

secret plural marriage. (And, in point of fact, it was not successful.) Absent are appeals to loving feelings he may have possessed for her or an offer to marry him in order to enjoy conjugal bliss. Neither does he remind her of the special status that she would receive being a plural wife of the prophet and Church president. Importantly, no coercive time-sensitive threats were declared that God had commanded her to comply or damnation would follow.²⁷

These characteristics make the other possibility likely—that Joseph's real target audience was Sidney and that the Prophet was trying to instruct him and gain his support. In early 1842, neither William Law, the second counselor in the First Presidency, nor Hyrum Smith, associate president of the Church, was aware of Joseph's teachings on the subject.²⁸ It seems probable, therefore, that Sidney was equally uninformed. Possibly Joseph hoped that Nancy would respond favorably and, through her participation, her father would become converted to the principle. There is no evidence that Sidney Rigdon ever accepted plural marriage as a correct doctrine.²⁹

Heber C. Kimball, Second Plural Husband

While the evidence is not conclusive, it appears that Heber C. Kimball was the second authorized polygamist in this dispensation. Lorenzo Snow shared a cell at the Territory of Utah's penitentiary with Helon H. Tracy in 1886 when both were incarcerated for practicing polygamy. Snow, who

27. The only known plural proposal that contained a time limit was issued to Lucy Walker who was introduced to the principle by Joseph Smith in 1842. She subsequently agonized for many months as the Prophet patiently waited. Lucy related: "I was tempted and tortured beyond endurance until life was not desirable. Oh that the grave would kindly receive me, that I might find rest. . . . Oh, let this bitter cup pass. And thus I prayed in the agony of my soul. The Prophet discerned my sorrow. He saw how unhappy I was." Lyman Omer Littlefield, *Reminiscences of Latter-day Saints: Giving an Account of Much Individual Suffering Endured for Religious Conscience*, 46. Only after witnessing her turmoil and having waited a minimum of several months, in May of 1843 Joseph instructed Lucy: "I have no flattering words to offer. It is a command of God to you." Then he gave a singular directive, "I will give you until tomorrow to decide this matter." This twenty-four-hour time limit is sometimes quoted to assert that Joseph gave ultimatums to his potential plural spouses to quickly press them into compliance. See, for example, George D. Smith, "The Forgotten Story of Nauvoo Celestial Marriage," 157. In reality many months passed between the two events.

28. William Law, Affidavit, July 17, 1885, quoted in Charles A. Shook, *The True Origin of Mormon Polygamy*, 126. On May 26, 1843, William Clayton recorded: "Hyrum received the doctrine of priesthood." George D. Smith, ed., *An Intimate Chronicle: The Journals of William Clayton*, 106.

29. Thomas J. Gregory, "Sidney Rigdon: Post Nauvoo," 61.