

THE REAL JOSEPH SMITH

One of the most serious problems facing a student of Mormon history today is that those who have gone before us have not always been honest. Both Mormon and anti-Mormon writers have been guilty of deceit, and this has sometimes led to problems for those who desire to know the real truth about Joseph Smith and the origin of the Mormon Church.

An example of a forgery which went undetected for many years is an anti-Mormon publication entitled, "Defence in a Rehearsal of My Grounds for Separating Myself from the Latter Day Saints." This "Defence" was supposed to have been written by Oliver Cowdery, one of the Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon, in 1839. For a number of years we accepted this document as being authentic. Even B. H. Roberts, who was probably the most famous Mormon historian, accepted the "Defence" as the work of Oliver Cowdery. Fawn M. Brodie also accepted the "Defence" as an authentic document, but she cautioned: "Apparently there are no copies of the original extant." On November 15, 1960, however, Pauline Hancock received a letter from Yale University Library which contained the statement that they had obtained a photographic copy of the original of Oliver Cowdery's "Defence." Mrs. Hancock told us that the original copy was located in or near Independence, Missouri. Wesley P. Walters later located and examined this copy. Unfortunately, it turned out to be a copy printed more than 60 years after Cowdery was supposed to have written it. In 1967 we did a great deal of research on the "Defence." In the *Salt Lake City Messenger* for May 1967, we stated: "Even though B. H. Roberts (who was the Assistant Mormon Church Historian) accepted the 'Defence' as the work of Oliver Cowdery, we have found some material that seems to show that it may have been spurious. We have made a study of this matter and have prepared a pamphlet entitled *A Critical Look—A Study of the Overstreet 'Confession' and the Cowdery 'Defence.'*" In the conclusion to this pamphlet we said:

After carefully examining the evidence, we have come to the conclusion that the "Defence" is probably a spurious work, written sometime after 1887—i.e., after David Whitmer's pamphlet appeared. Until an original copy or a contemporary reference to it is found, we must regard it as spurious.

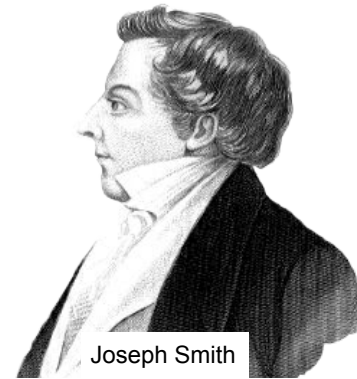
Perhaps some of our readers will have some information concerning the "Defence" or the Overstreet "Confession" which we are not aware of. If so, they can write us at: Box 1884, Salt Lake City, Utah.

While we received a few letters from people who still maintained the "Defence" was authentic, no one has furnished any new evidence that would lead us to change our mind.

In the pamphlet *A Critical Look*, we demonstrated that the person who made up the "Defence" used some articles which Oliver Cowdery wrote for the *Messenger and Advocate*, in 1834-35. This made the "Defence" appear to be in the style of Oliver Cowdery and helped to fool many people. A careful examination of some of the portions lifted from the *Messenger and Advocate*, however, shows they are so unnaturally inserted into the "Defence" that they give the whole thing away (see *A Critical Look*, pages 22-27).

In the same publication (*A Critical Look*) we also showed that the Overstreet "Confession" is a forgery. This is another anti-Mormon document which purports to show that Oliver Cowdery did not make a speech at Council Bluffs, Iowa, which the Mormons attribute to him. Instead, a man by the name of Oliver Overstreet was supposed to have been paid \$5,000.00 by Brigham Young to impersonate Oliver Cowdery. In the pamphlet *A Critical Look*, pages 4-6, we show that Oliver Cowdery was at Council Bluffs, and therefore it would have been impossible for Mr. Overstreet to have impersonated him.

While we have suspected for some time that there may have been some relationship between the Oliver Cowdery "Defence" and the Overstreet "Confession," recently we have become convinced that they came from the hand of the same impostor. To begin with, both documents are related to Oliver



Cowdery and his apostasy from the Mormon Church. Both the "Defence" and the "Confession" began to be circulated after the turn of the century, and in neither case can a 19th century copy be located. The most astonishing thing about this whole matter, however, is that the Overstreet "Confession" reveals the exact method that the impostor used in writing the "Defence." The reader will remember that we have previously stated that portions of Oliver Cowdery's early writings were used in the "Defence" to make it appear that it is written in his style. Now, in the Overstreet "Confession," Mr. Overstreet claimed that he was told to read some articles written by Oliver Cowdery so that he would be able to impersonate him: "To enable me to know what to say and do, Bro. Miller **had me read some articles written by Cowdery** and also gave me some voice drill, assuring me that he would make a **verbatim record** of my remarks, while personating Mr. Cowdery to be preserved for future use under Br. Brigham Young's direction; and that my part in the matter he was confident would never be known or suspected" (*A Critical Look*, page 1).

The fact that many portions of Oliver Cowdery's writings have been inserted into the "Defence" makes it very difficult to compare its style with that found in the "Confession." For instance, in an article published in the *Messenger and Advocate*, vol. 1, page 14, Oliver Cowdery stated: "And what serves to render the reflection past expression on this point is, that from his hand I received baptism, by the direction of the angel of God . . ." The reader will notice that while most of the words were copied verbatim from the *Messenger and Advocate*, the words "in its **bitterness to me**" did not appear there. This is very interesting because in the Overstreet "Confession" we find the words "**bitter to me.**" (*A Critical Look*, page 1)

The reader will probably be pleased to learn that we have reprinted *A Critical Look—A Study of the Overstreet "Confession" and the Cowdery "Defence."* We have included it in a special offer which is explained on the last page of this issue of the *Messenger*.

LIBERTY TAKEN ON HISTORY

Although it is easy for Mormon writers to accept the fact that these two anti-Mormon documents are forgeries, it is very difficult for them to be as objective about the documents upon which their own church is founded. For instance, in our book *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* pages 126-142, we prove that more than 60% of Joseph Smith's *History of the Church* was not compiled until after his death although the Mormon leaders have published it under his name. The remaining portion—less than 40%—compiled in his lifetime had serious changes made in it after his death. We pointed out that that material was taken from newspapers and journals and changed to the first person to make it appear that Joseph Smith had written it. One brief example

should suffice: in the newspaper *The Wasp* for August 13, 1842, we read: "As to Mr. Smith, we have yet to learn by what rule of right he was arrested to be transported to Missouri . . ." This was inserted in the *History of the Church* and changed to the first person to make it appear that it was written by Joseph Smith: "I have yet to learn by what rule of right I was arrested to be transported to Missouri . . ." (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, page 87)

Although a few Mormon writers have been willing to admit that changes have been made in Joseph Smith's *History of the Church*, there has been a reluctance to admit that material has been stolen from many sources and made to appear as if it were written by Joseph Smith. One Mormon scholar tried to inform his people about this matter in a book he was writing, but before publication this material was deleted by those who edited his book. The Mormon scholar Paul R. Cheesman has made a very revealing statement concerning Joseph Smith's *History of the Church*. It is found in an unpublished manuscript at the Brigham Young University Library and reads as follows:

As of now, the original source of Joseph Smith's statement, under the date of May 1, 1843, concerning the Kinderhook Plate, **cannot be found. Much of Volume V of the Documentary History of the Church was recorded by Leo Hawkins in 1853, after the saints were in Utah**, and was collected by Willard Richards from journals (Dean Jesse, Church Historian's office, Appendix #2). **Liberty was taken by historians of those days to put the narrative in the first person. Even though the source was not as such.** Verification of the authenticity of Joseph Smith's statement is still under study. In examining the diary of Willard Richards, the compiler of Volume V, the Kinderhook story is not found there. Our research has taken us through numerous diaries and letters written at this particular time, and the Kinderhook story is not mentioned. ("An Analysis of the Kinderhook Plate," by Paul R. Cheesman, March, 1970, Brigham Young University Library.)

Just as we were preparing to print this issue of the *Messenger* we learned that another Mormon scholar has now admitted that "large portions" of Joseph Smith's *History* were not written by him. Marvin S. Hill, of the Brigham Young University History Department, made these very revealing statements:

One reason that Brodie concluded that Joseph had veiled his personality behind a "perpetual flow of words" in his history may be that **she assumed he had actually dictated most of it. We now know that large portions of the history were not dictated but were written by scribes and later transferred into the first person to read as though the words were Joseph's.** That fact makes what **few things** Joseph Smith wrote himself of great significance. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1972, page 76)

The reader will notice that some Mormon writers now admit that Joseph Smith's *History* was not finished until after his death and that sources not written by Joseph Smith were put in "the first person" to make it appear that they were written by Smith himself. The Mormon leaders must face the serious implications of this whole matter. The Mormon scholar Hugh Nibley says: "A forgery is defined by specialists in ancient documents as 'any document which was not produced in the time, place, and manner claimed by it or its publishers'" (*Since Cumorah*, page 160). Under this definition the *History of the Church* must be classed as a forgery. It is every bit as spurious as the "Defence" or the Overstreet "Confession." Mormon writers might maintain that Joseph Smith's *History* is partly based on Joseph Smith's private journals. This is undoubtedly true, but which portions were taken from there and which portions were taken from other sources? The whole truth may never be known unless the Mormon leaders release all the manuscripts relating to this matter. A person might just as reasonably try to justify the writing of the "Defence" as to uphold Joseph Smith's *History* as the Mormon Church prints it today. We could say that part of the "Defence" actually comes from Cowdery's writings and that many of the incidents it relates are historically accurate. This would of course be true, but it is still a forgery and it would be dishonest for us to continue using it as Cowdery's work. If we did use it there would be no end to the ridicule that Mormon writers would heap upon us. This ridicule would, of course, be justified, for we could not blame the Mormons for protesting against the use of a bogus document which attacks their Church. The question we would like to ask Mormon scholars is this: *will they be as objective about Joseph Smith's History as they are about the "Defence"?* We feel that an honest investigation of the material which we present in *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* pages 126-142, will show the reader that Joseph Smith's *History of the Church* is a bogus history.

The Mormon leaders are certainly aware of the fact that they are confronted with a serious problem with regard to Joseph Smith's *History*, and it may very well be that they will try to phase it out. The Church recently

announced that a "sixteen-volume Sesquicentennial History has been launched" (*Mormon History Association Newsletter*, March 10, 1973, page 5). From reports we have heard this new history will be written by prominent Mormon scholars and will be far more honest than Joseph Smith's *History*. While this is certainly a step in the right direction, we feel that the Mormon leaders should first publicly repudiate Joseph Smith's *History* before bringing out a new one.

STILL SUPPRESSING RECORDS?

For many years we have maintained that the Mormon leaders do not want their people to know the truth about Joseph Smith and the foundation of the Church. The following appeared in the publication *Tiffany's Monthly* in 1859:

People sometimes wonder that the Mormon can revere Joseph Smith. That they can by any means make a Saint of him. But they must remember, that the Joseph Smith preached in England, and the one shot at Carthage, Ill., are not the same. The ideal prophet differs widely from the real person. To one, ignorant of his character, he may be made the impersonation of every virtue. He may be associated in the mind with all that is pure, true, lovely and divine. Art may make him, indeed, an object of religious veneration. But remember, the Joseph Smith thus venerated, **is not the real**, actual Joseph Smith . . . but one that art has created.

The Mormon leaders have gone to great lengths to keep their people from finding the real Joseph Smith. In our book *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* pages 11-13, we demonstrated that the Mormon leaders have suppressed the records which would reveal the truth about Joseph Smith and the origin of his Church. We showed that Dr. Hugh Nibley, who many Mormons feel is the top scholar in the Church, donated his great-grandfather's journal to the Church Historian's Office. This journal contained important information about Joseph Smith. The Mormon Historian Joseph Fielding Smith took the journal and locked it up in a safe, and when Dr. Nibley wanted to see it at a later time he was refused. In a letter dated March 21, 1961, Dr. Nibley stated: "Actually, **the last time I asked permission to see the Journal I was refused.** Any attempt to reproduce it at this time is out of the question." (See photograph of this letter in *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* page 12)

For a number of years we severely criticized the Church for suppressing the documents which would reveal the truth about Joseph Smith. Finally, in 1972 it appeared that the Church was going to have a change of policy. Dr. Leonard J. Arrington was appointed Church Historian. The *Deseret News* for January 15, 1972, stated that Arrington's appointment "marks the first time that this important post has been filled by going outside the membership of the church's general authorities . . ." While Dr. Arrington is an active Mormon, many people considered him to be very liberal. The thing that made the appointment of Dr. Arrington most surprising was that he had been critical of the Church leaders' policy of suppressing the documents. Writing in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1966, page 26, Dr. Arrington stated:

It is unfortunate for the cause of Mormon history that the Church Historian's Library, which is in the possession of virtually all of the diaries of leading Mormons, has **not seen fit to publish these diaries or to permit qualified historians to use them without restriction.**

On March 18, 1972, the *Deseret News* announced that James B. Allen and Davis Bitton had been appointed "as assistant church historians." These appointments came as a real shock, for both these men are rather liberal. Davis Bitton had even criticized the Church for changing Joseph Smith's *History*. He cited a number of changes which we mentioned in our book *Changes in Joseph Smith's History*, and made these interesting observations:

. . . the basic text itself has **not** been treated with proper respect. When we compare the *DHC* with the earlier versions, in fact, we discover that **hundreds of changes** have been made. These include deletion, additions, and simple changes of wording . . . for researchers in early Mormon history Rule Number One is "**do not rely on the DCH; never use a quotation from it without comparing the earlier versions.**" (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1968, pages 31-32)

With men like Arrington, Allen and Bitton we expected great changes in the policy of the Church with regard to the documents which have been suppressed. Unfortunately, however, the Mormon leaders have not allowed these men to proceed as they had planned. Now, it is true that there has been some improvement. We understand that a person can now obtain photocopies of many books which were not available in the past, and a Mormon scholar reported to us that he had better access to manuscript material than in the past.

While this may be true, the archives are certainly not available to everyone, and there is evidence that the First Presidency of the Church is trying to stop some of Dr. Arrington's plans. For instance, on November 24, 1972, the Mormon-owned *Deseret News* announced that an organization known as "Friends of Church History" would be formed:

Friends of Church History, a group of professional and nonprofessional history buffs will hold an organizational meeting Thursday Nov. 30, at 7:30 p.m. in the General Church Office Building, . . .

The meeting, . . . is open to all persons with an interest in the history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints . . .

Monthly meetings will be held at which papers will be presented thus providing members with a means of keeping up-to-date on current research and new interpretations, Smart added . . .

"It will be a meeting of the like-minded, a chance for Church history buffs to stimulate thought and encourage study among their group and beyond," commented Dr. Leonard Arrington, . . .

The group, which will operate in cooperation with the Church's Historical [de]partment, **will have access to the department's facilities** for research and study. (*Deseret News*, November 24, 1972)

The Friends of Church History got off to a great start. We understand that about 500 people attended the first meeting. Dr. Arrington was probably elated by the large turn out, but the Mormon leaders could see that this would cause serious problems for the Church. With a large group studying Church history the truth about Joseph Smith and the foundation of the Church would be very likely to emerge. They could not stand for their people to learn about the real Joseph Smith; therefore, an order was issued by the First Presidency that the next meeting should be cancelled. Meetings were to be held "the fourth Thursday of each month," but no meetings have been held since November 30, 1972. On April 27, 1973, we talked to a woman in Dr. Arrington's office. She admitted that the group did not meet in April and could not give a date when the group might meet again. She went so far as to say that they were "not sure" of the standing of the Friends of Church History. It is reported that Dr. Arrington was recently asked why the Friends of Church History were not meeting. He replied that they were still "thrashing out" the constitution. When a prominent Mormon scholar was told of Dr. Arrington's statement, he said that they were "thrashing out more than the constitution." William B. Smart—the man who was supposed to head the Friends of Church History—confirmed that it was the "First Presidency" that gave the order to "hold" it up.

On December 13, 1972, the *Deseret News* announced that "Elder Joseph Anderson has been appointed director of the Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints." Joseph Anderson is a man who believes in suppression the records, and he could make it very difficult for Dr. Arrington. On March 8, 1973, a member of the Church asked Joseph Anderson concerning an unpublished revelation of Joseph Smith. His reply was that it "isn't available." It would now appear that the Mormon leaders are still in charge of the Historical Department and that Dr. Arrington is only the "Church Historian" in name. When asked about access to documents he states that he is in charge of writing and researching but has nothing to do with persons wanting to do their research in the Church Historical Department of the Church. He refers a person to Earl Olsen who is the Church Archivist. Earl Olsen has been refusing access to the documents for many years. In the case where the man wanted to see an unpublished revelation of Joseph Smith, he had first asked Earl Olsen. Olsen told him he must get permission from the First Presidency. He called the First Presidency's Office, but they referred him back to Joseph Anderson. Anderson told him to call back in a few days, but when he did he was told that it "isn't available." This is almost the same routine that used to go on when Joseph Fielding Smith was Church Historian. Even the Mormon scholar who claims to have better access to material admits that the Mormon leaders are still not making all the documents available. For instance, the journal of George Q. Cannon may never be made available because it contains so much revealing material concerning the secret Council of 50. Although there has certainly been an improvement in the Church Historical Department since Dr. Arrington's appointment, some of the liberal Mormons fear that he is beginning to compromise. We know that he was planning to print Joseph Smith's journals, but we also know that some of the Mormon leaders would be very opposed to this since it would tend to further undermine the *History of the Church* and to reveal the truth about Joseph Smith. We hope that many people will put pressure on the Church to make the journals of Joseph Smith available. If pressure is not applied it may very well be that these journals may

never be made available. Members of the Church can be especially effective in this regard. If enough people will unite against the suppressive measures of the Mormon leaders they will be forced to release these documents. We know of one woman who had the courage to tell the Mormon leaders to either make a suppressed document available or remove her name from the Church records. Of course they did not comply with either request, but we know that if enough people will stand up for the truth great things will be accomplished. We feel that the Mormon leaders were forced into appointing Dr. Arrington as Church Historian because of the pressure that was exerted upon them. Now that he has been appointed, however, they have tried to take away the powers of his office and to make him compromise his position. We feel that the documents belong to the Mormon people and that they should raise their voice in protest against these oppressive measures.

JOSEPH SMITH AND ADULTERY

When Mormon apologists are unable to refute our arguments against the Church, they will often resort to dishonesty by accusing us of adultery or polygamy. For instance, in a letter dated February 26, 1973, we find the following:

A close friend of mine was recently converted to Mormonism . . .

I gave my friend your original thesis, *Mormonism*, and I could tell he was somewhat disturbed after reading it. But after discussing the thesis with some elders of his church, he came back with this statement about you: "Gerald Tanner was excommunicated from the Church on the charge of adultery."

Mr. Tanner, I would be most appreciative to hear your comment as to any truth that may surround this statement.

We, of course, replied that there is no truth in this statement and that we requested our names to be withdrawn from the rolls of the Church. We pointed out that we have photographically reproduced the letters relating to this matter (see *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* page 575) and that these letters plainly show that there was no "charge of adultery" involved. In a letter addressed to "Brother Jerald Tanner" and dated August 28, 1960, the Cannon Seventh Ward Bishopric stated: "In accordance with **your request** your name has been removed from the records and you are no longer considered a member of said Church."

Actually, the truth of the matter is that we felt that the Mormon Prophet Joseph Smith was guilty of adultery. This helped lead us to the conclusion that he was not a prophet and that we should ask for our names to be removed from the rolls of the Church. In our book *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* pages 202-251, we show that the Mormon doctrine of plural marriage was not the divine system that many people believe it was. In fact, there is evidence that Joseph Smith was involved with other women long before he gave his famous revelation on polygamy on July 12, 1843. The Mormon writer Max Parkin made this statement concerning a girl by the name of Fanny Alger:

The charge of adulterous relations "with a certain girl" was leveled against Smith by Cowdery in Missouri in 1837; this accusation became one of the complaints the Church had against Cowdery in his excommunication trial in Far West, April 12, 1838. In rationalizing Cowdery's accusation, the Prophet testified "that Oliver Cowdery had been his bosom friend, therefore he entrusted him with many things." (*Conflict at Kirtland*, 1966, page 166)

Max Parkin's source for this information is the "Far West Record." This is an unpublished "record book containing minutes of meetings in Kirtland and Far West, Missouri." The original is in the Church Historical Department. At one time Michael Marquardt was allowed access to a typed copy on microfilm at the Church Historical Office. He copied some important material from it which has never been published. We take the following from his notes:

David W. Patten testifies, that he went to Oliver Cowdery to enquire of him if a certain story was true re[s]pecting **J. Smith's committing adultery with a certain girl**, when he **turned on his heel and insinuated as though he was guilty**: Also said that **Joseph told him, he had confessed to Emma**, also that he has used his influence to urge on lawsuits.

Thomas B. Marsh testifies that while in Kirtland last summer, David W. Patten asked Olive Cowdery if Joseph Smith Jr. had confessed to his wife that he was guilty of adultery with a certain girl, when **Oliver Cowdery cocked up his eye very knowingly** and hesitated to answer the question, saying, he did not know as he was bound to answer the question **yet conveyed the idea that it was true**. Last fall after Oliver came to this place he heard a conversation take place between Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery when J. Smith asked

him if he had ever confessed to him that he was guilty of adultery, when **after a considerable winking** ect he said No. Joseph the asked him if he ever told him that he confessed to any body, when he answered no.

Joseph Smith, Jr. testifies that Oliver Cowdery had been his bosom friend, therefore **he intrusted him with many things**. He **then gave a history respecting the girl business**. Also that Oliver Cowdery took him one side and said, that he had come to the conclusion to get property and if he could not get it one way he would another, . . . (“Far West Record,” page 117)

Oliver Cowdery was one of the Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon. In a letter dated January 21, 1838, Cowdery plainly stated that Joseph Smith had an “affair” with Fanny Alger:

When he [Joseph Smith] was there we had some conversation in which in every instance I did not fail to affirm that what I said was strictly true. **A dirty, nasty, filthy affair of his and Fanny Alger’s was talked over** in which I strictly declared that I had never deserted from the truth in the matter, and as I supposed was admitted by himself. (Letter written by Oliver Cowdery and recorded by his brother Warren Cowdery; see photograph in *The Mormon Kingdom*, vol. 1, page 27)

Mormon writers admit that there was a connection between Joseph Smith and Fanny Alger, however, they claim that Fanny Alger was Joseph Smith’s plural wife and that he was commanded by God to enter into polygamy.

Andrew Jenson, who was the Assistant L.D.S. Church Historian, made a list of 27 women who were sealed to Joseph Smith. In this list he said the following concerning Fanny Alger: “Fanny Alger, one of the first plural wives sealed to the Prophet” (*Historical Record*, page 233). The Mormon writer John J. Stewart gives this interesting information:

Benjamin F. Johnson, another close friend to Joseph . . . says, “In 1835, at Kirtland, . . . there lived then with his family [the Prophet’s] a neighbor’s daughter. Fanny Alger, a very nice and comely young woman . . . toward whom not only myself but everyone, seemed partial, for the amiability of her character; and **it was whispered even then that Joseph loved her.**” Johnson, a Church patriarch at the time of writing, put his finger on the beginning of Oliver Cowdery’s and Warren Parrish’s downfall—Parrish was the Prophet’s secretary: “There was some trouble with Oliver Cowdery, and whisper said it was relating to a girl then living in his (the Prophet’s) family; and I was afterwards told by Warren Parrish, that he himself and Oliver Cowdery did know that Joseph had Fannie Alger as wife, for they were spied upon and found together.” . . . “Without doubt in my mind,” says Johnson, “**Fannie Alger was, at Kirtland, the Prophet’s first plural wife . . .**” One of the charges against Cowdery when he was excommunicated was that he had insinuated that Joseph was guilty of adultery. (*Joseph Smith the Mormon Prophet*, pages 103-104)

A PRETENDED MARRIAGE

Because of his relationships with other women Joseph Smith began to find himself in trouble with the law, his own followers and his first wife Emma. He found it necessary, therefore, to use a great deal of deceit to keep the matter from becoming public knowledge. This fact is made very evident in the case of his secret relationship with Sarah Ann Whitney. According to the Assistant Church Historian, Sarah Ann Whitney was married to Joseph Smith by her father, Newel K. Whitney: “Sarah Ann Whitney, afterwards the wife of Pres. Heber C. Kimball married to Joseph July 27, 1842, her father Newel K. Whitney officiating” (*Historical Record*, vol. 6, May 1887, pages 223-34).

As we pointed out in *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* page 581, Michael Marquardt discovered photographs of a letter written by Joseph Smith himself and addressed to Bishop Newel K. Whitney and his wife. It is very interesting because Smith asks the “three” of them—presumably Mr. and Mrs. Whitney and their young daughter Sarah Ann, to whom Joseph Smith was secretly married—to come see him by night. In the letter Joseph Smith makes it very clear that he does not want them to come when Emma, his first wife, would be present:

. . . **All three** of you can come and see me in the fore part of the night, . . . **The only thing to be careful of is to find out when Emma comes then you cannot be safe, but when she is not here, there is the most perfect safety: . . . I think Emma won’t come tonight if she don’t don’t fail to come tonight**, I subscribe myself your obedient and affectionate, companion, and friend. Joseph Smith

Since finding photographs of this important letter in the George A. Smith Collection at the University of Utah Library, Michael Marquardt has completed some very important research concerning this whole affair. His findings are so important that we are publishing them in a pamphlet entitled, *The Strange Marriages of Sarah Ann Whitney to Joseph Smith the Mormon Prophet, Joseph C. Kingsbury and Heber C. Kimball* (see special offer on page 6 of this *Messenger*). Among other things that Mr. Marquardt has discovered is the fact that Joseph Smith actually performed a “pretended” marriage ceremony between Sarah Ann Whitney and Joseph C. Kingsbury so that his own relationship with her would not be noticed. Mr. Marquardt cites the following from “The History of Joseph C. Kingsbury,” a document that is now in the Western Americana of the University of Utah Library:

. . . on the 29th of April 1843 **I according to President Joseph Smith Council & others agreed to Stand by Sarah Ann Whitney as supposed to be her husband & had a prete[n]ded marriage** for the purpose of Bringing about the purposes of God in these last days as spoken by the mouth of the Prophet Isiah Jeremiah Ezekiel and also **Joseph Smith, & Sarah Ann** Should Reed a Great Glory Honor & eternal lives and I also Should Reed a Great Glory, Honor & eternal lives to the full desire of my heart in having my Companion Caroline in the first Resurrection to claim her & no one have power to take her from me & we both shall be Crowned & enthroned together in the Celestial Kingdom of God . . . (“The History of Joseph C. Kingsbury,” University of Utah Library)

That a man professing to be a prophet of God would perform a “pretended” marriage to cover up his own iniquity is almost beyond belief.

In his pamphlet, Mr. Marquardt goes on to show that after Joseph Smith’s death, Sarah Ann Whitney continued to live with Joseph C. Kingsbury in this “pretended” marriage. While living with Kingsbury she became pregnant with the Apostle Heber C. Kimball’s child. Seven months later she was married to Kimball for “time” in the Nauvoo Temple, but she continued to live with Kingsbury until after the child was born. All these facts are well documented in Michael Marquardt’s pamphlet. We highly recommend this work.

From the above it would appear that Joseph Smith had absolutely no regard for the sacred vows involved in marriage. In our book *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* we show that Joseph Smith took married as well as single women as his plural wives.

ABRAHAM AND NEGROES

In our book *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* pages 294-369, we prove beyond all doubt that the Book of Abraham—which contains the basis for the anti-Negro doctrine—is a product of Joseph Smith’s own imagination and that it must be repudiated by the Mormon people. On page 304 of this book we show that Wesley P. Walters—one of the top scholars on Mormon history—may have forced the Mormon leaders to make the rediscovery of the Joseph Smith Papyri public and thus set the stage for its translation by Egyptologists. We are now happy to announce that Mr. Walters has written a pamphlet on the Book of Abraham (see special offer on page 6 of this *Messenger*). Wesley P. Walters’ achievements in Mormon history have been astounding. He is the man who demonstrated that there was no revival in Palmyra in 1820 as Joseph Smith had claimed. As if this were not enough, he discovered the document which proved that Joseph Smith was a “glass looker” and that he was arrested, tried and found guilty before a justice of the peace in Bainbridge, N.Y., in 1826. Mormon scholars had claimed that if this court trial could ever be established it would be “the most damning evidence in existence against Joseph Smith.” After the discovery by Walters, the Mormon scholar Marvin S. Hill, of the History Dept. at Brigham Young University, published a statement in which he said: “If a study of the handwriting and paper of the originals demonstrates their authenticity, it will confirm that there was a trial in 1826 and that glass looking was an issue at the trial.” It would appear that Marvin S. Hill now accepts the authenticity of the discovery for he makes the following statement in the latest issue of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*: “There may be little doubt now, as I have indicated elsewhere, that Joseph Smith was brought to trial in 1826 on a charge, not exactly clear, associated with money digging” (*Dialogue, A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1972, page 77).

Besides making these important discoveries Wesley P. Walters has also proved his objectivity by helping us to discover the truth about the Cowdery “Defence.” His new pamphlet is entitled, *Joseph Smith Among the Egyptians*. In this new work Wesley P. Walters states:

In April of that year [1966] Jerald and Sandra Tanner published a photomechanical reproduction of the "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar" which Joseph had begun to put together in 1835. Although a few Mormon scholars had known of the existence of this material since about 1935, it was not generally available to most Mormon or to non-Mormon scholars . . . When the scholarly world through the Tanners' publication got their first good look at this bizarre method of translating Egyptian, some Mormons became unsettled to the point of losing their faith in Smith's ability to translate Egyptian. Yet a more shattering blow to their faith was still to come to the following year.

On November 27, 1967, the news media carried an unexpected announcement that a portion of the papyri which Joseph Smith had acquired in 1835 was still in existence and had been turned over to the Mormon church by the Metropolitan Museum of Art . . . Now at last the official material was available for judging the Mormon leader's translating ability. What was heralded with great rejoicing by the Mormon community, has since turned into a nightmare for their scholars and has been responsible for some learned Mormons coming to reject the Book of Abraham and even renounce all the claims of their Prophet . . .

It is no wonder that some Mormons have come recently to reject Joseph's claim to a knowledge of Egyptian, . . . not even the best scholarship can save a sinking ship, and Mormons of integrity such as Dee Jay Nelson, whose competence in Egyptian is granted by all, have sorrowfully admitted that the Book of Abraham was not at all a divine production, but purely the work of Joseph Smith's imagination.

Wesley P. Walters gives a very good summary of the evidence against the Book of Abraham. He deals with Dr. Nibley's attempts to defend it and shows that he is in a "state of confusion" on almost every important issue. All of our readers should have a copy of Walters' new work, *Joseph Smith Among the Egyptians*.

HIDDEN REVELATION REVEALED

Just as we were preparing the last page of the *Messenger*, Michael Marquardt brought to light an extremely important revelation which the Mormon leaders have suppressed since 1842. This revelation is concerning polygamy and is dated a year earlier than the one published in the *Doctrine and Covenants*. It sanctions Joseph Smith's secret marriage to Sarah Ann Whitney. (The reader will remember that Sarah Ann Whitney was secretly married to Smith, but that she had a "pretended" marriage to Joseph C. Kingsbury to cover up this relationship.) This revelation is dated July 27, 1842, and reads as follows:

Verily, thus saith the Lord unto my servant N. K. Whitney, the thing that my servant Joseph Smith has made known unto you and your family and which you have agreed upon is right in mine eyes and shall be rewarded upon your heads with honor and immortality and eternal life to all your house, both old and young because of the lineage of my Priesthood, saith the Lord, it shall be upon you and upon your children after you from generation to generation, by virtue of the holy promise which I shall now make unto you, saith the Lord. These are the words which you shall pronounce upon my servant Joseph and your daughter S. A. Whitney. They shall take each other by the hand and you shall say, You both mutually agree, calling them by name, to be each other's companion so long as you both shall live, preserving yourselves for each other and from all others and also throughout eternity, reserving only those rights which have been given to my servant Joseph by revelation and commandment and by legal authority in times passed. If you both agree to covenant and do this, I then give you, S. A. Whitney, my daughter, to Joseph Smith, to be his wife, to observe all the rights between you both that belong to that condition. I do it in my own name and in the name of my wife, your mother, and in the name of my holy progenitors, by the right of birth which is of priesthood, vested in me by revelation and commandment and promise of the living God, obtained by the holy Melchisedeck Gethrow [Jethro?] and others of the Holy Fathers, commanding in the name of the Lord all those powers to concentrate in you and through you to your posterity forever. All these things I do in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that through this order he may be glorified and that through the power of anointing David may reign King over Israel, which shall hereafter be revealed. Let immortality and eternal life hereafter be sealed upon your heads forever and ever. (Revelation given by Joseph Smith, July 27, 1842, typed copy; original in the LDS Church Historian's Office)

In *The Strange Marriages of Sarah Ann Whitney* . . . , Michael Marquardt shows that the Mormon historian Orson F. Whitney mentioned this revelation in 1885 but stated that "it has never been published." Mr. Marquardt has also found that the Mormon scholar Larry Neil Poulsen claims to have "seen and read it several times in the Church Historian's Office in Salt Lake City." Although he did not include a copy of the revelation in his thesis written at Brigham Young University, Mr. Poulsen did include a description of it which seems to verify the copy we have printed above:

In the ceremony uniting the Prophet Joseph Smith and Sarah Ann in celestial marriage, the ceremony having been given to the Prophet by revelation, Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, is mentioned as one of Bishop's Whitney's ancestors. ("The Life and Contributions of Newel Kimball Whitney," Brigham Young University, 1966, pages 113-114, typed copy)

OLD ORDER FORM REMOVED

A TREMENDOUS SUCCESS

In 1963 we published our most important work on Mormonism. A major publishing company predicted that it wouldn't sell over 250 or 300 copies, but by 1965 Wallace Turner reported that we had sold "about 3000 copies" (*The Mormon Establishment*, page, 157). It was not long after this that our metal plates for printing began to break down, and the book went out of print for a number of years. In 1972, however, we issued a new enlarged and revised edition which has become a tremendous success. We have now sold almost 2,000 copies of the new printing, and this brings the total sales to over 7,000 copies. Dr. Jennings G. Olson, of the Department of Philosophy at Weber College, made these comments concerning it:

... there is now in existence a book which every Mormon and interested non-Mormon should study and ponder. . . . it is called *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* . . . it is tightly packed with serious, responsible research which **no one can deny is the most comprehensive and thorough analysis and evaluation of Mormonism ever produced in the history of the Church.**

Any Mormon of Elemental identification who wants to "answer" the Tanners will have his hands full for a long time to come because the Tanners have the microfilm sources from the early Mormon Church which no one before has had in such abundance. . . . **I seriously doubt Dr. Nibley will take this new revised book on,** because he is quoted often enough in it to be identifiable as one of the major contributors to Mormonism's obfuscation of issues; and he has actually contributed (unknowingly perhaps) to the growing painful dilemmas now facing the Elemental Mormonism I have previously identified . . .

But if Dr. Nibley or anyone else decides to "answer" the Tanners' book point for point I certainly promise to study that book carefully and review it in public. In the mean time I will state publically this book of the Tanners is a major contribution in the search for integrity and truth about Mormonism, and I shall quote from it a number of times. ("The Uniqueness of Mormonism: An Evaluation." by Dr. Jennings G. Olson, October 7, 1972, pages 22-23)

The following are some other comments concerning the new edition of *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?*

... the original was good—the new edition is **a marvel.** (*The Utah Evangel*, Sept.-Oct. 1972, page 1)

We must admit it is **the greatest thing yet written on the subject** . . . (*The Utah Evangel*, November-December 1972, page 4)

The most comprehensive and revealing work on Mormonism in print today . . . a must for all students of Mormonism. (*Utah Christian Tract Society Newsletter*, September-October, 1972, page 2)

Perhaps **the most exhaustive expose of Mormonism** between two covers . . . Based largely on primary sources. (*Mormonia—A Quarterly Bibliography of Works on Mormonism*, Fall 1972, page 89)

May this find you all well and busy shipping out **the greatest compendium** that ever existed on a most intriguing subject concerning the greatest religious hoax of all time . . . please prepare another 50 copies . . . (Letter from California)

We believe "Shadow or Reality" to be **the best book** available in refuting Mormonism. I showed it to more of the students & I now place an order to you for **(55)** more copies of *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* (Letter from Texas)

... I must say that your new work, *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* is a lulu! I have read it from cover to cover—much to the neglect of my other duties, but can & should become familiar with what you have found. It is interesting that so much of what you have printed I have found to be so in my own independent study . . . I sincerely need to know how you go about making a commitment to Christ, and I feel a real need to do so, . . . (Letter from Illinois)

Our customers seem to be well pleased with the new edition of *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* and it is taking a good deal of our time just to fill the orders. In our spare time we are working on a book about Creation which we hope to complete in about a year. This is a project we have worked on for many years.

Recently we decided to put a hard-backed binding on all copies of *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* Though this costs us more money, we feel that it gives the book a much better appearance and will make it last a

great deal longer. The reader will notice that we are having a special offer on *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* The regular price is \$8.95, but if it is ordered before September 30, 1973, the price will be only \$7.95 (see special offer below). Considering the size of this book and the fact that it is hard bound this is a real bargain. As one customer expressed it: "It never ceases to amaze me how for the price of two hours work I can buy a book such as your new enlarged edition."

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This book is now in a hard binding and contains 587 full 8 1/2 by 11 inch pages. This is by far our most important work, for we have taken the best material out of the old edition and combined it with the most important material from publications we have printed since 1964. Also includes a great deal of new material that has never before been published. The regular price on this book will be \$8.95, but if it is ordered before September 30, 1973, the price will be only \$7.95. The quantity prices are: 2 for \$16.00 – 5 for \$31.00 – 10 for \$53.70

Joseph Smith Among the Egyptians

By Wesley P. Walters - Price: 50¢

The Strange Marriages of Sarah Ann Whitney to Joseph Smith the Mormon Prophet, Joseph C. Kingsbury and Heber C. Kimball

By H. Michael Marquardt - Price: 50¢

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