, 1842.

As there seems to be some foolish notions that I have been engaged with J. C. Bennett, in the difficulties between him and some of the citizens of this place, I merely say in reply to such idle and vain reports that they are without foundation in truth. SIDNEY RIGDON.

Nauvoo, July 25, 1842.

Inasmuch as J. C. Bennett has referred the people to me for testimony against Pres. Joseph Smith, I take this opportunity to state before the public that I know nothing derogatory to his character, either as a christian, or a moral man.

Mr. Bennett made use of my name without my knowledge or consent.  
PAMELA A. MICHAEL.

Inasmuch as John C. Bennett has called upon me through the Sangamo Journal to come out and confirm the statements which he has made concerning Joseph Smith and others, I take this opportunity of saying to the public, that I know many of his statements to be false, and that I believe them all to be the offspring of a base and corrupt heart, and without the least shadow of truth, and further that he has used my name without my permission. I believe him to be a vile and wicked adulterous man, who pays no regard to the principles of truth or righteousness, and is unworthy the confidence of a just community. I would further state that I know of no Order in the Church which admits of a plurality of wives, and do not believe that Joseph Smith ever taught such a doctrine, and further, that my faith in the doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and in Joseph Smith, is unshaken.

WILLIAM MARKS.

Nauvoo, July 26, 1842.

Mr. Bennett seems to place very much confidence in the veracity, integrity and honor of the above individuals, we hope that he will now believe their

testimony.

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[page one]

## **The Wasp. - - - Extra.**

Nauvoo, Illinois, Wednesday, July 27, 1842.

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### **Affidavits and Certificates Disproving the Statements and Affidavits Contained in John C. Bennett's Letters.**

The whole of these affidavits are given by gentlemen of the first respectability, of unquestionable character, and of known reputation and veracity, and can of course be relied upon; and what light do they represent Bennett in, but that of a perjured wretch, a graceless vagabond, and a mean, vascillating, unprincipled villian, and a disgrace to human society; and if their testimonies, and the testimony of the City Council, cannot be relied upon, then indeed are we in a poor case; -- corrupt, fallen, and dishonored, -- But John C. Bennett is not the man to prove us so; we must have different testimony to his, and that of his partners in crime, to convict us of evil.

As John C. Bennett and the Sangamo Journal have called upon several persons, in this city, to come out and make disclosures, relative to the things about which they have been writing; they have responded to the call, and publish the following:

#### **AFFIDAVIT OF THE CITY COUNCIL.**

We the undersigned, members of the city council of the City of Nauvoo, testify that John C. Bennett was not under duress at the time that he testified before the city council May 19th 1842 concerning Joseph Smith's innocence, virtue, and pure teaching — his statements that he has lately made concerning this matter are false, — there was no excitement at the time, nor was he in anywise threatened menaced or intimidated, his appearance at the city council was voluntary, he asked the privilege of speaking, which was granted, after speaking for some time on the city affairs, Joseph Smith asked him if he knew any thing bad concerning his public, or private character, he then delivered those statements contained in the testimony voluntarily, and of his own free will, and went of his own accord as free as any member of the council.

We do further testify that there is no such thing as a Danite Society in this city nor any combination, other than the Masonic Lodge, of which we have any knowledge.

WILSON LAW, GEO. A. SMITH,  
JOHN TAYLOR, GEO. W. HARRIS,  
W. WOODRUFF, N. K. WHITNEY,  
VINSON KNIGHT, BRIGHAM YOUNG,  
H. C. KIMBALL, CHARLES C. RICH,  
JOHN P. GREENE, ORSON SPENCER.  
WILLIAM MARKS,

Subscribed, and sworn to, by the persons whose names appear to the foregoing affidavit, the 20th day of July, A.D. 1842; except N. K. Whitney, who subscribed and affirmed to the foregoing this day before me.

DANIEL H. WELLS,  
Justice of the Peace within and for Hancock county, Illinois.

Daniel H. Wells Esq., is an old resident in this place, and is not a Mormon.

#### **AFFIDAVIT OF HYRUM SMITH.**

On the seventeenth day of may, 1842, having been made acquainted with some of the conduct of John C. Bennett, which was given in testimony under oath before Alderman G. W. Harris, by several females, who testified that John C. Bennett endeavored to seduce them and accomplished his designs by saying it was right; that it was one of the mysteries of God, which was to be revealed when the people was strong enough in the faith to bear such mysteries — that it was perfectly right to have illicit intercourse with females, providing no one knew it but themselves, vehemently trying them from day to day, to yield to his passions, bringing witnesses of his own clan to testify that their [sic - there?] was such revelations and such commandments, and that it was of God; also stating that he would be responsible for their sins, if their was any; and that he would give them medicine to produce abortions, providing they should become pregnant. One of these witnesses, a married woman that he attended upon in his professional capacity, whilst she was sick, stated that he made proposals to her of a similar nature; he told her that he

wished her husband was dead, and that if he was dead he would marry her and clear out out with her; he also begged her permission to give him medicine to that effect; he did try to give him medicine, but he would not take it — on interrogating her what she thought of such teaching, she replied, she was sick at the time, and had to be lifted in and out of her bed like a child. Many other acts as criminal were reported to me at the time. On becoming acquainted with these facts, I was determined to prosecute him, and bring him to justice. — Some person knowing my determination, having informed him of it, he sent to me Wm. Law and Brigham Young, to request an interview with me and to see if their could not be a reconciliation made. I told them I thought there could not be, his crimes were so heinous; but told them I was willing to see him; he immediately came to see me; he begged on me to forgive him, this once, and not prosecute him and expose him, he said he was guilty, and did acknowledge the crimes that were alleged against him; he seemed to be sorry that he had committed such acts, and wept much, and desired that it might not be made public, for it would ruin him forever; he wished me to wait; but I was determined to bring him to justice, and declined listening to his entreaties; he then wished me to wait until he could have an interview with the masonic fraternity; he also wanted an interview with Br. Joseph; he wished to know of me, if I would forgive him, and desist from my intentions, if he could obtain their forgiveness; and requested the privilege of an interview immediately. I granted him that privilege as I was acting as master pro. tem. at that time; he also wished an interview first with Br. Joseph; at that time Brother Joseph was crossing the yard from the house to the store, he immediately come to the store and met Dr. Bennett on the way; he reached out his hand to Br. Joseph and said, will you forgive me, weeping at the time; he said Br. Joseph, I am guilty, I acknowledge it, and I beg of you not to expose me, for it will ruin me; Joseph replied, Doctor! why are you using my name to carry on your hellish wickedness? Have I ever taught you that fornication and adultery was right, or polygamy or any such practices? He said you never did. Did I ever teach you any thing that was not virtuous — that was iniquitous, either in public or private? He said you never did. Did you ever know anything unvirtuous or unrighteous in my conduct or actions at any time, either in public or in private? he said, I did not; are you willing to make oath to this before an Alderman of the city? he said I am willing to do so. Joseph said Dr. go into my office, and write what you can in conscience subscribe your name to, and I will be satisfied — I will, he said, and went into the office, and I went with him and he requested pen ink and paper of Mr. Clayton, who was acting clerk in that office, and was also secretary pro. tem. for the Nauvoo Lodge U. D. Wm. Clayton gave him paper, pen and ink, and he stood at the desk and wrote the following article which was published in the [11th No. of the Wasp](#); sworn to and subscribed before Daniel H. Wells, Alderman, 17th day of May, A. D. 1842; he called in Br. Joseph, and read it to him and asked him if that would do, he said it would, he then swore to it as before mentioned; the article was as follows:

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Personally appeared before me, Daniel H. Wells, an Alderman of said city of Nauvoo, John C. Bennett, who being duly sworn according to law, deposeth and saith: that he never was taught any thing in the least contrary [sic] to the strictest principles of the Gospel, or of virtue, or of the laws of God, or man, under any occasion either directly or indirectly, in word or deed, by Joseph Smith; and that he never knew the said

Smith to countenance any improper conduct whatever, either in public or private; and that he never did teach to me in private that an illegal illicit intercourse with females was, under any circumstances, justifiable, and that I never knew him so to teach others.

JOHN C. BENNETT.

Sworn to, and subscribed, before me, this 17th day of May, 1842.

DANIEL H. WELLS,  
Alderman.

During all this intercourse, I was present with him, and there was no threats used, nor harshness, every thing was as pacific as could be under existing circumstances. I then immediately convened the Masonic lodge, it being about four o'clock P. M. He then came into the lodge and charges of a similar nature were preferred against him. He admitted they were true, in the presence of about sixty in number. He arose and begged the privilege of speaking to the brethren; he acknowledged his wickedness; and begged for the brethren to forgive still longer, and he called God and angels to witness that he never would be guilty of the like crimes again — he would lay his hand on the Bible and swear that he would not be guilty of such crimes. He seemed to be very penitent and wept much; his penitence excited sympathy in the minds of the brethren, and they withdrew the charge for the time being, until he could be heard on other charges which had been preferred against him by members of the Pickaway Lodge, of Ohio, through the communications of the Grand Master, A. Jonas. After this we found him to be an expelled mason, in consequence of his rascally conduct from the Pickaway Lodge, in Ohio; the circumstances and documents were mentioned in the 11th No. of the Wasp, signed by George Miller, Master of Nauvoo Lodge, under dispensation, and reads as follows:

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All Editors who are friendly to the fraternity of free and accepted ancient York Masons will please insert the above.

GEORGE MILLER.  
Master of Nauvoo Lodge,  
Under Dispensation.

Still after all this we found him guilty of similar crimes again, and it was found to our satisfaction that he was conspiring against the peace and safety of the citizens of this state — after learning these facts we exposed him to the public; he then immediately left the place abruptly; threatening to drink the hearts blood of many citizens of this place. Previous to this last disclosure, the hand of fellowship was withdrawn from him, May 11th, 1842, by the first presidency, six days previous to the time he pretended to withdraw from the church, which you will see published in the Times and Seasons, [June 15th, 1842](#), I was also present at the time when he gave this testimony before the City Council, as printed in the Times and Seasons, July 1st, 1842, on [page 841](#) which reads [as] follows:



Dr. John C. Bennett, ex-Mayor, was then called upon by the Mayor to state if he knew aught against him; when Mr. Bennett replied: "I know what I am about, and the heads of the church know what they are about I expect. I have no difficulty with the heads of the church. I publicly avow that any one who has said that I have stated that General Joseph Smith has given me authority to hold illicit intercourse with women is a liar in the face of God, those who have said it are damned liars; they are infernal liars. He never, either in public or private, gave me any such authority or license, and any person who states it is a scoundrel and a liar. I have heard it said that I should become a second Avar by withdrawing from the church, and that I was at variance with the heads and should use an influence against them because I resigned the office of Mayor; this is false. I have no difficulty with the heads of the church, and I intend to continue with you, and hope the time may come when I may be restored to full confidence, and fellowship, and my former standing in the church; and that my conduct may be such as to warrant my restoration — and should the time ever come that I may have an opportunity to test my faith it will then be known whether I am a traitor or a true man."

Joseph Smith then asked: "Will you please [state] definitely whether you know any thing against my character either in public or private?"

Gen. Bennett answered: "I do not; in all my intercourse with Gen. Smith, in public and in private, he has been strictly virtuous.

*Aldermen.* WILSON LAW,  
N. K. WHITNEY, JOHN TAYLOR,  
HIRAM KIMBALL, BRIGHAM YOUNG,  
ORSON SPENCER, JOHN P. GREEN,  
GUST. HILLS, H. C. KIMBALL,  
G. W. HARRIS. W. WOODRUFF  
*Councillors* GEO. A. SMITH.  
WILLARD RICHARDS.

JAMES SLOAN Recorder.

May 19th 1842.

I know he was not under duress at the time for his testimony was given free and voluntarily, after requesting the privilege of the council to speak (which was granted him,) on matters pertaining to the city ordinances, while speaking, or before he took his seat, he was requested by the Mayor of the city, Joseph Smith, to state to the council if he knew aught against him; and he replied according to the above.

I also know that he had no private intercourse with Joseph in the preparation room on the 17th day, as he stated in his letter as printed in the Sangamo Journal, for the lodge was convened on that day, and I had the keys of the doors in my possession from 7 o'clock A.M. until 6 o'clock P.M. and it was when the lodge called off for refreshment during recess, that I had the interview with him, at which time he wrote the affidavit and subscribed it in my presence, and I was with him during the whole time from his first coming to me, until he signed it and until the lodge convened again at 4 o'clock.  
HYRUM SMITH.

Sworn to, and subscribed, before me July 23, 1842.  
GEO. W. HARRIS,



Alderman of the city of Nauvoo.

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**AFFIDAVIT OF WM. LAW.**

As John C. Bennett has become our open enemy, and is engaged in circulating falsehoods of the blackest character, I deem it duty to make the following statement of facts:

John C. Bennett states in the Sangamo Journal that the withdrawal of the hand of fellowship by the first Presidency, and the Twelve, was after he had withdrawn from the church. I presume the notice of our withdrawal was not published till after he withdrew, but that does not prove his statement true, for I hereby testify that I signed the article in question several days before he withdrew. I believe it was on the evening of the 11th day of May, some four or five days afterwards I had some conversation with J. C. Bennett and intimated to him that such a thing was concluded upon, which intimation I presume led him to withdraw immediately. I told him we could not bear with his conduct any longer — that there were many witnesses against him, and that they stated that he gave Joseph Smith as authority for his illicit intercourse with females. J. C. Bennett declared to me before God that Joseph Smith had never taught him such doctrines, and that he never told any one that he (Joseph Smith) had taught any such things, and that any one who said so told base lies; nevertheless, he said he had done wrong, that he would not deny, but he would deny that he had used Joseph Smith's name to accomplish his designs on any one; stating that he had no need of that, for that he could succeed without telling them that Joseph approbated such conduct.

These statements he made to me of his own free will, in a private conversation which we had on the subject; there was no compulsion or threats used on my part; we had always been on good terms, and I regretted exceedingly that he had taken such a course. He plead with me to intercede for him, assuring me that he would turn from his iniquity, and never would be guilty of such crimes again. — He said that if he were exposed it would break his mother's heart — that she was old, and if such things reached her ears it would bring her down with sorrow to the grave. I accordingly went to Joseph Smith and plead with him to spare Bennett from public exposure, on account of his mother. On many occasions I heard him acknowledge his guilt, and beg not to be destroyed in the eyes of the public, and that he would never act so again, "So help him God." From such promises, and oaths, I was induced to bear with him longer than I should have done.

On one occasion I heard him state before the city Council that Joseph Smith had never taught him any unrighteous principles, of any kind, and that if any one says that he ever said that Joseph taught such things they are base liars, or words to that effect. This statement he made voluntarily; he came into the council room about an hour after the council opened, and made the statement, not under duress, but of his own free will, as many witnesses can testify.

On a former occasion he came to me and told me that a friend of his was about to be tried by the High Council, for the crime of adultery, and that he feared his name would be brought into question. — He entreated me to go to the council and prevent his name from being brought forward, as, said he, "I am not on trial, and I do not want my mother to hear of these things, for she is a good woman."

I would further state that I do know from the amount of evidence which stands against J. C. Bennett, and from his own acknowledgments, that he is a most corrupt, base, and vile man; and that he has published many base falsehoods since we withdrew the hand of fellowship from him.

About the time that John C. Bennett was brought before the Masonic Lodge he came to me and desired that I would go in company with B. Young, to Hyrum Smith, and entreat of him to spare him — that he wished not to be exposed — that he wanted to live as a private citizen, and would cease from all his folly, &c. I advised him to go to Texas, and when he returned, if he would behave well we would reinstate him. He said he had no means to take him to Texas, and still insisted on B. Young and myself to intercede for him.

WM. LAW.

Sworn to, and subscribed before me a Justice of the Peace, within and for the county of Hancock, State of Illinois, July 20th 1842.

DANIEL H. WELLS.

STATE OF ILLINOIS, }

COUNTY OF HANCOCK. } I hereby certify that on the 17th day of May last John C. Bennett subscribed and swore to the affidavit ove[r] my signature of that date, and published in the Wasp, after writing the same in my presence, in the office where I was employed in taking depositions of witnesses. The door of the room was open and free for all or any person to pass or repass. After signing and being qualified to the affidavit aforesaid, he requested to speak with me at the door; I followed him out — he told me some persons had been lying about him and showed me a writing granting him the privilege to withdraw from the church, and remarked that the matter was perfectly understood between him and the heads of the church; and that he had resigned the Mayor's office and should resign the office he held in the Legion, *but* as there was a court martial to be held in a few days Joseph Smith desired that he would wait until that was over.

I was in the City Council on the 19th day of May last — I there heard him say what has been published concerning the teachings of Joseph Smith, and of his own course. I afterwards met him in company with Col. Francis M. Higbee, he then stated that he was going to be the candidate, (meaning candidate for the Legislature) and Joseph and Hyrum Smith were going in for him: said "you know it will be better for me not to be bothered

with Mayor's office, Legion, Mormon, or any thing else." During all this time if he was under duress, or fear, he must have had a good faculty for concealing it, for he was at liberty to go and come when and where he pleased, so far as I am capable of judging. I know that I saw him in different parts of the city, even after he had made these statements, transacting business as usual, and said he was going to complete some business pertaining to the Mayor's office; and I think did attend to work on the streets.

I was always personally friendly with him, after I became acquainted with him. I never heard him say any thing derogatory to the character of Joseph Smith, until after he had been exposed by said Smith, on the public stand in Nauvoo.

DANIEL H. WELLS

July 22, A. D. 1842.

Sworn to, and subscribed before me a Justice of the Peace, in and for the City of Nauvoo, in said county, this 22d day of July, 1842.

GUSTAVUS HILLS, (L. S.)  
J. P. & Alderman.

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## MORE DISCLOSURES.

It is not with a view to excite the passions and prejudices of the people, that the following affidavits, are made [public], but to disabuse the community, which can not be less than fomented at the perusal of Dr. Bennett's letters and affidavits which have recently shot forth like meteors. Our space is too small to publish the documents referred to, but as there are no lack of presses and men, to give the Doctor a fair hearing, as well as extensive circulation, we shall presume that every body knows his story about the Mormons at Nauvoo, and proceed to rebut, refute, disprove, or expose, as the nature of the case may require.

The Doctor claims among all his *et ceteras* a little law, but had he reflected once on *lex scripta*, where he has ten times to gratify his lustful desires, he would exclaim like the old barrister, "John might swallow a cart load of stuff without obtaining one particle of truth." His affidavits are mere wind for effect. Mr. Bennett knows better than to make such foolish quirks. In fact, until the

whole City Council of Nauvoo are *impeached*, the Doctor must stand before the public as a perjured man. — There let him stand:

Two things are certainly requisite in witnesses, — knowledge and character: By this rule, as the Doctor fails himself, we think some of his testimony, when properly cross examined will appear a little more than plumb. Who is Mrs. Shindle? A harlot. What next? References to others, whose knowledge of facts and weight of character, will find a brief — *ex necessitali rei*.

The doctor's *duress*, so gravely sworn to, is the climax of his legal sagacity. There is a point at issue in that, which, when the Doctor wakes from his lethargy, will look like a vexed question, with iron eyes, which may be refresh his mind with the consolation that sudden and violent moves in public, often bring leisure, repentance in solitude.

As it regards his third letter, concerning fraud, time alone will determine that. Common law, common sense, and common prudence, teach us to try men for crimes that they have committed, not for what they *may commit*.

What he says of the proceedings of the Lodge is nothing; he is an expelled mason. Mr. Rigdon's name goes with his certificate, and settles the matter on that point, and with his daughter. Elder Marks' name is to the city council's affidavit; and we might add many other things to show the vanity of the man and the enormity of his crimes, but we forbear, though a word or two more may not be amiss. As to the Danite band, which seems like Hamlet's ghost to haunt the Doctor by night and by day, it must be something more than Mormon, for the City Council testifies that they know of no such band. And in justice to the community we ought to say, and strangers who are among us daily bear the same evidence, that nothing of any such league, combination or knot of men, is known in Nauvoo.

The certificates of Elders Rigdon, Marks, and Higbee, and Miss Michael, (the Journal's Mitchell) go to show that Doctor Bennett used the names of persons without their consent. These certificates speak for themselves, and leave the doctor before the public as he is, a debaucher, a spoiler of character and virtue, and a living pestilence, walking in darkness to fester in his own infamy.

There is one [affidavit] out, that Bennett might easily be put out of the way; and in justice to the community, and the aggravation of the crimes which he has committed, (and to substantiate which, the testimony of respectable persons has

been properly authenticated, but which is actually too indelicate for publicity,) we say, and every man who has a wife, or a daughter, or a sister, that he wishes uncontaminated with vice of the slyest but most atrocious mien, will say, *we will never rest till the law is executed on such a bloody lifed Vampyre.*

### CERTIFICATES.

Sir, From a perusal of the St. Louis papers, I find from an article signed J. C. Bennett, stating that all who are friends to Mr. Joseph Smith he considers his enemies. As a matter of course then, I must be one, for I am and have been for a long time the personal friend of Joseph Smith; and I will here say that I have never yet seen or known any thing against him that I should change my mind. It is true many reports have been and are put in circulation by his enemies for political or religious effect, that upon investigation are like the dew before the morning sun, vanish away, because there is no real substance in them.

Could Dr. Bennett expect any man acquainted with all the circumstances, and matters of fact which were developed both here and from abroad, respecting his conduct and character, previous to his leaving this place, for one moment to believe him — I answer NO! he could not. And all his affidavits, that came from any person entitled to credit, (I say entitled to credit, because some there are who are not entitled to credit, as Dr. Bennett very well knows) are in amount nothing at all, when summed up, and render no person worthy of death or bonds.

F. M. Higbee's knowledge concerning the murder of a prisoner in Missouri, I am authorized to say, by F. M. Higbee that he knows of no such thing — that no prisoner was ever killed in Missouri, to the best of his knowledge. And I also bear the same testimony, that there never was any prisoner killed there, neither were we ever charged with any such thing, according to the best of my recollection.

ELIAS HIGBEE.

July 22, 1842.

This is to certify that I do not know of the murder of any prisoner in Missouri, as above alluded to.

F. M. HIGBEE.

July 22, 1842.

As there seems to be some foolish notions that I have been engaged with J. C. Bennett, in the difficulties between him and some of the citizens of this place, I merely say in reply to such idle and vain reports that they are without foundation in truth.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

Nauvoo, July 25, 1842.

Inasmuch as John C. Bennett has called upon me through the Sangamo Journal to come out and confirm the statements which he has made concerning Joseph Smith and others, I take this opportunity of saying to the public, that I know many of his statements to be false, and that I [begin to] believe them all to be the offspring of a base and corrupt heart, and without the least shadow of truth, and further that he has used my name without my permission. I believe him to be a vile and wicked adulterous man, who pays no regard to the principles of truth or righteousness, and is [unworthy of] the confidence of a just community. I would further state that I know of no Order in the Church which admits of a plurality of wives, and do not believe that Joseph Smith ever taught such a doctrine, and further, that my faith in the doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and in Joseph Smith, is unshaken.

WILLIAM MARKS.

Nauvoo, July 26, 1842

Mr. Bennett seems to place very much confidence in the veracity integrity and honor of the above individuals, we hope that he will now believe their testimony.

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THE



WASP.

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TRUTH CRUSHED TO EARTH WILL RISE AGAIN. -- BRYANT.

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Vol. I. - No. 20. Nauvoo, Hancock Co., Sat., Sep. 3, 1842. Whole No. 20.

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For the Wasp.

Mr. Editor: --

I have noticed, of late, in some of the public prints, articles to the following import: -- that I had renounced 'Mormonism,' [left Nauvoo](#), &c.

That the public may be rightly informed upon these matters, I hereby certify, that I have not been absent from Nauvoo during twenty four hours, at any one time, since I returned from my English mission, which was upwards of one year ago. Neither have I renounced the church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, but believe that its doctrine, which has been extensively published both in America and Europe, is pure and according to the scriptures of eternal truth, and merits the candid investigation of all lovers of righteousness. There is something in truth that recommends itself to the consciences of all noble-minded, good men. They see its beauty -- its wisdom -- its power, and its glory, and, in fine, there is a mething in it which seems to whisper that 'God is there.' Therefore, it is to be hoped, that the independency of feeling which is so characteristic of the American public, may yet inspire thousands to investigate our principles, which cannot but result in the full conviction of their truth.

The lustre of truth cannot be dimmed by the shadows of error and falsdehood. Neither will the petty difficulties existing among the votaries weaken its influences or destroy its power. Its course is onward to accomplish the purposes of its great Author in relation to the happiness and salvation of the human family.

Nauvoo, Sept. 2nd, 1842.

ORSON PRATT.

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Nauvoo, Aug. 27th, 1842.



Editor of the Wasp.

Dear Sir: I am fully authorized by my daughter, Nancy, to say to the public through the medium of your paper, that [the letter](#) which has appeared in the Sangamo Journal, making part of General Bennett's letters to said paper, purporting to have been written by Mr. Joseph Smith to her, was unauthorised by her, and that she never said to Gen. Bennett or any other person, that said letter was written by said Mr. Smith, nor in his hand writing, but by another person, and in another persons' hand writing. She further wishes me to say, that she never at any time authorised Gen. Bennett to use her name in the public papers, as he has done, which has been greatly to the wounding of her feelings, and she considers the obtruding of her name before the public in the manner in which it has been done, to say the least of it, as a flagrant violation of the rules of gallantry, and cannot avoid to insult her feelings, which she wishes the public to know. I would further state that Mr. Smith denied to me the authorship of that letter.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

P. S. I wish the Sangamo Journal and all papers that have copied Bennett's letters to copy this also, as an act of justice to Miss Rigdon.

S. R.

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We are authorized to say, by Gen. Joseph Smith, that the [affidavit of Stephen Markham](#), relative to Miss Nancy Rigdon, as published in the handbill of affidavits, was unauthorized by him; the certificate of Elder Rigdon relative to the letter, being satisfactory.

In October two statements were signed mostly by church members who did not know about the new order that had been introduced by Joseph Smith. These statements said that there was one marriage ceremony in the church and that they "know of no other rule or system of marriage than the one published from the Book of Doctrine and Covenants." The following certificates were published in the *Times and Seasons*:<sup>15</sup>

We the undersigned members of the church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and residents of the city of Nauvoo, persons of families do hereby certify and declare that we know of no other rule or system of marriage than the one published from the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, and we give this certificate

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<sup>15</sup> *Times and Seasons* 3 (October 1, 1842):939-40.



to show that Dr. J. C. Bennett's "secret wife system" is a creature of his own make as we know of no such society in this place nor never did.

S[amuel]. Bennett,	N. K. Whitney,
George Miller,	Albert Pettey,
Alpheus Cutler,	Elias Higbee,
Reynolds Cahoon,	John Taylor,
Wilson Law,	E. Robinson,
W. Woodruff,	Aaron Johnson.

We the undersigned members of the ladies' relief society, and married females do certify and declare that we know of no system of marriage being practiced in the church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints save the one contained in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, and we give this certificate to the public to show that J. C. Bennett's "secret wife system" is a disclosure of his own make.

Emma Smith, President,  
Elizabeth Ann Whitney, Counsellor,  
Sarah M. Cleveland, Counsellor,  
Eliza R. Snow Secretary, [Sealed to Joseph Smith for three months.]

Mary C. Miller,	Catherine Pettey,
Lois Cutler,	Sarah Higbee,
Thirza Cahoon,	Phebe Woodruff,
Ann Hunter,	Leonora Taylor,
Jane Law,	Sarah Hillman,
Sophia R. Marks,	Rosannah Marks
Polly Z. Johnson,	Angeline Robinson,
Abigail Works.	

Among the other names of persons which appeared upon the certificates were Bishop Newel K. Whitney, the father of Sarah Ann Whitney and the one who performed the marriage ceremony between Sarah Ann and Joseph Smith. Elizabeth Ann, who was a counselor in the Relief Society, was a witness to the marriage of her daughter. Elizabeth's name was on the certificate of the ladies who belonged to the Nauvoo Relief Society. Eliza R. Snow, who signed as secretary, had been sealed to Smith in June 1842.