More Wives Than One

TRANSFORMATION OF THE MORMON MARRIAGE SYSTEM, 1840–1910
For Bill,

who has made thirty-four years of monogamy
so ideal that it has made much more difficult
the task of understanding why my great-grandmother
and great-great grandmother entered plural marriage
3 Nineteenth-Century
Marriage Law in Utah

Twenty-year-old Fred Cox made a momentous decision in the spring of 1857: he would ask Mary Ellen Tuttle to be his wife. He had no wealth to offer his prospective bride—on the 1860 census he listed no real or personal property—but at the height of the reformation in Manti, that was a small consideration. Women were being importuned to marry, especially to become plural wives. Fred was an eligible young man, and several young women had encouraged his attention. He chose young Mary Ellen.¹

His difficulty was how he should tell Lucy Allen, who had so openly shown her affection for him, that he planned to marry someone else. He concluded he would break the news to her at a church dance on April 20. That night he asked Lucy to walk outside with him. While he hesitated to apprise her of his choice, she told him she was going to Provo to work that summer, unless, she hinted, something happened to keep her in Manti. Before he could use this opening to introduce his subject, Bishop Warren S. Snow approached the couple and stopped to exchange pleasantries. From their former association and their seeking to be alone, the couple appeared to the bishop to be lovers, and he offered to marry them on the spot. Lucy eagerly agreed. Not taking the bishop seriously, Fred submitted. The bishop played his part well and went through the entire ceremony. When he asked Fred if he took Lucy to be his wife, the young man hesitated, but when the question was repeated, he gave the usual answer.
The bishop had made Fred's message to Lucy more difficult, but somehow he communicated enough so that she left for Provo as planned. By late summer, Mary Ellen had agreed to become Fred's wife. As dedicated Latter-day Saints, they wanted to be married in the religious ceremony that would seal them for "time and eternity," a rite generally performed only at the Endowment House in Salt Lake City. For them to be eligible to participate in this ceremony, the bishop had to certify their worthiness. So to the bishop they went.

Bishop Snow seemed perplexed at their request to be married. He had wanted Mary Ellen as his own plural wife but had been thwarted because her father did not want her to enter plural marriage. Fred was unaware of this when he and his prospective bride made their request. The bishop asked the girl if she had carefully weighed her decision to enter plural marriage and queried the young man whether he was financially able to support another wife. Now it was the couple's turn to be perplexed. Mary Ellen assured the bishop that such questions need not be asked, but he countered by affirming that Fred was already married to Lucy Allen and that he himself had performed the marriage. Fred protested, arguing that the ceremony had not been a real wedding and was neither legal nor binding. His protests were for naught. Fred and Mary Ellen enlisted the aid of their parents and even the aid of Lucy's parents, but the bishop was adamant that Fred and Lucy were married. The couple and their parents appealed to a higher authority. While attending the church's semi-annual conference in October, Fred, his father, and Lucy's father sought an interview with Brigham Young. The president of the church listened attentively to their story. After carefully considering the case, he announced to Fred that he was a married man and advised him to go home and make the best of it. On the way home, Fred stopped in Provo to get Lucy and took her home with him to Manti.

Lucy proved the kind of wife who would have confirmed to Brigham Young the sagacity of his decision: she bore her husband twelve children and in 1873 consented to his marrying a second wife. In addition, she ran a boardinghouse to supplement the family's income. Mary Ellen, meanwhile, married Walter Stringham in 1859 and bore fifteen children. She remained true to her first intentions to avoid polygamy, however, and her marriage to Walter remained a monogamous one.

The circumstances under which Fred Cox and Lucy Allen were married were surely unusual, but the story illustrates the most important feature of nineteenth-century Mormon marriage: marriage was considered a religious, not a civil, rite and was governed by ecclesiastical rules.

The president of the church, not a court of law, decided whether the marriage was valid. No civil legislation restricted who could marry or who could perform marriages in Utah until 1887, although the territorial legislature passed a law in 1852 to allow plural wives and their children to inherit from their polygamous husbands and fathers. Because Mormon marriages might be valid only for this life, for eternity only, or for both, the Saints recognized several types of marriage that conferred different rights and responsibilities on husbands and wives, and these were enforced by ecclesiastical, not civil, courts.

Since Mormons held marriage to be sacred rather than secular, the Mormon-dominated Utah legislature saw little need for the civil government to regulate marriage until congressional legislation forced action in the 1880s. The most important early legislation regarding marriage was the incorporation of the church. On February 4, 1851, during debate on the issue, Brigham Young made clear that an important reason for incorporation was to allow plural marriage when he said, "So if the Latter Day Saints wish to have more wives than one to live Holy & raise up Holy seed unto the Lord let them enjoy that privilege." That day the legislature obliquely passed "An Ordinance Incorporating the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints," affirming that the "said church holds the constitutional and original right...to solemnize marriage compatible with the revelations of Jesus Christ...that the pursuit of bliss, and the enjoyment of life, in every capacity of public association and domestic happiness...may not legally be questioned...inasmuch as the doctrines, principles, practices, or performances, support virtue, and increase morality, and are not inconsistent with, or repugnant to the Constitution of the United States, or of this State, and are founded in the revelations of the Lord." In essence, the act claims for the church the right to regulate its own marriage practices without interference, as long as those practices are not specifically prohibited by the Constitution of the United States or of Utah. Because neither mentioned marriage, the act left the church free to determine who was married and who was not. The act mandated that all units of the church maintain a record of marriages that occurred in their jurisdictions, but with no provision being made to enforce the records of marriages that were not also sealings were indifferently kept. A statute dealing with marriage had been introduced into the first territorial legislature, but it had been laid aside on February 28, 1852, "to take up business of more consequence." Although the Morrill Act passed by Congress in 1862 annulled the acts incorporating the church, this did not
Two problems produced inherent tensions in this marriage system. First, allowing secret, informal marriages created difficulties in knowing whether a prospective spouse was already married. Second, jurisdiction over marriage resided mainly in the church, but civil courts asserted their authority over property rights created by marriage and by birth. These inherent tensions helped produce a different set of beliefs about marriage during the Reformation. Although marriage was a divine institution, according to Martin Luther in his Babylonian Captivity, it was not a sacrament, it did not impart grace, and it was not necessary for salvation. Other reformers followed Luther’s lead, and all reformed churches rejected the Catholic Church’s claim that marriage was a sacrament. With that change in belief, control over marriage could be vested in civil rather than religious courts. Reducing the clergy’s jurisdiction over mortal life, Protestant governments on the Continent began requiring parental consent for minors to marry and mandating the presence of witnesses to validate a marriage. In response, the Catholic Church tightened regulations for marriage at the Council of Trent in 1563, requiring that the traditional exchange of consent take place before witnesses, one of whom was the pastor.

In England, however, the Reformation took a different path in regard to marriage. Because elites found that ecclesiastical courts had adequately served their interests, reformation of the English church did not include abolition of those courts. The Church of England was independent of the Roman Catholic church before the Council of Trent, so its requirement of witnesses and a pastor for a valid marriage had no force. Clandestine marriages flourished; perhaps as many as 20 percent of marriages in England in the mid-eighteenth century were clandestine. Not until 1753, with the passage of the Hardwicke Marriage Act, were such marriages curtailed.

The Hardwicke Act was not passed until long after the American colonies had begun developing their own marriage laws. New England drew on the Reformation’s ideas about civil government’s control over marriage. Magistrates, not ministers, performed marriages there until 1686, when the Crown established its control over New England after revoking those colonies’ charters. In the South, the Church of England was the established church, but without bishops or ecclesiastical courts, civil regulation of marriages was uncontested. A variety of churches proliferated throughout the middle and southern colonies, and the marriages performed by the rites of those churches were recognized. With diverse religious traditions and peoples, the idea that free consent of the couple in the present tense created a valid marriage passed into the common law.
These developments, along with the movement away from government involvement prevalent in early nineteenth-century America, elevated consent of the couple over public control of marriage. Unlike colonial or contemporary English interpretations of the common law, American nineteenth-century courts generally validated secret and informal marriages. By midcentury in the United States, the opinion of James Kent, the most influential legal commentator of his time, was accepted by all but a minority of courts: "No peculiar ceremonies are requisite by the common law to the valid celebration of the marriage. The consent of the parties is all that is required." This rule was explicitly applied to Utah in 1883, when its supreme court ruled, "The marriage is complete when there is a full, free and mutual consent by the parties capable of contracting, though not followed by cohabitation. ... Under our law a marriage depends solely upon the mutual consent of the contracting parties. They may enter into the marriage relation secretly, and the fact may be unknown to all save the man and woman. ... [A] couple may meet on the highway at any time in the day or night and there contract a valid marriage ... [n]o particular form or ceremony being essential, and no witness being required." Thus, no specific form for solemnizing a marriage was necessary to make it valid, as long as both bride and groom consented to the marriage. Nor were witnesses required. Not until 1888 did the law in Utah mandate that two witnesses sign the marriage certificate. That law also declared that marriages not solemnized by an authorized person were void, thus nullifying common-law marriages.

In the light of these traditions and laws, Fred Cox's case reveals a number of aspects about marriages in early Utah. Reversing increasing civil control, Mormons resacralized marriage and reverted to religious authority to regulate it. When Fred Cox did not believe the wedding ceremony performed by Bishop Snow was binding, he took his case to the president of the church, not to a court of law, and all parties accepted the prophet's judgment. Nevertheless, the judgment rendered was consistent with current common law in the United States that gave primacy to the consent of the couple, not to compliance with a specific form or ceremony. Because both Fred and Lucy had consented to the marriage in the present tense, the presumption was strong that the marriage was valid. Once married, only a divorce could dissolve the union. Although it was long disputed whether in Utah the common law was in force—with the church contending that it was not—both the common law and the church had the same goal of encouraging marriage. Whether Fred Cox's vocal assent to the marriage constituted consent is of course problematic when he had mental reservations, but his consent at the time was not coerced and was in the present tense. Under these circumstances—no positive legislation regarding marriage in Utah, marriage considered a religious act, and an emphasis on consent rather than on the form of marriage—Cox was a definitely a married man.

Contrary to popular belief about them in the nineteenth century, Mormons, like their contemporaries in the Western world, believed in the free consent of parties to a marriage. But freely consenting to a marriage is not the same as freely deciding whether to marry or choosing whom to marry, and the Saints believed that women in particular had a right to choose their marital status as well as their husbands. To counter the erroneous views about coerced marriages in Utah, several Mormon women wrote to the Senate Committee on Education and Labor in 1886: "No Mormon woman, old or young, is compelled to marry at all, still less to enter into polygamy. Every young woman is as free to choose her own destiny as the bird in the air; free to marry from motives of purest affection the man of her choice, or free to live in single blessedness to the day of her death, if she so desires." Mormon women were free to choose their marital status, whether single, monogamous, or polygamous, although there were numerous social and religious reasons to marry.

During the Mormon reformation considerable pressure was put on some women to marry. Orson Hyde and A. P. Rockwood, both general authorities, admonished Manti congregations in 1857 that men should not use their priesthood to get wives. "The rights of woman must be respected," Rockwood warned. Brigham Young had made it clear in 1854 that women should be free to choose their husbands: "When your daughters have grown up, and wish to marry, let them have their choice in a husband, if they know what their choice is. ... Take this or that man if you want them my girls, I give you good counsel about it, nevertheless you shall have your own agency in the matter, even as I want mine." Although he believed children should have their parents' consent to marry, he did recommend that parents give their daughters the right to choose, as the story of Ann Cook illustrates.

In the fall of 1861, seventeen-year-old Ann Cook showed a preference for William Kilshaw Barton, a man who had been a polygamist but whose first wife had died in the spring of that year. Because she had revealed her preference, William asked Ann if she had any objections to keeping his company, if her father gave his sanction. She replied that she would be glad to do so. William spoke to her father, but he refused to consent. Sometime later, Brigham Young visited Manti and in the presence of many witnesses told Ann and her father that she had the right of choice. Her father then acquiesced, and she married William on October 10, 1864,
as his plural wife. Parents' approval was important but did not override a young woman's choice.

Ann showed her preference for the man of her choice but left the initiative to him. Some other women were more direct. By the time Emmeline Woodward Whitney was twenty-four, she had been deserted by her first husband and widowed by her second. Alone and with two young daughters, she wrote "A Letter from a True Friend" to Daniel H. Wells, a prominent church and civic leader with five wives. Reminding him of his friendship with her second husband, Newell Whitney, she asked him to consider her lonely state and "return to her a description of his feelings for her." She then expressed the wish to be "united with a being noble as thyself." She and Wells were married six months later.

Similarly, Nancy Gibbons suggested marriage to John D. Lee. On February 26, 1847, he wrote in his diary that she came to his house and after some conversation said "she wanted I should take charge of her and her effects, that is if I considered her worth taking off." He then asked if she wanted to be married to him, and she replied that she did. The forty-eight-year-old woman was subsequently sealed to thirty-five-year-old Lee as his plural wife.

In 1903, seventy-five-year-old Azariah Smith also received a proposal of marriage. A friend invited him to her house so she could introduce him to Sevilla Stoy Mitchell, who was seventy-one. After "some pleasing conversation with her, ... she proposed being sealed to me for time. ... She not wishing to put it off ... and wishing to go and get her things, and come back right away," They were married the next day.

In each of these instances, the woman had been married before, and in two the man already had several wives. Women could expect that older or polygamous men would be willing to marry again, and a few were willing to approach the man directly to bring about the marriage. Orson Pratt intimated that because marriage was crucial to exaltation, women were justified in proposing marriage and reversing the prevailing customs. In contrast, never-married women, such as Lucy Allen and Ann Cook, expressed their preference by their actions but left initiating the marriage proposal to the man, as was customary elsewhere.

The Saints grounded the logic of women's right to choose in the structure of polygamy itself. In plural marriage, men could choose a mate more than once, but each woman had only one husband. In her account of her parents' courtship, Brigham Young's daughter wrote that women "ought to have their choice in the matter for they can choose but one; and they have a right to select that one.

Nevertheless, some women succumbed to the wishes of their parents and entered marriages not of their own choosing. Karen Kirstine Poulsen emigrated from Denmark with her parents in 1853 and suffered through the Walker War and the grasshopper devastations. When Herman Julius Christensen, a church and civic leader in Mantle, asked her as his wife, her parents told her to marry him because he was a wealthy man and could take care of her. Obedient to her parents, she accepted his proposal. She cried the morning he came to take her to Salt Lake for the wedding, but fourteen-year-old Karen Kirstine formally, if reluctantly, consented to become the third wife of a man twenty-three years her senior. Although she always remained somewhat frightened of him, she bore him fifteen children.

Mary Frances Callaway also obeyed her father when she became Daniel D. McArthur's third wife. Her mother died in 1869, leaving her to take care of her father and the six younger children. Her father then married a woman only two years older than Mary Frances. When McArthur asked him for his daughter's hand, Levi Callaway was amenable and told his daughter that she would go to the party that night with McArthur, although she already had a date. She obediently went with McArthur and shortly thereafter, at age seventeen, married him.

Some young women insisted on making their own choices, however, and they married as they liked. When George Peacock's daughter Sarah planned to marry a non-Mormon, he met with her and "gave her such Council as I thought was my Duty to her as Father[,] I found that She was determined to marry Doct. O. C. Ormsby contrary to my wishes and Council." A second interview produced the same result: nineteen-year-old Sarah married the man of her choice without her father's approval or his presence. Although young women were pressured to marry with their parents' approval, a daughter willing to flout filial and religious duties to wed the man of her choice could do so, albeit at the risk of alienating herself from her parents.

Anna Maria Isaacson insisted on marrying whom she wished but waited until her parents finally gave their consent. She was fifteen when Edwin Whiting, twenty-one, first proposed to her, and she knew "there was no one else for me." Her parents, however, thought she was too young to fall in love, and, according to her, "They didn't like the idea of me going with a young fellow who wasn't tried and tested. Both Mother and Father thought it would be better for me to marry some older man who had already proved himself, had a wife or two and was ready to provide for his families." This favorable parental attitude toward polygamists' personal and economic traits had led Karen Kirstine Poulsen and Mary Frances Callaway to enter plural marriage. At the time, they obeyed their
parents and married; however, they had not accepted the proposal of young bachelors. Anna Maria Isaacson had, and she refused offers to enter plural marriage. When she turned eighteen, her parents finally gave their consent, and she married the man of her choice.36

Believing the religious aspect of marriage was most crucial, Mormons downplayed the role of romantic love. In 1853, Orson Pratt wrote that love was not “such as is often described in novels, which acts irresistibly, forcing all the other powers of the mind into subjection.” Charles C. Rich was even more pointed in his criticism of romantic love in 1877: “When a person is love struck, there is no reason in them. We should never be struck very bad.”37 According to the historian Karen Lysa, while romantic love in the nineteenth century was perceived as an uncontrollable force, its most essential feature was the “completely unfettered” revelation of oneself to one’s beloved, and only to one’s beloved. This intimacy between two lovers set them off from others and “contributed to the displacement of God by the lover as the central symbol of ultimate significance.”38 This nineteenth-century view of romantic love that set the couple apart from the community and tended to displace God was hardly compatible with Mormon beliefs. “Never love your wives one hair’s breadth further than they adorn the Gospel,” Brigham Young preached. “Never love them so but that you can leave them at a moment’s warning without shedding a tear.”39 Love was supposed to be guided by and subordinated to religious purposes.

To be sure, love was crucial to marriage. “No woman should be united in marriage with a man unless she have some love for him,” Orson Pratt wrote, but he added, “Any woman who loves righteousness can and does love a man who works righteousness; and she can, by cultivating this love, be happy in his society, as a friend and as a brother; and if she were united to him in marriage, she could love him as a husband...” There is not a righteous good woman in the Church of God but what a righteous man loves as a friend and a sister; and if he were lawfully united to her in marriage, he could love her as a wife; and this love, by cultivation and mutual kindness, would grow stronger and stronger, until they were perfect in love.”40 Successful marital love, then, was dependent not on finding one’s soul mate but on marrying a righteous person—someone who shared one’s beliefs and lived by them—and cultivating love for that person. Such love was not necessarily exclusive or intimate, though close and romantic relationships were certainly not excluded.

Whether a woman’s love was romantic or whether a woman or her parents had chosen her husband, she had to consent to the marriage: the matter of consent lay at the heart of the Mormon marriage ceremony that wed couples for time and eternity. The couple joined right hands as they faced the officiant, who first asked the husband if he received the bride as his wife by his “own free will and choice.” After an affirmative response, the officiant then turned to the bride, calling her by name, and asked if she gave herself to the groom as his “lawful and wedded wife for time and all eternity,” of her “own free will and choice.”41 After both bride and groom had asserted that they entered the marriage of their own free will, the officiant pronounced the couple legally and lawfully husband and wife and promised them eternal blessings. The consent of both bride and groom and the officiant’s pronouncements constituted the Mormon religious ceremony.

Unlike the nineteenth-century Episcopal ceremony, for example, in which the bride’s father or a friend gave the bride to the husband, in the Mormon rite the woman gave herself to the man.42 If it was a plural marriage, the first wife gave her consent by placing the plural wife’s right hand in the right hand of her husband at the beginning of the ceremony. The church permitted a man to take another wife without the first wife’s consent if the first wife could give no good reason to refuse her husband permission to enter plural marriage.43 In any case, the bride gave her free and willing consent, which was no different from the requirements under common law to validate the marriage.

Although free consent was crucial, under the common law no particular form of ceremony was required, nor was public notification of the marriage. The early-nineteenth-century republican ethos combined with social conditions in America to weaken state regulation.44 As an 1816 Pennsylvania court decision stated, “We have no established church. A certificate of the bishop, therefore is out of the question. We have no law compelling the keeping of a register by all persons who perform the marriage ceremony. Our marriages are celebrated sometimes by clergymen, sometimes by justices of the peace and sometimes before witnesses, without the intervention of clergymen or justices... Many marriages take place in parts of our country but thinly settled. To hold a woman, therefore, to proof of her actual marriage might be productive of great inconvenience, without any advantage.”45 As this judgment indicates, registration of marriages was not compulsory. Americans were averse to state intervention into private affairs, which is what registration of marriages meant to many.46

With no law regulating marriage, Utah also had no registration system outside the church. After a sealing ceremony, a scribe was supposed to enter the date of the marriage as well as the names of the witnesses.47 This record was not public, however. In the 1880s, when the U.S. com-
missioner of labor compiled statistics on marriage and divorce in America, he could not obtain even the number of marriages performed by church officials. Nor are these records currently available to scholars. Some marriages performed in Manti by local church authorities were recorded in the Manti Ward Record, but others were either not recorded or not preserved. Justices of the peace also performed marriages, but their records were also often indifferently kept.

That such records did not exist or that marriage certificates were not issued did not invalidate marriages under common law—or under church law—as the unwitting Fred Cox learned when Brigham Young pronounced him a married man. Laws about marriage were lenient in mid-nineteenth-century America, giving primacy to the bride's and groom's consent to the marriage. But nowhere outside Utah were the laws lenient enough to allow plural marriage, and such leniency proved to be the rock upon which permissive laws founndered as the century came to a close.

4 The Nature of Mormon Marriages

Unreliable public records made it difficult for many couples to substantiate their marriages, but American courts accepted into common law the rule that a marriage could be presumed from the cohabitation, reputation, and acknowledgment of the couple. On the whole, midcentury law in America encouraged marriage. Because most judges required no particular form of ceremony or a record of it to presume a marriage, they put the weight of the law behind those living as husband and wife. Moreover, both Georgia and Pennsylvania passed laws stating that marriage was encouraged. In Utah, marriage was encouraged not only by continual preaching from the pulpit but also by the lack of legal barriers to it. Even Pennsylvania's encouragement contained a proviso: "All marriages not forbidden by the law of God shall be encouraged." In Utah, neither the law nor the law of God was restrictive. Whereas the Episcopal ceremony included the sentence, "If any man can show just cause why they may not lawfully be joined together, let him now speak, or else hereafter for ever hold his peace," the Mormon ceremony omitted such cautions altogether. Utah law listed no "just cause" for preventing a couple from marrying, and Mormon practice placed no restrictions on marriage based on age, existing marriage, or affinity and few based on consanguinity.

Although the Utah legislature enacted no laws legalizing plural marriage, it did pass a measure stating, "No laws nor part of laws shall be read, argued, cited, or adopted in any court, during any trial, except those enacted by the Governor and Legislative Assembly of this Territory, and those passed by the Congress of the United States when applica-
ble, and no report, decision, or doing of any court shall be read, argued, cited, or adopted as precedent in any other trial.** Because precedent is the basis for the common law, this measure disallowed the authority of the common law in the territory. Since the common law prohibited bigamy, rejection of the common law at least tacitly made plural marriage legally possible. However, whether the common law was in force was in considerable dispute because of the judicial decisions made by non-Mormon judges.

Except for permitting plural marriage, Mormon practice was generally congruent with contemporary common law in its lack of restrictions on marriage. Following Roman law, under common law the age of discretion, the age at which a valid marriage could be contracted, was twelve for females and fourteen for males. A marriage contracted by an individual under age seven was a complete nullity. Although individuals could contract a marriage between age seven and the age of discretion, they could also disaffirm the marriage at any time before reaching the age of discretion. Such disaffirmation could be either private or public, that is, with or without a judicial decree declaring the marriage invalid. Although under common law parental consent continued until the child turned twenty-one, most American judges gave greater weight to the sanctity of marriage than to parental disapproval. Judges in the United States often rendered legislation raising the age for marriage ineffective by treating such laws as merely advisory, not compulsory. In Utah, if any restrictions on age prevailed, they were the common-law ages of discretion, until 1888 when those ages were incorporated into the Act Regulating Marriage. Only in 1897 were the ages raised to fourteen for females and sixteen for males.

The Mormon marriage system similarly gave wide latitude in choice of mates. Brigham Young set the tone for unions among kin when he stated in 1854 that "the children of Adam and Eve married each other, ... I believe in sisters marrying brothers, and brothers having their sisters for wives. Why? Because we cannot do otherwise, ... Our spirits are all brothers and sisters, and so are our bodies, ... for they are of the same flesh, blood, and bones as all the family of the Earth." Not many Mormons chose to marry blood relatives, but a few consanguineous unions have been identified, including one between a brother and his half-sister.

George Darling Watt, one of the first Mormon converts in England, immigrated to Utah in 1851 with his wife, his eight-year-old son, his mother, and his younger half-sister, Jane Brown. Soon after their arrival, Watt's wife died, leaving him to care for their son. Probably while Brown was helping in that endeavor, she and Watt decided they wanted to marry. Watt asked Brigham Young for his consent for the union, citing the biblical example of Abraham marrying his half-sister Sarah as precedent. The church president denied permission for the marriage, which elicited another plea, this time from Jane: "[George] has made me acquainted with your counsel touching our union which alas is unfavorable to the same. What am I to do? My whole affections are placed upon him. His manly bearing, his untiring kindness and unshaken faithfulness as a brother and a friend has won my love over which I have no control to love another." Young's response is unknown, but the Ordinance Index does not show that George and Jane were ever sealed. Nevertheless, they did marry in the early 1850s and had three children. Jane's faithfulness to George was shaken, however, after he entered plural marriage in 1853. In 1860, he was living with two wives he had married subsequent to his marriage to Jane, but she did not reside in his household or live near him. Unhappy with plural marriage and the church, Jane joined the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in 1864, married a soldier in the Ohio Cavalry Volunteers, and moved with him to Nebraska.

From the current evidence, it appears the church did not approve this marriage between a half-brother and a half-sister, though apparently the couple was not punished for it either. The marriage was not successful and ended for reasons unrelated to the close blood relationship between the couple.

More frequent but still rare were uncles who married their nieces. James T. S. Allred and Henry Sudweeks both married their brothers' daughters as plural wives. In both cases, their brothers had died, and the nieces had immigrated to Utah shortly before the marriage. In these cases, neither woman was young: Sudweeks's niece was forty when she married him in 1885, and Allred's was forty-two when they married in 1875.

Anne Maria Bertelsen was only twenty-one, however, when she married her mother's brother as a plural wife, which she did in 1858, only a few months after her arrival from Denmark with her fifteen-year-old brother. When her husband died, she became the plural wife of another uncle, her first husband's brother. During the reformation in 1857, Samuel Smith, a church and civic leader in Brigham City, married two of his teenage nieces. Aaron Johnson, high councillor in Nauvoo and bishop in Springfield, married five of his brother Lorenzo's daughters, two before leaving Nauvoo and three during the 1850s. It appears that uncle-niece marriages after the 1850s became less common and that nieces who subsequently married uncles were considerably older. Since the validity of a marriage between an uncle and his niece was upheld even in South
the couple for eternity. Unlike ceremonies containing the words “till death us do part,” celestial marriages perpetuate the union beyond the grave. Mormon couples, such as Fred and Lucy Cox, that have been married in a civil ceremony are often married again later by someone authorized to perform celestial marriages so that their unions will be eternal. Fred and Lucy were sealed to each other on March 3 1873, the same day Fred was sealed in plural marriage to Alvira Coolidge. Men could be sealed to many women, whether living or dead, but women could be sealed for eternity to only one man. Eternal marriages could be monogamous as well as polygamous, but plural marriages were religious, not civil, ones.

The importance of marriage is inherent in the Mormon conception of eternity. Mormon theology teaches that the spirits of all humanity were born of God and spiritual consorts in a preexistent state. God wishes his spirit children to become like him, and for that purpose they come to earth, gain mortal bodies, and have the opportunity to prove themselves in their earthly probationary state. Adam and Eve were given the commandment to “multiply and replenish the earth” to provide mortal bodies for spirits waiting to enter the second, or earthly, phase of existence. Those who prove themselves on earth by their righteousness and perform the necessary rituals, including eternal marriage, are rewarded in heaven by “gaining exaltation”: they are given a world over which to rule and to people by producing spirits who will then repeat the process. To be worthy of exaltation, a man and a woman must be married for eternity, not merely until death. According to Mormon theology, marriages that seal couples for eternity can be performed only on earth. Mormons are thus encouraged to be sealed in marriage because their exaltation depends on their having a marriage valid for eternity.

Eternal marriage has a dual purpose: first, on this earth, to prepare bodies to receive spirits waiting in the preexistent state and to train them properly so that they will choose righteous ways; second, in heaven, to continue the procreation of spirits for new worlds, thus increasing the dominions and glory of God himself. Because having children is so important in Mormon theology, plural marriage was an advantage—the ability of righteous men to beget children would not be curtailed by the biological limitations of one wife.

How necessary living in plural marriage was to a person’s reward in the hereafter was not always clear. Leaders’ pronouncements varied over the years that plural marriage was publicly practiced, but the revelation written in 1843 to convince Emma Smith to allow her husband to take plural wives provided the basic framework for understanding the doctrine.
That revelation warned that “if ye abide not that covenant, then are ye damned” (Doctrine and Covenants 132:4). Joseph F. Smith, counselor in the First Presidency, later stated that the revelation as it stood “was not designed to go forth to the church or to the world. It is most probable that had it been then written with a view to its going out as a doctrine of the church, it would have been presented in a somewhat different form.”

That it was not written for the church membership in general left open the question of whether plural marriage was required of all members. “Some say, I would do so, but brother Joseph and brother Brigham have never told me to do it,” Brigham Young said, acknowledging members’ uncertainty about its general applicability if they had not specifically been called to practice it.

Pressure was strongest on church leaders to enter plural marriage, and this pressure increased in the 1880s. In a meeting of the First Presidency, the Twelve Apostles, and stake presidents in 1882, John Taylor told those assembled, “A man obeying a lower law is not qualified to preside over those who keep a higher law.” Wilford Woodruff amplified this, saying, “The leading men of Israel who are presiding over Stakes will have to obey the Law of Abraham or they will have to stop.” In 1884, the pressure on leaders intensified. In St. George, George Q. Cannon of the First Presidency warned that he “did not feel like holding up his hand to sustain anyone as a presiding officer over any portion of the people who had not entered into the Patriarchal order of Marriage.” At the April conference that year, the First Presidency said, “Celestial Marriage... was binding on all Latter-day saints, and that no man was entitled to the right of Presiding, without abiding this law. They advised Presidents of Stakes, who have not obeyed this law to do so, or resign their positions as Presidents.”

To be sure, leaders of the church were more likely to practice plural marriage, and those who did not were advised to do so. Among the general authorities who were appointed from 1845 to 1888, only fourteen (31.8 percent) were monogamists. With the exception of Anthon H. Lund, who was appointed only a year before the church announced its abandonment of new plural marriages, all those who did not enter plural marriage had relatively short tenure in their positions. Local leaders (stake presidencies and bishoprics) were generally also in plural marriage.

Faithful men outside the leadership were also counseled to take plural wives, and plural marriage was not only the preferred type but also the most honored and most sacred. But whether monogamists sealed in marriage could be exalted—receive the greatest reward in the highest, or celestial, kingdom—was ambiguous. In general, those in plural marriages were told that they would have a greater glory than would monogamists, which implied that those with one wife could be exalted although with lesser glory. In announcing plural marriage to the world in 1852, Orson Pratt said plural marriage was “necessary for our exaltation to the fullness of the Lord’s glory in the eternal world.” In 1878, Joseph F. Smith was more explicit: “It is useless to tell me that there is no blessing attached to obedience to the law, or that a man with only one wife can obtain as great a reward, glory or kingdom as he can with more than one, being equally faithful.” Clearly, the general authorities preached that entering plural marriage brought a greater reward.

Several statements from church leaders, however, make it appear that monogamists could not attain exaltation, even at a lesser level. In 1883, Erastus Snow, writing on Doctrine and Covenants 131, stated that there were many “who are not able to abide this new and everlasting covenant... They may remain in their saved condition [in the Celestial Kingdom] without exaltation, but they enter not into the order of the Gods.” In 1873, Brigham Young had warned monogamists that a man who says that he does not want more than one wife “will perhaps be saved in the celestial kingdom, but when he gets there he will not find himself in possession of any wife at all.” Drawing on Jesus’ parable of the talents, Young compared monogamists to the slothful servant who hid his talent in the earth, and when the master came, he took that one talent and gave it to the servant who had doubled his talents. Earlier, in 1866, Young had stated, “The only men who become Gods, even the Sons of God, are those who enter into polygamy.” These pronouncements seemingly indicate that monogamists not only would receive a lesser reward but also could not be exalted.

Nevertheless, these statements are not as inflexible as they at first appear. While the term new and everlasting covenant appears to mean plural marriage in this context, it was generally used in its original meaning, as the gospel restored through Joseph Smith. When used in conjunction with marriage, it often included all marriage sealings, not merely polygamous ones. In the speech in which Erastus Snow made his comment about those outside the new and everlasting covenant not being exalted, he also referred to “a new and everlasting covenant, the holy covenant of marriage for time and all eternity, the union of the sexes, the sealing of wives to husbands and husbands to wives.” This includes all marriages sealed, not just plural ones. John Taylor used the term in this same way when he referred to a man who “entered into the new and everlasting covenant... and by that covenant has been united to his wife for time and all eternity and his wife to him.” The singular form of wife
indicates all sealings, not just plural ones, and thus new and everlasting covenant encompassed all monogamous as well as polygamous sealings.

In the context of other statements by Brigham Young, his declarations above are also less than absolute. In the same address in which he stated that only polygamists would become gods, he also stated that “if you desire with all your hearts to obtain the blessings which Abraham obtained, you will be polygamists at least in your faith.” Moreover, Wilford Woodruff reported in his journal that Young told the Saints in Grantsville that “a Man may Embrace the Law of Celestial Marriage in his heart & not take the Second wife and be justified before the Lord.” In short, entering plural marriage might not be essential for exaltation, but believing that it was a righteous principle ordained of God was.

Similarly, belief, not always practice, was essential in some pronouncements warning of damnation. “What will become of those individuals who have this law taught unto them in plainness, if they reject it? . . . they will be damned,” warned Orson Pratt, drawing on the language of the revelation in Doctrine and Covenants 132. Twenty-two years later, Pratt repeated his warning: “Those who reject this principle reject their salvation, they shall be damned, saith the Lord.” The word reject means to refuse to recognize, credit, grant, or agree to, implying that those who do not believe in plural marriage will be damned, not those who do not practice it. Similarly, Brigham Young admonished the Saints, “Deny [plural marriage] in your feelings and I promise that you will be damned.” Belief was the central issue, although, of course, faith in the principle would naturally lead to its practice. Orson Pratt averred that the Saints “believe in the principle, and we are willing to practice it, because God has spoken from the heavens.” The word willing indicates that action depends not only on being required to do something but also on the ability to do it. Joseph F. Smith was more emphatic: “I understand the law of celestial marriage to mean that every man in this Church, who has the ability to obey and practice it in righteousness and will not, shall be damned.” Will not means more than simply does not; it means refusal and indicates willfulness. George Q. Cannon made this point: “I believe there are very excellent, very worthy, very true and very faithful Latter-day Saints of both sexes who have not entered into the practice of plural marriage; and it is not for me to cast reflections upon any of my brethren or sisters about not having obeyed that principle, unless there has been positive disobedience.” The crux of the issue was faith in the principle and a willingness to obey it, not that one had entered plural marriage.

In 1880, Cannon had emphasized the importance of obedience when he stated that no one could enter the celestial kingdom “until he is tested and proved in all things.” To deserve the highest reward in eternity, a person had to prove perfect obedience to all God’s commands, just as Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son Isaac. The ultimate test was to obey God implicitly in all things he commanded at the time, not necessary to live in plural marriage.

To be sure, a Saint who had faith that plural marriage would bring a greater eternal reward would want to practice it, but “ability to obey” was an important qualifier in Smith’s statement. As Cannon explained, “I am perfectly satisfied there are men who will be counted worthy of that glory who never had a wife; there are men probably in this world now, who will receive exaltation, who never had a wife at all, or probably had but one.” He cited the example of Elder Lorenzo D. Barnes, “a faithful man in the Church, a man of zeal, a man of integrity, who did all in his power to magnify his holy Priesthood” but who died while on his mission to England before he married. Other young men, Cannon averred, “who die before they have had the opportunity to obey that law. . . will, doubtless, receive also, inasmuch as they were worthy.” To qualify for exaltation in such a case, one had to achieve the highest degree of worthiness: “It must be perfection before God, and a proof of willingness on their part, if they had the opportunity.”

Those who never were Latter-day Saints could also achieve exaltation. According to George Q. Cannon, “For good Men died without having the Privilege and men would be judged according to their desires as well as their acts.” Just as all who had no opportunity in this life would have the chance to accept the gospel in life hereafter, “[s]o with those who would have received the Patriarchal Order of Marriage if they had a Chance will be saved in the Celestial Kingdom.” Even nineteenth-century Latter-day Saints had limited opportunities to practice plural marriage. Cannon acknowledged that in Utah “the males outnumber the females; it cannot therefore be a practice without limit among us.” The demographic realities of too few women meant that men willing to practice plural marriage might be unable to.

In short, pronouncements from the pulpit made it clear that entering plural marriage could bring a higher eternal reward, though monogamists or single people could achieve exaltation if they believed in plural marriage and were willing to practice it but were denied the opportunity. These pronouncements, however, were not unambiguous.

It is even more difficult to determine what individual Mormons believed. Those in polygamous relationships were likely to aver that entering plural marriage was necessary for their exaltation. Annie Clark Tan-
ner, a plural wife, wrote, “It was taught at that time that the second wife opened the door of salvation in the Celestial Kingdom not only for herself, but for her husband and his first wife.” Joseph E. Taylor, a counselor in the Salt Lake Stake Presidency, interpreted Doctrine and Covenants 131 to mean that exaltation could “only be reached by observing the patriarchal order of marriage.” In contrast, some members who had been sealed to one spouse, according to Joseph F. Smith, “supposed that the doctrine of plural marriage was a sort of superfluity, or non-essential, to the salvation or exaltation of mankind.” Smith conceded that those who lived up to their covenants made in their monogamous sealing would “receive his reward therefor, and this reward, or blessing, he could not obtain on any other grounds or conditions.” What that reward was Smith did not state. The purpose of the address, however, was to make clear that the “law [regarding plural marriage] is in force upon the inhabitants of Zion” and that it applied to every qualified man in the church. Two years later, George Q. Cannon echoed this: “Some men think they can slip around—I have heard such men talk—they think they are going to get into the celestial kingdom without obeying the law of celestial marriage.” He, too, refuted that idea. Still, many were reluctant to enter plural marriage, as a number of general authorities acknowledged publicly. Others obeyed the law, without having to live in plural marriage in mortality, by being sealed to another wife after the first wife had died or by having dead women sealed to them. The principle was clearly not a popular doctrine even with many Saints, and church leaders had to give the practice their strongest endorsement for it to expand beyond a small group.

Beyond stressing the eternal significance of marriage, nineteenth-century Mormons also accepted its generally acknowledged purposes: first, to rearrange the relationship between a man and woman and hence their rights and duties to each other; second, to give rights of sexual access; third, to rear children and to transmit material goods and culture from one generation to another; and fourth, to reorder the relationship between the kin groups of the husband and wife as they acquire a common kinship with the children of the couple. Whether monogamous or plural, celestial marriage added a fifth reason—one’s eternal salvation—to these.

While most celestial marriages, or sealings, encompassed these five elements, not all did. Some sealings were for eternity only and conferred no earthly rights or obligations. Similar to eternity-only marriages were nominal marriages. Neither appears to have bestowed rights of sexual access on the couple, but wives in nominal marriages used their husbands’ surnames and may have received some temporal help. Yet other sealings conferred on the couple all earthly and eternal rights and obligations but with the understanding that these would not take effect until some later time.

In addition to sealings, the church sanctioned second marriages that had no force in eternity if a wife had previously been sealed to a husband. These proxy marriages, like civil marriages, bestowed on the couple all the earthly rights and duties of marriage. In such marriages, however, the man acted as a “proxy” for the husband to whom the wife had earlier been sealed for eternity. Convenience marriages, however, conferred only the right of sexual access. All these various types of marriage are represented in the Manti data set.

Most women who were married for eternity-only were sealed to men who had wives still living. Ann Wixes, for example, married George Taylor in England in 1830, and both were baptized as Latter-day Saints in 1848. They subsequently separated, and she and their children immigrated to Utah in 1854. Two years later, at age fifty-six, Ann was sealed to William Black, who had a wife still living. Ann and William apparently never lived together, and she and an unmarried daughter were listed in the 1860 census as living in the household of Ann’s married son. There is no evidence that she and William Black ever cohabited, and when she died, she was buried under the name Ann Taylor.

The original records of the eternity-only marriages have no notations about the nature of the marriage, and unfortunately these records are not currently available for scholarly purposes. In this study, a woman who had passed childbearing age when she was sealed, who did not live in the same household with the man to whom she was sealed, and who was never referred to by his surname is considered sealed for eternity only. Fifteen plural marriages in which the plural wives were sealed to their husbands for eternity only are included in the Manti subset.

Four nominal plural wives are also included in the Manti subset. James Cook, for example, married Hannah Massey Davenport in 1865. She was a fifty-seven-year-old widow, eight years his senior, at the time of the sealing. In the 1870 census, she was listed as Hannah Cook but was living in her daughter Marie’s household. After his first wife died, James Cook married Hannah’s daughter Marie. In 1879, Marie Cook died. In the 1880 census, James was listed as widowed, and Hannah had reassumed the name Davenport, the surname of her first husband. A short biographical sketch of James Cook written sometime later stated, “Second wife was Anna Davenport, to whom he was sealed but did not live with.”
Similarly, Maren Jorgensen was sealed to Morten Mortensen on December 12, 1878, the same day he was sealed to his first wife. Maren was sixty-five years old and twelve years his senior. In 1880, Morten and the two wives to whom he had been sealed all lived in Manti. Maren was living alone, however, and in the census she was listed as Maren Axelsen. Axelsen was Morten's patronymic and the surname he used in immigrating to the United States and in the 1900 and 1910 censuses, although he was listed as Mortensen in the 1880 census.

Although Hannah and Maren were undoubtedly sealed to their husbands for eternity only, they did bear their husbands' names, hence, in this study these marriages are designated as nominal plural marriages. Such marriages apparently did not include the right of sexual access, but what other rights and duties they conferred is unclear. In one case, a widow was sealed to a married man, apparently for eternity only, but later brought a complaint against him in a church court for not supporting her. The man defended himself by saying that "in their marriage contract she promised not to be an expense to him," his first wife testified that before the sealing, the widow had claimed she wanted the sealing for religious reasons and "would never think of having pleasure with a man at my age." The decision favored the second wife, indicating that, in being sealed to her, the man had accepted a responsibility that he could not shirk. While this form of marriage did not include sexual access, there appears to have been no clear consensus about what responsibilities the husband and wife had for each other.

Another type of sealing was the marriage of a couple with the understanding that the rights and responsibilities of marriage were to be postponed. Some of these marriages were performed for very young couples just before leaving Nauvoo because Mormons feared that it would be a long time before another temple would be built where such rites could be performed. Such a sealing was performed for twelve-year-old Mary Dunn and eleven-year-old Mosiah Hancock. Mosiah wrote in his autobiography that it was done "with the understanding that we were not to live together as husband and wife until we were 16 years of age." As it turned out, they never did so. While both families were at Winter Quarters, Mary came to the Hancock camp and wanted to live with them. Her mother had died, and her father had not married again but also taken a plural wife. Apparently Mary believed living with her husband's family would be more pleasant, but Mosiah's mother would not allow her to stay because there was no room. Mosiah's father was away in the Mormon Battalion, and life was undoubtedly already difficult for the family. Mosiah later wrote, "[W]ith what joy I hailed my noble, beautiful wife!"

But Mary had to go, and oh what sorrow as I saw her depart." Mosiah and Mary were never united after they arrived in Salt Lake City; at age eighteen, Mary married Martin Luther Ensign.

Because celestial marriages transcend this world, it was possible for a person to be married to one spouse for this world and sealed to a different spouse for eternity. The spouse to whom a person was sealed for eternity might not even be living. Isaac Morley's daughter Cordelia, for example, was sealed to Joseph Smith for eternity in Nauvoo eighteen months after he was killed at Carthage. Frederick W. Cox stood as proxy for the sealing to Joseph Smith in the temple ceremony while marrying Cordelia for time, or for the duration of mortal life.

Such marriages for time only—proxy marriages—entailed the same responsibilities and conferred the same rights that civil marriages did. In these marriages, the children bore their biological fathers' names but in the hereafter would belong to the family of their mother and the husband to whom she was sealed for eternity. Mercy Rachel Thompson, who had been in two such marriages, designated this the "proxy method." Her husband for time agreed "to take care of me as long as he lived, and then deliver me up to my first husband in eternity... together with all children that we might have." This sometimes affected the way some individuals felt about others in the family. For example, the grandchildren sealed to Brigham Young felt superior to Young's other biological grandchildren who would be in Joseph Smith's family in heaven.

Such marriages could also affect the couple's attitude toward the marriage. Eunice Billings married John Warner in 1849 and was sealed to him for eternity on August 6, 1851. They had four children, the last born after his father was killed by Indians in 1853. Three years later, she became the second wife of George W. Snow. This second marriage produced four children, but by 1870 she had moved from Manti to Provo. The census indicates that she lived in her mother's household and had reassumed her first husband's surname. In the 1880 census, she is again listed as Eunice Warner. Moreover, the census shows her as both married and widowed, appropriately so in her case when she bore the name of her first husband but was recognized by the church and Mormon society as the wife of the second. Eight months after his first wife died, George married Eunice again to regularize their marriage—a common practice in the late 1880s and 1890s. They lived separately, however, and in 1900 George resided with his daughter and her husband in Manti, although the census indicates he was married.

Apparently both considered this a levirate marriage. In biblical times, these were marriages in which a man married his deceased brother's wife
to ensure that the deceased would have an heir to carry on his name. For Mormons, these marriages had a slightly different purpose. Discussing a second marriage when the wife had previously been sealed to her first husband, Orson Pratt stated that the second husband accepts "her as a wife for time only, yielding her up with all her posterity in the morning of the first resurrection to her legal and lawful husband." In short, a spiritual brother married a deceased man's wife; he then fathered children who would increase the family belonging to the deceased in the eternities and assisted financially in caring for the family during their mortal lives.

Undoubtedly the rarest type of marriage among Mormons was the "convenience marriage," such as took place between Frederick Cox Sr. and Mary Ann Darrow Richardson. Mary Ann and her husband, Edmund Richardson, as well as their two children, were forced to stay in Salt Lake City during the winter of 1853-54, when their ox died and they could not continue their journey to Oregon. Impressed with the generosity of their neighbors, they soon were baptized into the church and accepted an assignment to help the settlers in Manti. With the importance the Saints placed on having children, however, Mary Ann Richardson worried about her husband's inability to father more children because of his "having become an eunuch." She was also concerned about her exaltation, especially when several had told her she was wrong to stay with her husband and should be sealed to another. Writing to Brigham Young for advice, she expressed her desire to remain with her husband if that course would not hinder her eternal reward. In a letter dated March 5, 1857, Young proposed a novel solution, one of the few possible in that age before the advent of modern reproductive medicine: "If I was imperfect and had a good wife I would call on some good bro. to help me that we might have increase, that a man [her husband] of this character will have a place in the Temple, receive his endowments and in eternity will be as tho nothing had happened to him in time." According to Young, her husband's sterility would not bar him from the most important temple ordinances, and his eternal reward would not be adversely affected. As for having additional children, Mary Ann could be married in a civil ceremony to another man who would father her children. By being sealed for eternity to Edmund, Mary Ann as well as all her children, would belong to him.

The couple eventually accepted the plan, but only reluctantly. Edmund and Mary Ann were sealed for eternity on April 20, 1857, but only after they "each had seen a vision" did they accept President Young's unusual suggestion. After they acceded to the plan, he gave them a pass listing three polygamous men he considered worthy to participate. They chose Frederick Cox. He, too, at first refused to participate in the plan but also became convinced that "the plan was divinely inspired." One of the sons of this union later wrote of his birth: "It took three visions and a religion to reconcile others to my coming." On January 9, 1858, Brigham Young celebrated the marriage of Mary Ann Darrow Richardson and Frederick Cox in a religious ceremony that did not seal the couple. From this union, two sons were born: Charles on October 13, 1858, and Sullivan on January 26, 1861.

Family legend indicates that Brigham Young granted the Richardsons a temporary separation or a civil divorce and that Edmund lived some distance from Manti during his wife's second marriage. He may have spent some time away, but one year after the first son was born, he returned and took his wife to Salt Lake to be sealed again for eternity in the Endowment House. Moreover, as indicated on the 1860 Manti census, he was again reunited with his wife about eight months before the second son was born.

Not long thereafter the Richardsons moved to another town. For about twenty years Cox did not see his sons. When he did, he shook their hands heartily, looked at them and listened to them unceasingly during their visit, but never mentioned the relationship between them. The second marriage did not bestow the rights and responsibilities that marriage usually confers. Mary Ann retained the Richardson name, lived in the Richardson home, and received her support from Edmund Richardson. Cox received no rights in the children: they were not called by his name, nor did they inherit from him. Because the Cox-Richardson children were cautioned to say nothing about the circumstances of their birth to protect the good name of their mother, it is highly unlikely any public acknowledgment was made of Mary Ann's second marriage. In short, other than the right of sexual access, the marriage ceremony conferred no rights or responsibilities.

This form of marriage was not an isolated instance, although it was undoubtedly a rare one. When Richardson's descendants sought answers about the marriage, the executive assistant of the Genealogical Society of Utah assured them that there were other such marriages and that these were known as "convenience marriages." As Lawrence Foster argues, calling such marriages polyandrous is misleading because polyandry is incompatible with the patriarchal nature of nineteenth-century Mormon marriages. While Mary Ann's two marriages overlapped, the form of the marriage to each man was different and did not entail the same rights and responsibilities. Marriages for
time were perceived as temporary because life on this earth was viewed as ephemeral in the expanse of eternity. Seatings for eternity were thus much more important and took precedence over marriages for time, although they did not necessarily invalidate them.83

These examples indicate that nineteenth-century Mormons recognized several forms of marriage that conferred different rights and responsibilities on the husbands and wives. First, civil marriages, those performed by civil or local church authorities, were the same as marriages outside the Mormon community. Second, time-and-eternity marriages added to the usual rights and responsibilities conferred at marriage the pronouncement that the union would endure throughout eternity. Third, proxy marriages also bestowed the usual temporal rights and responsibilities but stipulated that in the hereafter the husband had no rights to either the wife or the children born to their union. Fourth, marriages for eternity only conferred no earthly rights or responsibilities on the couple but dealt only with their union during eternity. Such marriages could be performed for two living persons, for one living and one deceased person, or for two people who were both dead. Fifth, nominal marriages conferred only limited rights on the couple for this life and sealed them for eternity. Sixth, marriages with delayed rights involved ceremonies that sealed the couple for time and eternity, but the couple postponed living together because of the bride's youth. Seventh, convenience marriages conferred rights of sexual access but gave the man no rights to the children and limited responsibility for the woman.

This variety of marriages among Mormons indicates a conception of marriage different from that generally held in nineteenth-century America. Eighteen states defined marriage as a civil contract, while three others described marriage as a personal relationship arising out of a civil contract.84 English law recognized that Mormon marriages created rights and responsibilities different from those in other marriages, and in Hyde v. Hyde and Woodmansee it specifically eschewed acknowledging the first woman a man married as his wife and the others as concubines.85

An English convert, John Hyde, had immigrated to Utah and married Lavina Hawkins according to the rites of the church on November 10, 1853.86 In 1856, he left Utah for a proselyting mission but soon renounced the church and wrote Mormonism: Its Leaders and Design, attacking the church and polygamy.87 The church excommunicated him. His wife, declared Heber C. Kimball, was "just as free from him as though she never had belonged to him"; she needed no formal divorce.88 In spire of John's letters to Lavina urging her to abandon her faith and join him, she refused and in 1858 married Joseph Woodmansee.

Hyde returned to England, became a minister of a dissenting chapel at Derby, and eventually petitioned for a divorce. In 1866, Sir James O. Wilde rendered his decision, an ironic one for Hyde, who had opposed polygamy. "Marriage, as understood in Christendom," the judge decided, "may for this purpose be defined as the voluntary union for life of one man and one woman, to the exclusion of all others."89 In Utah, the judge ruled, marriage meant something wholly different. Although Hyde's marriage had been monogamous, he continued, Mormon marriages created a set of rights and obligations different from those created by "Christian marriages," because Mormon monogamous marriages always had the potential of becoming polygamous ones. English matrimonial law, the decision maintained, was inapplicable to polygamous marriages, because it allowed a woman a judicial separation and permanent support from her husband on the grounds of "personal violence, open concubinage, or debauchery in face of the wife, her degradation in her home from social equality with her husband, and her displacement as the head of his household." If these provisions were applied to polygamous marriages, "the Court would be creating conjugal duties, not enforcing them, and furnishing remedies when there was no offence."90 In short, the Hyde marriage may have been binding by lex loci—the law of the place in which it was contracted—but English matrimonial law did not acknowledge it as a marriage.91 What made Mormon marriage different, then, was not just plural marriage, which was only its most notable and notorious feature. Mormon marriages added or limited the rights and responsibilities of those marrying, depending on the type of marriage.

One of the responsibilities Mormons believed marriage—whether a sealing or only for time—entailed was to rear the children of that marriage and to provide financially for those children and their mother. Because plural marriage was not legalized by Utah law and the rights of such marriages were not enforceable in courts of law, it was necessary to make statutory provisions for plural wives and their children to inherit. All states have laws stipulating how an estate will be distributed among a decedent's heirs in the absence of a valid will. The Utah legislature passed legislation in 1852 to deal with such intestate estates—estates in which the decedent left no will—but tried to allow plural wives and their children to inherit by mandating, "The homestead occupied by the wife, or any portion of the family of the deceased at the time of his death, shall in all cases be held free to the use of the wife and family of the deceased... in the absence of other arrangements by will, [the estate after liquidation of liabilities will] descend in equal shares to his children or their heirs; one share to such heirs through the mother of such children,
... or if he has more than one wife, who either died or survived in lawful wedlock, it shall be equally divided between the living and the heirs of those who are dead. The language in this section appears purposely ambiguous. It could mean a man who had two wives in succession with whom he had children, one who had died before he married the second wife, who survived him. Or it could mean more wives than one who were married to him at the time he died.

Like most territories entering the Union after 1850, Utah Territory enacted a homestead provision exempting the dwelling from the claims of creditors and other claimants and ensuring it would be retained by the wife and children after the husband's death. First passed by Texas in 1839, such provisions replaced dower, or the right under common law for a wife to inherit for her use during her lifetime one-third of her husband's real estate. Dower worked against the interests of plural wives because if the first wife inherited one-third of the estate, the proportion that could be allotted to them would be small, certainly significantly smaller than the first wife's. In addition to providing an accepted alternative to dower, this section of the law allowed for the possibility of a decedent's having more than one lawful wife surviving him and enabled each to inherit from him. Because dower could put up a barrier to plural wives' inheriting from their husbands, the territorial legislature specifically abolished dower in 1872.

Because Mormons did not consider children born to plural wives illegitimate, it is unclear whether the section that followed was also passed to secure the inheritance rights of plural wives and their offspring. It was, however, used by courts to refer to plural families: "Illegitimate children and their mothers inherit in like manner [as legitimate children and wives] from the father, whether acknowledged by him or not, provided it shall be made to appear to the satisfaction of the court, that he was the father of such illegitimate child or children." The broad language of the Utah provision was open to abuse, and in 1876 this law was modified so that the illegitimate child inherited only if the father acknowledged the child. Though in advance of such laws elsewhere, the Utah law was in keeping with the trend allowing illegitimate children to inherit from their fathers. In 1858, Wisconsin passed a similar law allowing an illegitimate child to inherit if the father acknowledged he was the father in writing signed before witnesses. Nevertheless, this provision reflected a deeply held Mormon belief that a man who sired a child, legitimate or otherwise, was responsible for financially providing for its needs.

These inheritance laws appear to have fulfilled their purpose of ensuring that plural wives inherited from their husbands, but the legacies given to the wives were not always equal. George Peacock died intestate in 1879, leaving three wives and twenty-five children. In the decree of the distribution of the estate, his first wife was listed as widow, while the two plural wives were designated as "mother & guardian" of their respective children. The property appears to have been distributed fairly equally among the three wives, each one receiving the house, lot, and property—the homestead—she had used during their husband's life. While the first wife was given the property "for and during her natural life," the plural wives received their property "for the use of said mother during her natural life and for the support and care of said minors." Such a careful distinction conformed to section 25 of the Utah inheritance law: each plural wife inherited as mother and guardian of children acknowledged by the father.

Whereas a local merchant had been the administrator of the Peacock estate, the estate of Frederick W. Cox Sr. was settled by an "agreement as to the division of the estate" among the five wives in 1882. The legacies left to the five were not equal. Three wives, including the first, had no unmarried children, but the first wife received over a hundred dollars more than either of these two other plural wives. Another plural wife with an unmarried child received a slightly larger amount than the first wife. By the time the estate was settled, two and a half years after the husband's demise, the fifth wife had remarried, and she received no property. Her second husband, however, as guardian of Cox's four minor children, received an amount only slightly smaller than the first wife's portion. In addition, the two sons who had married since their father's death received amounts approximately equal to the portions given to the plural wives with no unmarried children, apparently to provide for these sons in the manner in which older sons had earlier been provided for when they married. The agreement was signed by all five wives and most of Cox's adult children.

Similarly, when Orson Hyde died intestate, an agreement was made in 1881 among "Mary Ann P. Hyde widow of deceased" and the four plural wives who were "guardians of the minor heirs of Orson Hyde." The childless widow received $136.75 in personal property, while the plural wives received three to five times as much. The residue of the estate not specifically assigned to one of the women was to be divided among them. The childless widow, who was the legal wife, apparently agreed to receive the smallest amount because she had no children for whom she needed to provide.

Although John Taylor left a will when he died in 1887, it consisted only of a listing of his wives and children, and the family had to divide the property. In a family meeting, it was decided that each wife and each
child would receive an equal share of the property but that the children would give their mothers use of their share of the property until their mothers' deaths. However, since the seventh wife had the youngest family, she was given use of the farm, and a daughter with mental problems was allowed a double share for her support.¹⁰³

When a plural wife had no children through whom she could make a claim on the man's estate, it was necessary for the polygamist to leave a will. Such wills, however, did not necessarily designate plural wives as wives. Although Madison Hambleton called both his wives members of his family in his will, he referred to them separately as "my wife Chelniec and Heir Bergetta." Five years later, in 1874, Christian Nielsen made a similar distinction in his will between his "beloved wife Maren Nielsen" and his "heir Marie Nielsen."¹⁰⁴

Polygamists who died testate were not always so punctilious, however, and some did describe their plural wives as wives in their wills. When James Olsen died in 1883, he willed thirty acres and the house close to Manti "to my wife Katharine and her children." The balance of his farm was "to be divided between my 3 wives . . . according to the size of family."¹⁰⁴

Many estate settlements did not come before the probate courts, particularly in the early years, but were decided by the church courts. For example, when one polygamist died, it was ordered that each of his four wives would receive $600 while each of his fifty-four children would receive $375. The decedent had deeded property to one wife, and she was allowed to also retain that "in consideration of the large number of minor children she has to rear and educate."¹⁰⁵

Between wills, decisions of the probate and church courts, and agreements among wives, plural wives and their children were able to inherit even though their status had never been regularized in law. To be sure, not all wives were satisfied with receiving less than other wives or with the proportion they had inherited, especially when a child might inherit as much as a wife, but unless a first wife took the case to a territorial court where it would be decided by non-Mormon judges, plural wives could expect to inherit from their husbands.¹⁰⁶ Although not recognized in law, plural wives in practice were acknowledged as wives who had a claim on their husbands' estates. They did not, however, always inherit as much as the first and legal wife; and legally, if not in practice, their position remained tenuous.

This de facto recognition of plural wives changed as Congress stepped up its campaign against polygamy in the 1880s. Polygamy, along with those consanguineous marriages that many considered incestuous, had become symbols of the family crisis in America. Reformers rallied behind legislation requiring marriage licenses, raising the statutory age of marriage, banning marriages between blood relatives, and curtailing plural wives' ability to inherit from their husbands. Even the courts began to soften their support for informal matrimony amid the reformers' fears of free love and "rampant Mormonism." Polygamy, a "prime instigator" of the social climate that produced these reforms, became one of the first targets for change.¹⁰⁷

During the 1880s, the federal government dismantled the entire system the Mormons put in place in the 1850s to protect plural marriage. Not only were polygamous families excluded from inheriting from intestate estates, but also Congress passed laws regulating marriage and mandating registration of marriages. By enforcing these laws, by taking the selection of judges out of the hands of Mormons, and by attacking the church itself, the federal government was also able to curtail the church's influence over the civil courts and to diminish the ecclesiastical courts' control over family issues.

But until the 1880s, marriage in Utah was essentially regulated by ecclesiastical officials, with some help from custom. Mormons encouraged marriage, not only through the lack of legal barriers but also from the belief in eternal marriage as a requirement for one's exaltation in the next life. The latitude given for kin to intermarry and in the age youths could wed, although wide, was not much greater than that allowed by the common and statutory law elsewhere in midcentury United States—except, of course, that Mormons' interpretation of their law also supported plural marriage. Although Mormons never regularized through law the status of plural families, territorial legislation did provide for the children and their mothers to inherit. Mormon control over marriage was challenged, however, as Americans throughout the United States in the late nineteenth century demanded and got more stringent legislation regarding marriage for themselves and mounted a federal campaign against marital practices among the Mormons. Before that happened, though, the Mormons had developed a marital system that fostered but did not force marriage.
6 Women Who Became Plural Wives

The Mormon church's success in encouraging plural marriage depended to some degree on such marriages also fulfilling the individual's needs. Unquestionably, those who entered plural marriage believed that it was mandated by God. In a diary entry about women living in polygamy, Eliza Partridge Lyman wrote that "nothing but a firm desire to keep the commandment of the Lord could have induced a girl to marry in that way." Similarly, Sarah D. Rich, writing about why she permitted her husband to marry additional wives, averred that "this I could not have done if I had not believed it to be one principle of His Gospel, once again restored to the earth, that those holding the Priesthood of Heaven might, by obeying this Order attain to a higher glory in the eternal world." The divinity of plural marriage was often preached from the pulpits—from 1860 to 1889, plural marriage was the fifth most popular topic at church conferences—and it was canonized as scripture and embedded in church doctrines about salvation. Without that doctrinal foundation, few, if any, would have entered into plural marriages.

But plurality was not practiced by all who believed in it. Many of those who did enter plural marriage probably had additional motivations, such as status, love, and financial considerations. Economic reasons appear to have been important to many women marrying as plural wives. Almost half of plural wives in the Manti subset entered plural marriage in the difficult years from 1844 to 1859, years that spanned the exodus from Nauvoo and the initial settlement of a dry land infested by insects and inhabited by sometimes hostile Indians. In 1853, before the Walker War came to an end, the Saints in Manti had to live with reduced provisions because of the "grasshopper war." During the next two summers, grasshoppers again returned to devour the crops. In 1855, the grasshoppers were accompanied by a drought, followed by a severe winter. The next summer crops were again scanty, and the snow was deep during the winter of 1856.

While the Saints were experiencing these difficulties, the largest number of nineteenth-century immigrants coming in a two-year period arrived in the mountain valleys. The record influx of immigrants into the already strained economy undoubtedly exacerbated the financial problems of the Saints. Not only were there many new immigrants, but many of them were impoverished as well. Nearly two thousand of those who arrived in 1856 were too poor to buy wagons and the animals to pull them in order to cross the plains. Many of the indigent pulled handcarts, which contained all their belongings and some provisions, from Iowa to Utah.

In the wake of these agricultural disasters and record immigration, church leaders began the reformation to renew members' commitment to Mormon religious ideals. During the October 1855 General Conference, a system of home missions was instituted to awaken the Saints from their spiritual slumber. When that failed to have the desired effect, a second phase began in March 1856 in which church leaders preached repentance and reeducation. In the October conference that year, as the historian Thomas Alexander has pointed out, "the calls for reformation became increasingly intense and personal," with appeals for greater commitment and pressure to enter plural marriage. By spring of 1857, the third phase of the reformation, inaugurated by Wilford Woodruff in December 1856 and "characterized by love and concern," began to supplant the second and harsher phase. In Manti, the second, harsher phase of the reformation lasted seven months, from October 1856 to April 1857.

The increase in immigration during the middle of the decade was accompanied by an upturn in the number of new plural marriages. During the harsh phase of reformation, however, the number of new plural marriages increased dramatically over their already high levels, as can be seen in table 4. As large numbers of immigrants arrived in Utah, the incidence of plural marriage more than doubled—from four marriages to nine—but when the millenialist fervor of the reformation revivals was superimposed on record immigration and economic problems, the number of women entering plural marriages almost tripled—from nine marriages to twenty-six. The number of plural marriages, however, dropped back to the original level—four marriages—when the pressure-laden revivals ended and the economic situation improved with the abundant harvest during the summer of 1857. Although the numbers in table 4 are
Table 4. Plural Marriages in Manti Subset, by Seven-Month Periods, January 1855 to November 1857

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Number of Plural Marriages</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 1855–July 1855</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 1855–February 1856</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>+125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1856–September 1856</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 1856–April 1857</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>+189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1857–November 1857</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Manti subset.

small, Ivins's study supports the finding that the number of plural marriages increased dramatically during the second phase of the reformation. It appears that religious motivations were crucial for many women who become plural wives during the reformation; nevertheless, the increased number of immigrants and the depressed economic situation were also important factors in the overall increase in plural marriages.

A comparison of this Mormon marriage pattern during the mid-1850s with that of early modern England during hard economic times reveals how differently the two societies reacted to economic downturns. In England, not only were all marriages monogamous, but also all couples were expected to have sufficient resources to be independent, both economically and residentially, when they married. Plentiful harvests encouraged marriages, while hard times prompted their postponement. Because fertility was linked to marriage, fewer marriages during hard times helped keep the population in balance with economic resources.

In Utah, however, the situation was the opposite. During the difficult economic times of the 1850s, church leaders encouraged young women to enter plural marriage, which meant they usually married older, economically secure men. Young women thus did not need to postpone their marriages until better times when young men could secure sufficient resources to set up independent households. Nor did social custom prescribe that a polygamous husband had to supply his plural wives with independent households. The plural wife might already be living in the household as a servant or a dependent before the marriage. Hard economic times therefore did not postpone marriage for women in Utah as it had in early modern England. Rather, it appears to have encouraged women to select economically secure—and hence already married—men. There was consequently no check on population growth caused by a decreased number of marriages. On the contrary, fertility rates in Utah, which were always above national norms, were at their highest during the 1850s, in spite of the agricultural disasters. Not only were Mormons fulfilling the divine command to prepare bodies for waiting spirits, but also they were ensuring a growing church membership through natural increase and an expanding population that could continue to spread throughout the territory and augment Mormon control of the area.

In the unstable frontier economy of early Utah, however, widowed, divorced, and fatherless women were at a disadvantage. Making the desert blossom as a rose required the hard physical work of grubbing out sagebrush, plowing hardened ground, digging canals for irrigation, planting and nurturing crops in the semi-arid climate, and building fences to keep livestock out. To make new areas habitable required building roads, erecting houses, and often making the adobes necessary for constructing buildings. This was considered men's work. Like other Mormon women, plural wives had come from societies with clearly delineated gender roles and generally preferred "women's work"—cooking meals, baking bread, sewing dresses and shirts, knitting stockings, laundering linens and clothing, cleaning house, planting and caring for gardens, tending fowls and other barnyard animals, and nurturing children—tasks that were all the more difficult in rudimentary shelters without the amenities of the more settled areas. Patty Sessions's diary entry on the day she married John Parry illustrates the perceived need for men's help: "I feel to thank the Lord that I have some one to cut my wood for me."

Women's work required stamina more than strength. Running a farm—and most families during the initial settlement were farm families, at least to some extent—required both men's and women's work. Single women were at a considerable disadvantage in an economy where the products of women's work brought little remuneration. This undoubtedly motivated some single women, particularly those without a man in the family to perform the men's work, to become plural wives. Such women—widowed, divorced, and fatherless women—account for the majority of plural wives in the Manti subset (see figure 7). Those women thirty years old or over and whose family status is unknown most likely were divorced or widowed or whose fathers were dead or not in Utah. When such women are added to those widowed, divorced, and fatherless, such women were responsible for two-thirds of all the new plural marriages. They also constitute a majority of the new plural wives in each quinquennium. Not surprising, the proportion of women who had fathers in Utah and became plural wives reached its highest point from 1855 through 1859, the five-year period encompassing the reformation, when all Latter-day Saints were under pressure to enter plural marriage.

To understand how these economic pressures affected women's
Figure 7. Percentage of Plural Marriages by Wives' Previous Family Status, 1843–89. Source: Manti subset.

decisions, consider the case of Sophia Klaud Petersen. She emigrated from Denmark at age thirty-one with five children. After she had paid for the family's journey to Utah, she had only one drsdaler. She and her children pulled a handcart across the plains in the Willie Company, but the company left late in the season and was caught by snow in the mountains. Sixty-eight of the 437 in the company died before help arrived. Men were considerably more likely to die of cold and starvation than were women: 24.9 percent of the men died, while only 8.5 percent of women succumbed to the cold and starvation. As soon as the Petersen family arrived in Utah, it was asked to go to Manti. There the destitute family moved in with the Smiths, and less than three months later the impoverished Sophia became the second wife of the man in whose household she was living.

Like Sophia Petersen, Elizabeth Haydock, a fifty-five-year-old widow, could not afford to buy a wagon and the animals to pull it so she traveled to Utah with a handcart company. She was with the ill-fated Martin Handcart Company, which left even later than the Willie Company did. Of the 576 people in that company, over 103 died before rescue teams arrived. Elizabeth and her daughter survived, but Elizabeth lost an eye through exposure to the cold. A year after her arrival, she became the third wife of the bishop of Manti. In the same handcart company, Anne Larsen lost her husband and two children before help arrived. She, too, became the plural wife of a Manti resident a year later. Thirteen years later, her daughter married as a plural wife at age nineteen.

When forty-seven-year-old Mette Christina Christiansen married Niels Peter Domgaard in October 1859, she had already been suffering with dropsy—congestive heart failure—for about eight months. She died of that disease only five months after she became a plural wife. Her husband and her sister-wife could provide not only hot food, shelter, clean linen, and companionship during her waning months but also, because Niels's first wife was a nurse, medical care as her life ebbed away.

Single women without families also were often destitute after their journey to Utah and needed assistance. Maren Andersen joined the Mormon church against her parents' better opposition. Although a childhood illness had left her with "an impaired left side," she moved from her parents' home, worked as a seamstress for two years, and by frugal living was able to pay for her passage to Utah. At age twenty-nine, she arrived in Utah with no family or acquaintances and little money. The Jens Hansen family in Manti invited her to stay with them "until other arrangements could be made." Such arrangements were made about a year later when she became Hansen's second wife.
It was not uncommon for a single woman to live or work as a servant in a household and then become a plural wife of the husband. Cecelia Marie Jorgensen came to work for Hans Jensen Hals in Manti for five weeks, after which he married her as his third wife. Emma Batchelor signed a paper saying that she would serve for a year in Brother Kippen's home, "and the implication was that at the end of that time she would become his plural wife." In her case, however, she did not like the man and his wife well enough to join their family. Instead, she became the plural wife of a man to whom she was first attracted at church.22

As the Utah economy matured, women found it easier to earn a living without a man's help, so the economic advantages of plural marriage decreased. As hard work resulted in surpluses that could be traded for a variety of goods and services, some women became seamstresses, though they were generally poorly paid, or milliners. As more women received further education, particularly after the 1870s, they became telegraph operators, writers, and medical doctors. New converts immigrating to Utah with little education or knowledge of English, however, were still at a disadvantage in the territory's changing economy; and marriage to a countryman, whether he was single or married, could help ease the adjustment to their newly chosen life in Mormondom. Moreover, strong encouragement to marry continued unabated from the pulpits, and increased economic opportunities did little to change gender roles of most women in rural communities.23 Having a man to do men's work remained important after 1870, although not as necessary as in the struggling frontier days.

Besides providing some economic security, marriage, especially plural marriage, instantly established numerous kinship ties. Unlike in Sublimity, Oregon, where many people migrated with kin and neighbors, many Latter-day Saints had strained or severed ties with their families when they converted to Mormonism and left for Utah.24 Cohesive communities, forged by common persecution and a common faith, filled many of the needs generally supplied by kin, but ties of marriage secured a woman's place within a family. Because family responsibilities over-ride almost all other moral obligations, marriage created a woman's right to aid. In Mormondom, as in most nineteenth-century societies, men held significantly more economic resources than women, and through marriage a woman had a right to some of those resources. "Women have claim on their husbands for their maintenance, until their husbands are taken," declared Doctrine and Covenants 83:2, giving religious sanctions to already strong family obligations. Among the general authorities of the church, uniting one's family with those of other church leaders may have been an important consideration in choosing plural wives,25 but such dynasticism was much less significant for ordinary Mormons. General authorities, however, also married widows and impoverished women.

Because of the financial problems posed by the lack of a male provider, the types of women who became plural wives suggest that economic considerations, in combination with religious motivations, were a significant factor in many women's decisions to become plural wives. As illustrated in figure 8, women without fathers in Utah were more likely than other never-married women to enter a plural marriage. [The women included in the figure were only those whose first marriages were performed in Utah and who spent some of their married lives in Manti; women who remarried are discussed in chapter 9.]

Although plural wives accounted for only about one-fifth of those women marrying for the first time in Utah between 1848 and 1887, 38.7

percent of those women whose fathers were dead or not in Utah became plural wives. When first wives are added, 51.8 percent of fatherless women were in plural marriages. Immigrants accounted for 62.7 percent of fatherless women, many of whom had left their families behind in Europe. Of fatherless immigrants, 45.0 percent first married as plural wives, 63.3 percent became either first or plural wives.

Although the population of Utah was much smaller in the frontier period than in the middle period, women whose fathers were dead or not in Utah were concentrated among those women who first married before 1870. Three-fourths of Utah women who were fatherless married in the frontier period. Crossing the plains was more perilous in the early years than it later became, and several fathers died before they could complete the journey. Moreover, women were less likely to immigrate to Utah without fathers after the frontier period: two-thirds of the fatherless women immigrated during the early period. Of immigrants and Utah fatherless women, 69.5 percent married in the frontier period; of these, 45.0 percent became plural wives, while 63.6 percent became either first or plural wives.

For women who were alone or whose families lost the breadwinner along the trail to Utah, entering a plural marriage with an older, established man could provide economic security. Approximately half (53.4 percent) of married women in Manti whose first marriages were as plural wives did not have fathers living in Utah at the time of their marriages [see figure 9], suggesting that economic considerations were important for women in the formation of many plural marriages. Writing about polygamy in general, the economist Gary Becker argues, "Women are better off than if polygyny were forbidden," especially in societies that value many children.20

Vicky Burgess-Elson’s work also points to the importance of economic motivations. In her study based on records written by polygamous wives, she found that 8.3 percent of first wives, 17.9 percent of middle wives, and 37.5 percent of last/youngest wives gave economic reasons for entering plural marriages. For last/youngest wives, it was the single most important reason. For all wives, at 21.1 percent, economic reasons ranked only slightly below dedication to the principle of plural marriage (26.3 percent) and pressure from a third party (22.4 percent). The women included in her study, however, were all literate and disproportionately from the United States, underrepresenting immigrant women, so her findings undoubtedly do not fully measure the importance of economic considerations.21 Nevertheless, women, including fatherless women, made various marital choices, and the majority of fatherless women did marry first as monogamous wives.
amous wives. Nevertheless, a disproportionate number became plural wives. This was particularly the case when the father remarried. The marriage of an older daughter removed her from a household where she might be in conflict with her stepmother. That was accomplished expeditiously through plural marriage: the demand for plural wives appears to have been greater than the supply, and plural marriages could take place without lengthy courtships.

The women least likely to enter plural marriage were those whose parents were monogamous and both living, although such women still constituted 16.6 percent of plural wives. Nevertheless, monogamous parents tended to produce monogamous daughters. Of the 24 exceptions to this in the Manti subset, 6 were women whose families had experienced the trials of Nauvoo and Winter Quarters, 5 came from families that had immigrated within eighteen months of the marriage, 3 were from families that listed no wealth on the census or tax assessment rolls near the date of the marriage, and 1 had borne an illegitimate child. In many monogamous families, however, particularly those who immigrated after the 1850s, no members ever entered plural marriage.

As figure 9 suggests, while the family backgrounds of plural wives differed somewhat from those of monogamous wives, women who were first wives in plural marriages came from families remarkably similar to those of plural wives. Most women who became first wives had married their husbands before immigrating to Utah; however, fifty-six first wives who resided in Manti did marry in Utah. Among these first wives, 49.1 percent had fathers who were dead or not in Utah, a percentage only slightly lower than that for plural wives. Those whose fathers were polygamists constituted 26.4 percent of first wives, while daughters of monogamous parents made up 17.0 percent—within four percentage points of plural wives in each category. Overall, then, plural and first wives who married in Utah came from family situations much more similar to each other than to those of monogamous wives. First wives who had lived without male support appear to have been more willing to help similar women by allowing their husbands to marry those women as plural wives.

Thus, neither first nor plural wives were representative of all Mormon brides. Fatherless women were disproportionately in polygamous marriages. Moreover, about 30 percent of plural wives had been previously widowed or divorced. Among marriages other than the first contracted by Manti women, slightly over half were plural ones. In short, women who were fatherless or who had previously been married—women who were, in other words, largely dependent on their own financial resources—constituted two-thirds of plural wives in the Manti subset.

It is not surprising a church that believed marriage was necessary for exaltation but had limited financial resources found a solution for helping the fatherless and widows by fostering their marriage. Nor is it surprising little is written to indicate that this was the case. The church’s extensive missionary program was often accused of being a recruitment program for plural wives. This was not so; almost as many single men as single women immigrated to Utah. Nor did most single female converts become plural wives.

It does appear, however, that the church, with its strong advocacy of separate gender roles, gave different types of financial assistance to women than to men. For poor, immigrant men, it provided jobs on public projects, including work on temples and the Tabernacle. It helped single women by providing them ample opportunities to marry, including as plural wives.

One plural wife indicated that this was what she thought the church intended: “Utah in those days was full of girls and women who had come from the European countries and from the Eastern states [as converts]. Brigham Young used to say to the men: ‘Marry these girls and give them a home and provide for and protect them. Let them be wives and mothers.’ So all men who could looked upon it as a duty.” John Taylor, president of the church, specifically preached that widows should be taken care of through marriage: “[I]f a man has a brother dead who has left a widow, let the woman left in that kind of a position be just as well off as a woman who has a husband. . . . If a woman is left by her husband, let her have somebody to take care of her, if not her husband’s brother, then his next of kin. . . . We ought to look after the welfare and interest of all.” The brother who married a widow, however, was more often a brother in the gospel rather than a kinsman.

When it was a religious responsibility to take care of the widows and the fatherless and when it was to such women’s economic advantage to marry, the high percentage of plural wives belonging to those categories is not surprising. Mormon women undoubtedly believed in the principle of plural marriage, but women who needed economic help disproportionately practiced it.
Chapter 3: Nineteenth-Century Marriage Law in Utah


2. Mary Ellen Tuttle would have been thirteen at the time she and Fred Cox wanted to marry. Marrying at age thirteen was not common in the 1850s in Utah, but several did so. None of Mary Ellen’s siblings entered plural marriage. John Henry Tuttle Family Group Record, Patrons Section, FHL.

3. Wanless, “So Be It,” 26–31. Howard Cox, son of Fred Cox, and his plural wife Alvira, were the sources for this story; a niece of Fred Cox verified it (31). Although the story was written down long after the events, it does not conflict with those facts that can be checked. Lucy did not conceive her first child until December 1857, although she was married April 20 of that year. Her four subsequent children were born regularly at two-year intervals, indicating little difficulty in conceiving children. Such data support the assertion that she and Fred Cox did not begin living together as husband and wife until sometime in October. Frederick W. Cox Jr.—Lucy Allen Family Group Record, Patrons Section, FHL.

4. Frederick W. Cox Jr.—Lucy Allen Family Group Record, Patrons Section, FHL, 1900 U.S. Census, Manti, Sanpete County, Utah, Population Schedule, E.D. 125, 10 [stamped 188A], Lucy Cox household, National Archives Micropublication T623; Walter Stringham Family Group Record, Patrons Section, FHL.


6. Acts, Resolutions, and Memorials Passed at the Several Annual Sessions of the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Utah (Salt Lake City: Joseph Cain, 1853), chap. 17, sect. 3, 104 [emphasis added].


23. Emmeline B. Wells, Ellen B. Ferguson, Emily S. Richards, and Josephine M. West, letter to the Honorable Committee of the Senate on Education and Labor, May 12, 1886, Hearings, Interior Department, Territorial Papers of Utah, microfilm roll 4, Letters Received relating to Polygamy, January 27, 1879, to December 17, 1897, 540, National Archives and Records Service.


25. Fred C. Collier, ed., *The Teachings of President Brigham Young*, vol. 3, 1832–1834 [Salt Lake City: Collier's, 1897], 292. For a similar comment by Brigham Young, see JD 6:307 [April 6, 1853].


32. Personal letter from Sydney C. Mickelsen, Karen Kirstine Poulsen's granddaughter, November 5, 1985, Herman Julius Christensen—Karen Kirstina Poulsen Family Group Record, Patrons Section, FHL. During the reformation, Emma Lynette Richardson also was pressured by her father to marry an older man in polygamy; it was an unhappy marriage that ended in divorce. Emma Lynette Richardson Conover, "Autobiography, 1841–1903," 5, typescript, Utah State Historical Society.


34. George D. Peacock, "Diary," December 14 and 17, 1865, Special Collections, BYU.


36. Ibid., 120, 125–27.


39. *ID* 51:60 [June 15, 1856]

40. "Celestial Marriage," *Seer* 1 (October 1853): 154. In the 1940s, Joseph Fielding Smith echoed this view of marriage in a sermon at a Rigby, Idaho, Stake Conference, when he stated that if a man and woman were both really living the gospel, they could live together as husband and wife. Interview with Sydney C. Mickelsen, June 6, 1998, Idaho Falls, Idaho, copy of audiotape in possession of author.


42. *The Book of Common Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments, and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, according to the Use of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America*: Together with the Psalter, or Psalms of David (Philadelphia: King and Baird for the Bishop White Prayer Book Society, 1848), 120. Baptists and Methodists also included a similar giving of the bride by her parents as part of their wedding ceremonies. See Perry H. Bidle Jr., *A Marriage Manual*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1994), 109, 117.


47. O. Pratt, "Celestial Marriage," 32.


49. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Manti Ward, "Record of Members, [1849–1877]," 38/9–45, microfilm of original, FHL.

50. Many justice of the peace records have been destroyed or are difficult to locate, while some justices of the peace kept records in their personal journals. *Research Outline: Utah* (Salt Lake City: Family History Library, 1997), 23–24.

Chapter 4: The Nature of Mormon Marriages


6. Grossberg, Governing the Hearth, 105-8; Compiled Laws of Utah (1888), sec. 2984; Laws of the State of Utah, Passed at the Second Regular Session of the Legislature of the State of Utah Held at Salt Lake City, the State Capital, in January, February, and March (Salt Lake City: Star, 1897), chap. 23, 40.

7. Collier, Teachings of President Brigham Young, 3:292.


9. Embry, "Ultimate Taboos," 104-5; George D. Watt and Jane Brown, CPI, Ronald G. Watt, Sailing The Old Ship Zion: The Life of George D. Watt, Brigham Young University Studies 18 [Fall 1977]: 48-63; Susan Easton Black, comp., Early Members of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 6 vols. [Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1993], 5:44; George Darling Watt—Molly Gregson Family Group Record, AF; 1860 U.S. Census, 14th Ward, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah, Population Schedule, 41, George Watt household. Some descendants of Watt believe he married Brown on January 5, 1852. That is the date Jane Brown and her mother, Mary Ann Wood, received their endowments, but the Ordinance Index does not show a sealing for Brown and Watt on that date.


11. Ebe Jesse Family Group Record, Archives Section, FHLC; Jes Oleson Family Group Record, Archives Section, FHLC; Anna Maria Bertheelsen, COF.


13. Among the families Jessie Embry surveyed, one-quarter involved sororal plural marriage, while Kambell Young found sororal polygamy among nearly one-fifth of the families he studied. Embry, Mormon Polygamous Families, 141; K. Young, Isn't One Wife Enough? 126. Both studies are nonrandom and weighted toward the later period during which plural marriage was practiced. On the permission necessary for a mother and her daughters to marry the same man, see Annie Eliza Berry, "Reminiscences, 1899-1907," 4, microfilm of typescript, LDS Church Archives. Other examples of mothers and daughters sealed to the same man are in Embry, "Ultimate Taboos," 102-3.


15. Ibid., 121, 344-45.


17. Frederick W. Cox Jr.—Lucy Gunn Allen Family Group Record and Frederick W. Cox—Alvira Coolidge Family Group Record, Patrons Section, FHL.


19. After the Manifesto, some plural marriages were civil marriages but were without church authorization. Quinn, "LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriages," 53-55; Hardy, Solomonic Covenant, 232-24.


22. C. Wright, Marriage and Divorce, 72-73. See also History of the Church, 5:391-92; and Doctrine and Covenants 132.


24. "ID 20:29 [July 7, 1878]."

25. "ID 3:265 [July 14, 1855]."


29. Quinn, Mormon Hierarchy: Extensions of Power, 180-82.

30. Arrington and Bitton, Mormon Experience, 204.


32. "ID 24:161 [June 24, 1883]."

33. "ID 161:66 [August 31, 1873]. The parable is found in Matthew 25:14-30. Erastus Snow said that Joseph Smith had interpreted that parable this way. Woodruff, Journal, 8:12:26-27 [October 14, 1882]."

34. "ID 11:326 [August 10, 1866]."

35. "ID 24:161 [June 24, 1883]."

36. "ID 24:170 [May 15, 1883] (emphasis added). See also ID 24:146 (May 6, 1883), where George Q. Cannon refers to "new and everlasting covenant concerning patriarchal marriage," indicating that the new and everlasting covenant encompasses more than plural marriage. An unpublished revelation [whose authentic-
ity has been questioned) given through John Taylor, president of the church, in 1886 about how binding the new and everlasting covenant was on the Saints states, “All commandments that I give must be obeyed by those calling themselves by my name unless they are revoked by me or by my authority and how can I revoke an everlasting covenant.” John Taylor, “A Revelation on Celestial Marriage Given through President John Taylor at Centerville, Utah, on September 27, 1886,” in Unpublished Revelations of the Prophets, ed. Collier, 145. The same ambiguity about the term new and everlasting covenant in the Erastus Snow quotation applies to this as well. Quinn, however, argues that John Taylor understood the term in this context as plural marriage. Quinn, “LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriages,” 29–30.

37. ID 11:268–69 [August 19, 1866] [emphasis added].
39. ID 1:164 [August 29, 1852] [first quote, emphasis added]; ID 17:224 [October 7, 1874] [second quote, emphasis added]. See also ID 3:266 [ Brigham Young, July 14, 1855].
41. ID 3:266 [July 14, 1855] [emphasis added].
42. ID 17:224–25 [October 7, 1874]. This reading differs from that given by B. Carmon Hardy, who interprets this passage to mean “one could not...rightfully call himself a Latter-day Saint without accepting and practicing polygamy.” Hardy, Solomon Covenant, 19 [emphasis added].
43. ID 20:311 [July 7, 1878] [emphasis added].
44. ID 23:278 [October 8, 1882].
45. ID 22:124 [October 31, 1880].
46. Genesis 2:17–18. The early Latter-day Saints often used the command given to Abraham to sacrifice his son and his willingness to do so as the type of trial the Saints would have to endure to prove their perfect obedience. See, for example, ID 4:120 [Heber C. Kimball, October 5, 1856]; ID 4:249 [Heber C. Kimball, March 1, 1857]; ID 4:369 [Brigham Young, June 28, 1857]; ID 8:164 [Brigham Young, September 2, 1860]; ID 12:164 [Brigham Young, February 16, 1868]; ID 12:206 [Brigham Young, May 10, 1868]; ID 16:235 [George Q. Cannon, October 6, 1873]; and ID 20:259 [John Taylor, March 2, 1879].
47. ID 22:124–25 [October 31, 1880]. Lorenzo D. Barnes, born March 22, 1812, in Massachusetts, was baptized in the church on June 16, 1833. He served a mission to Ohio before becoming a member of Zion’s Camp. After a mission to Virginia, he became a member of the Adam-ondi-Ahman High Council and then served another mission from 1838 to 1841. Shortly after arriving in Nauvoo, he was called on a mission to England, where he died on December 20, 1842, the first missionary of the church to die on foreign soil. His body was brought to Utah in 1853 to be reinterred. Andrew Jenson, Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia: A Compilation of Biographical Sketches of Prominent Men and Women in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Andrew Jenson History Company, 1901; reprint, Salt Lake City: Western Epics, 1971], 3:307–8; Andrew Jenson, Church Chronology: A Record of Important Events Pertaining to the History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2d ed., rev. and enl. [Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1914], 46.
48. Quoted in Woodruff, Journal, 8:335 [March 9, 1884].

49. ID 24:46 [June 25, 1882].
54. George Edward Grove Taylor Family Group Record, Archives Section, FHL, Ann Taylor, COL.
57. The historian D. Michael Quinn has stated that, although he has searched thousands of records, he has not seen the expression eternity only in original nineteenth-century records of sealings. Quinn, Mormon Hierarchy: Extensions of Power, 184. I have found that some eternity-only marriages, while not designated as such, are listed on a different page in the record book than the one containing other marriages performed on the same day, indicating an awareness that these marriages were somehow different from the others. In addition, Melissa Willis testified in 1892 that “sometimes they are married for time and eternity, and some times only for time. Sometimes for time, and some times for eternity,” indicating those in the nineteenth century acknowledged that some sealings were for eternity only. Melissa Willis, testimony in United States Circuit Court (5th circuit), Court proceedings, 1892–94, typescript of part of the court proceedings and testimony in the case called the "Temple Lot Case," #757. Special Collections, BYU.
58. James Cook Family Group Record, Patrons Section, FHL, Louisa C. Tatton, “Cemetery Records, Manti, Sanpete County, Utah,” 1936, 37, copied from sexton records, typed by the Genealogical Society of Utah, FHL.
60. 1880 U.S. Census, Manti, Sanpete County, Utah, Population Schedule, E.D.
63. 32 [stamped 422D], Samuel Davenport household, and E.D. 65, 30 [stamped 421B], James Cook household; Lever, History of Salt Lake, 172 [quote].


62. 1880 U.S. Census, Manti, Sanpete County, Utah, Population Schedule, E.D. 65, 5 [stamped 409A], Maria Axelsen household, and 36 [stamped 424D], Morten Mortenson household, Morten Axelsen, COI, 1900 U.S. Census, Manti, Sanpete County, Utah, Population Schedule, E.D. 125, 9 [stamped 157B], Morten Axelsen household, 1910 U.S. Census, Manti, Sanpete County, Utah, Population Schedule, E.D. 155, 28, Morten Axelsen household, National Archives Micropublications T624, 2A. Morten's and Morten's use of different surnames does not appear to be an attempt to hide their relationship. Despite the Supreme Court's ruling in the Reynolds case the year before, seventeen Manti households in the 1880 census contained two or more wives, and their relationship to their husbands [head of household] was stated.

63. Nels Anderson, Desert Saints: The Mormon Frontier in Utah (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942), 353–53. Michael Quinn staters that because older women are still attractive, one should not assume that sex was not a part of a marriage to "widows and elderly spinsters." Quinn, Mormon Hierarchy: Extensions of Power, 185. This issue, however, is not attractiveness but what rights and obligations were involved in the commitments a couple made to each other. Although Quinn is persuasive that too many marriages have been termed "infantilism" only but in fact were conjugal ones, even he acknowledges that "some lesser-known wives may not have been in a sexual relationship with their sealed husband" [185].

64. Mosiah Lyman Hancock, "Autobiography," 31, microfilm of typescript, LDS Church Archives.

65. Ibid., 38.

66. Black, Membership of the Church, 14:708–10; "Nauvoo Temple Endowment Record," microfilm of typescript, FHL.


68. Frederick Walter Cox-Calista Cordelia Morley Family Group Record, Patrons Section, FHL.

69. Complainant's Abstract of Pleading and Evidence... the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Complaint, v. the Church of Christ at Independence, Missouri... [Lamoni, Iowa: Herald Publishing House, 1863], 350 [hereafter cited as Abstract of Temple Lot Case]. Such marriages were commonly called proxy marriages early in the church's history. See J. Johnson, "Determining and Defining 'Wife,'" 38. See, for example, ID 26:15 [George Q. Cannon, November 20, 1884].

70. K. Young, Isn't One Wife Enough? 32.


73. Deuteronomy 5:5–10.

74. ID 6:358 (July 24, 1859). See also "Celestial Marriage," See 1 [September 1854]: 142.

75. C. Christensen, Before and after Mt. Pisghah, 233.

76. Typescript of letters in possession of author. See Foster, Religion and Sexuality, 312–13, and Lawrence Foster, "Sex and Prophetic Power: A Comparison of John Humphrey Noyes, Founder of the Oneida Community, with Joseph Smith, Jr., the Mormon Prophet," Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought 31 [Winter 1998]: 50. In neither work does Foster have the context for this letter, and he erroneously uses the Richardson example as support for the idea that early Mormon leaders were using proxy husbands for wives whose husbands were temporarily away on missions. Foster acknowledges that there is "no conclusive manuscript evidence explicitly supporting such a practice." Foster, Religion and Sexuality, 165. As I have shown, the term proxy husband was used in an entirely different context, and in the early church the term proxy was used almost exclusively in relation to the temple. [Of the twenty-one times the word proxy is used in the journal of Discourses, seventeen are clear references to vicarious ordinations, two are to the Atonement, one is to Boaz as a proxy or levirate husband to Ruth, and one is to proxy voting. See, for example, ID 550 [Heber C. Kimball, July 26, 1857]; ID 5:260 [Erasmus Snow, October 4, 1857]; ID 6:232 [Joseph Young, April 18, 1857]; ID 6:307 [Brigham Young, April 18, 1853]; ID 1:173 [D. H. Wells, June 30, 1857]; ID 13:328 [Brigham Young, April 24, 1870]; ID 16:187 [Brigham Young, September 4, 1873]; ID 18:192 [Joseph F. Smith, October 6, 1875]; ID 18:194 [Wilford Woodruff, April 16, 1876]; ID 21:294 [Orson Pratt, July 18, 1880]; ID 22:666 [Charles W. Penrose, July 17, 1881]; ID 24:597 [Charles W. Penrose, March 4, 1883]; ID 25:235 [F. D. Richards, May 17, 1884]; ID 26:15 [George Q. Cannon, November 20, 1884] and ID 26:183 [John Taylor, August 30, 1857]}. In addition, the quotations Foster uses as support for his argument come from critics of the church. Although there was more than one "convenience" marriage, the context of the Richardson case, the only one for which we currently have credible documentation, does not support his conjecture that such marriages were to provide sexual partners for wives whose husbands were absent temporarily on missions.

77. Annie Richardson Johnson and Elva Richardson Shumway, Charles Edmund Richardson: Man of Destiny [Tempe, Ariz.: Publication Services, 1982], 6–12, 26–29 [quote on 29].

78. Frederick Walter Cox–Mary Ann Darrow Family Group Record, Patrons Section, FHL.

79. C. Christensen, Before and after Mt. Pisghah, 334; Johnson and Shumway, Charles Edmund Richardson, 29; Edmund Richardson Family Group Record, Patrons Section, FHL; 1860 U.S. Census, Manti, Sanpete County, Utah, Popula-
of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Manti Ward, "Record of Members, [1849]-1877," 2.
100. Agreement for Settlement of Estate, January 3, 1882, Frederick W. Cox File, File of Estates.
104. Sanpete County, "Probate Record, including Minutes, 1866-1884," Book A, 413.
105. Firmage and Mangrum, Zion in the Courts, 336.
106. C. Madsen, "At Their Peril," 436-37. Both Kimball Young and Jessie Embry discuss inheritance in polygamous families, although their examples, with the exception of John Taylor, are drawn from the late, post-Manifesto period, when Mormons no longer had exclusive control over the laws and courts that controlled inheritance. K. Young, Isn't One Wife Enough? 261-76, Embry, Mormon Polygamous Families, 182-86.
107. Grossberg, Governing the Hearth, 121, 95-102, 141-49 (first quote on 97, second on 121).

Chapter 5: The Marriage Market

1. Although the church officially forsook plural marriage, some new marriages were sanctioned after 1890. Hardy, Solemn Covenant, 389-425; Quinn, "LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriages," 57-103.
2. For the sources used to create the Manti data set, see the appendix.
4. The population used to calculate these rates is women in any Manti census who were twenty years of age and older and never married as well as those women who spent some of their married life in Manti. The latter group of women did not necessarily live in Manti when they married, but their first marriage took place in Utah; thus, although the base of the study is Manti, the women represent the wider social patterns in Utah. In addition, for the last period, the population used for calculation also includes early twentieth-century Manti residents' daughters who were born before 1890 but who married after 1910. This was done so that the marriage rates would reflect the reality of the Manti marriage rates and not be biased downward: excluding some women in the same birth cohorts as those who did marry before 1910 would have misrepresented the experience of women in the last cohort. As with monogamous wives, only plural wives who spent some
scape," in Mormon Role in the Settlement of the West, ed. Jackson, 98; Lever, History of Sanpete, 61.


47. Manti data set; note on Lyness Bemus Family Group Record, Patrons Section, FHL.


50. Taeuber and Tauber, People of the United States, 305; Logue, Sermon in the Desert, 46.


54. Melvin Embry argues that variations in sex ratios are important in explaining polygamy. Melvin Embry, "Warfare, Sex Ratio, and Polynogamy," Ethnology 13 [April 1974]: 197-205. Polygamy, however, overcorrects for a shortage of males and causes a marriage squeeze against males, that is, since there were fewer single women than men, it was difficult for males to find mates. Gary R. Lee, Family Structure and Interaction: A Comparative Analysis, 2d ed., rev. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), 80; Daynes, "Single Men in a Polygamous Society," 89-91.


56. It was similar in St. George, where women in their twenties outnumbered men in 1870, although the ratio varied by 1880. Logue, Sermon in the Desert, 70.


60. The ordinance of the endowment was suspended during the Utah War, from May 15, 1858, to August 20, 1859. "Endowment House Record."

61. This gender difference was not simply the result of women's being endowed so that they could become plural wives. The pattern of gender differences does not coincide with that for plural marriages. For example, the sex ratio for those endowed in 1869-70 is 73 during a year when there was a large number of plural marriages, which would suggest women were being endowed just before sealings into plural marriage. But the sex ratio is also that low in 1875 and 1884, when the number of plural marriages was fairly low.


Chapter 6: Women Who Became Plural Wives


4. Lever, History of Sanpete, 50-51, 78; Arrington, Great Basin Kingdom, 148-56.

5. See figure 4.

10. Parents often preferred such men as husbands for their daughters. Embry, Mormon Polygamous Families, 49.
11. K. Young, Isn't One Wife Enough? 126, Bean, Mineau, and Anderton, Fertility Change on the American Frontier, 111.
14. Women in the "unknown, women over 30" category have not been identified on the Crossing the Ocean Index or Crossing the Plains Index using their maiden names. This means that they probably came to Utah using another surname, but further marriages for these women have not been found, often because the name is too common to clearly distinguish the woman searched from others of the same name. Probably most had been previously married and, in any case, had no father living in Utah.
15. Mulder, Homeward to Zion, 148.
16. Donald R. Grayson, "Human Mortality in a Natural Disaster: The Willie Handcart Journal," Journal of Anthropological Research 32 [Summer 1966]: 185-205. Women, Grayson explains, are normally better able than men to survive under conditions of little food, because females over five years of age have a lower basal metabolism. They are also generally smaller and have a higher proportion of body fat than men. In addition, women endure cold conditions better than men because their body fat is distributed subcutaneously and thus serves as a good insulator. Men have greater decreases in core temperatures, and their basal metabolism increases more than women's, while they maintain higher skin temperatures. Men thus suffer greater heat loss because of the greater difference between their higher skin temperatures and the temperature of the air. Grayson, "Human Mortality," 186. Various figures have been given for the number of deaths and the number of people in the company. Those given in the text are Grayson's. Howard Christy gives 74 deaths for the Willie Company. Christy, "Weather, Disaster, and Responsibility," 51.
18. Lever, History of Sanpete, 51; John Lowry Sr. Family Group Record, Patrons Section, FHL; Elizabeth Haydock; CPL; Christy, "Weather, Disaster, and Responsibility," 51; Josiah Rogerson, who was fifteen when he was a member of the Martin Company, estimated that between 135 to 150 of the company died. Hafen and Hafen, Handcart to Zion, 140.
19. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Manti South Ward, "Record of Members, 1877-1941," 22, microfilm of MS, FHL; William Bench Jr. Family Group Record, Patrons Section, FHL.
21. "Family History: Taken from a History Written by Joseph Hansen, Price, Utah," 11, typescript, Manti City Library; Jens Hansen Family Group Record, Patrons Section, FHL.
28. Seven unknown monogamous wives have been eliminated from this figure.
30. See chapter 4.
32. See chapter 9.
33. Of the 19,017 Latter-day Saints emigrating from Britain between 1845 and 1868, 47.0 percent were male and 47.5 were female; the remainder were infants not listed by sex. Before 1845, male immigrants outnumbered female. Of the 12,477 emigrants from Scandinavia, 46.5 percent were male, and 53.5 percent female. Single women over fourteen made up 15 percent of the emigrants, and single men over fourteen accounted for 12 percent. Before 1869, of the immigrant companies studied by William Mulder, 80 to 85 percent of both British and Scandinavian emigrants came in family units. Mulder, Homeward to Zion, 109-8.
34. Arrington, Great Basin Kingdom, 211-13.
36. JD 26:72-73 [November 30, 1884].

Chapter 7: Economics and Plural Marriage