

The Holy Order in Nauvoo

by

Lisle G Brown

All rights reserved. November 1995. This document may be freely distributed, as long as it includes this statement and no alterations are made to the text.

In the Spring of 1836 Joseph Smith introduced the Church's first temple ordinances (washings, anointings, washing of the feet, and the solemn assembly) in the Kirtland Temple. Accompanying these ordinances was a pentecostal outpouring of the Spirit of God, which constituted a divinely promised endowment from on High. Apparently the Prophet intended the administration of these ordinances to become an annual function of the priesthood.^{/1} After the second solemn assembly, held in 1837, the anticipated annual services did not continue. Instead the Kirtland Temple ordinances assumed a secondary status, becoming initiatory rites to a body of richly symbolic ceremonies introduced by the Prophet at Nauvoo in the 1840's. These new ordinances reflected the expanding horizon of Joseph Smith's vision of the Kingdom of God which he saw as an eternal, covenant-bound, patriarchal society. The new ordinances included: a proxy baptism for the dead; a washing and anointing ritual bestowing a promise to become kings and priests unto God; an endowment drama containing lectures, signs and tokens, and oaths and covenants necessary to reenter God's presence; a sealing ceremony joining families together in eternal patriarchal units; and adoption rite linking men to men in an endless priesthood lineage; and a second anointing confirming the contingent blessings of the initial washing and anointing.^{/2}

Individuals who received these ordinances from Joseph Smith recorded their experiences in diaries, journals, and letters, often using personal codes, symbols, shorthand, abbreviations, or cryptic phrases. Since the Prophet imbued in those he endowed a sacrosanct regard for the ordinances, such attempts at secrecy are not unusual. Because of this it is nearly impossible to determine precisely the exact date on which the Prophet initially officiated in any of the new ordinances. Perhaps Heber C. Kimball sensed this unique situation, when he placed the reminiscences of his own initiation under the heading, "Strange Events."^{/3}

The Holy Order of the Holy Priesthood

At what point Joseph Smith began to consider administering the ordinances is not known. Clearly such was his feeling by April 28, 1842, when at a meeting of the newly organized Female Relief Society of Nauvoo, "He spoke of delivering the keys of the Priesthood to the Church, and said that the faithful members of the Relief Society should receive them in connection with their husbands."/4 On May 4, 1842, the Prophet met with nine associates in the upper room over his store: Hyrum Smith, Associate President and Presiding Patriarch of the Church; William Law, Second Counselor in the First Presidency; Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball and Willard Richards, members of the Quorum of the Twelve; William Marks, President of the Nauvoo Stake; Newel K. Whitney, General Bishop to the Church; George Miller, General Bishop and President of the Nauvoo High Priests Quorum; and James Adams, close friend of the Prophet./5 The Prophet instructed them "in the principles and order of the priesthood, attending to washings and anointings, endowments, and the communication of keys pertaining to the Aaronic Priesthood, and so on to the highest order of the Melchizedek Priesthood, setting forth the order pertaining to the Ancient of Days."/6

Obviously Joseph Smith introduced one or more of the previously mentioned ordinances, but which one of them? Brigham Young wrote of receiving his "washings, anointings, and endowments," and years later he elaborated further: "Joseph...gave us our instructions as we passed along from one department to another, giving us signs, tokens, penalties with the key words pertaining to those signs."/7 Probably on this occasion the Prophet administered the initiatory rites and endowment drama. He may have also introduced other ceremonies. Heber C. Kimball wrote that he "was initiated into the ancient order, was washed and anointed and Sealed and ordained a Priest and so forth."/8 George Miller wrote: "Joseph washed and anointed us kings and priests to God, and over the House of Israel...and conferred on us the Patriarch Priesthood."/9 Such statements suggest that the Prophet may have initiated the adoption ceremony, or even a rudimentary second anointing.

Curiously Joseph Smith met with most of these same men a year later, on May 26, 1843, and readministered the ceremonies, or at least part of them. An indication that he did not officiate in all of the ordinances introduced the previous year can be found in Brigham Young's history: "The Prophet Joseph administered to us the first ordinances of the endowment."/10 In 1842 the men advanced to the "highest order of the Melchizedek Priesthood," but on this occasion they received only the "first ordinances of the endowment." Perhaps the men met to officiate in the first, or initiatory ordinance of washing, before

beginning to administer the rituals to others in Nauvoo. Joseph Smith used a similar procedure before endowing the Priesthood in the Kirtland Temple, and Brigham Young continued the practice before endowing the Saints in the Nauvoo Temple./11

The nine men, endowed by Joseph Smith in 1842 and 1843, became the nucleus of a select company of individuals -- those who received their endowments from the Prophet. Members of this group referred to themselves in a bewildering variety of names, including: company, quorum, council, council of the quorum, special quorum, grand quorum, first quorum, anointed quorum, quorum of the anointed, council pertaining to the High Priesthood, ancient order, order pertaining to the Ancient of Days, holy order, and holy order of the Holy Priesthood. Of all these names the most commonly used by the members was simply, the "quorum." By custom the group has come to be called the Anointed Quorum, or the Holy Order. For the purpose of this paper the author has used the latter.

In September, 1843, Joseph Smith began bringing others, including women, into the Holy Order. From then until his death in June, 1844, he administered the ordinances to nearly seventy persons. (See Chart I). Although most of the General Authorities, including the First Presidency, all of the Twelve Apostles, the Presiding Patriarch, and one of the First Council of Seventy, received their endowments, most of the members of the Holy Order were the close friends and family of the Prophet. These people considered it to be a special blessing to belong to such an exclusive society. Joseph Fielding wrote of the "privilege granted" to him and his wife to be endowed along with the Twelve./12 Soon after his initiation Heber C. Kimball wrote to Parley P. Pratt:

Brother Joseph feels as well as I Ever seen him. one reason is he has got a Small company that he feels safe in thare hands. and that is not all he can open his bosom to and feel him Self safe. I wish you was here so as to feel and hear fore your Self. we have received some pressious things through the Prophet on the preasthood that would caus your Soul to rejoice I can not give them to you on paper for they are not to be riten. So you must come and get them fore your Self./13

During Joseph Smith's lifetime the Holy Order met semi-weekly, once on Sunday and again on a week night, usually on Wednesday or Thursday. Apparently the Prophet continued to meet with the Holy Order until shortly before his arrest and death/14 Usually the Holy Order assembled in the room over the Prophet's store, but they also met occasionally at the Mansion House,

the Homestead, and Brigham Young's home. These meetings came to be called "prayer meetings," because a member once stated, that at a fast meeting the Prophet told the Saints they did not know how to pray and have their prayers answered, but to those he endowed he taught the "order of prayer."/15 At a prayer meeting, held on September 28, 1843, the Prophet organized the Church's first prayer circle, where he was by "common consent and unanimous voice" sustained as the "president of the quorum."/16 Thereafter the Holy Order met "in an upper room dedicated for that purpose, and prayed...repeated in those meetings."/17

Besides prayer and ordinances Joseph Smith also gave the Holy Order counsel and instructions at the prayer meetings. Undoubtedly most of his teachings in these meetings were not meant for the general Church membership. Wilford Woodruff stated that the Prophet's "mind was opened by the visions of the Almighty, and the Lord taught him many things by vision and revelation that were never taught publicly in his day; for the people could not bear the flood of intelligence which God poured into his mind."/18 To the Holy Order, however, he could unbosom his inner thoughts, and feel "safe in thare hands," as Parley P. Pratt put it. Occasionally the diaries of members of the Holy Order provide glimpses of some of the Prophet's teachings. At one prayer meeting the Prophet gave "good instruction in meekness and humility," testifying that among the Holy Order the selection of the 144,000 had already commenced./19 At another meeting, when William Law was absent, he taught "on the principles of integrity and showed that the lack of sustaining this principle led men to apostasy."/20 Others besides the Prophet taught at the prayer meetings. Once Wilford Woodruff spoke "upon the relationship...towards our Progenitors & posterity in the resurrection of the dead."/21 On another occasion when the Prophet was absent with illness, Brigham Young instructed the Holy Order on the necessity of following their file leader and "savior in all his laws and commandments."/22

Clearly the Holy Order was not a loosely organized or ill defined group. Individuals became members by personal invitation, and their initiation was by the administration of specific rituals. the group had a president, suggesting an organizational hierarchy. The members met on a fairly regular basis, receiving ordinances and instructions in their meetings. Moreover expulsions from the group was not by an arbitrary process, but by a typically Mormon procedure, the rule of common consent. Bathsheba W. Smith described the scene when the first member was expelled:

I was present when William Law, Joseph Smith's counselor, was dropped from the Quorum by each one voting yes or no in his

turn. He was the first member dropped who had received his endowments. One member hesitated to vote, which called for earnest remarks from the Prophet Joseph. He showed clearly that it would be a serious wrong to retain him longer. After this explanation the vote was unanimous./23

The seriousness with which members of the Holy Order viewed expulsion from their ranks, can be found in a statement by Heber C. Kimball in December, 1845: "About 4 years ago next May nine persons were admitted [by Joseph Smith] into the Holy Order 5 are now living -- B. Young -- W. Richards -- George Miller -- N.K. Whitney & H.C. Kimball Two are dead [Hyrum Smith and James Adams] and two are worse than dead [William Law and William Marks]."/24

The Holy Order and the Council of Fifty

The Holy Order was not the only clandestine group organized by Joseph Smith in Nauvoo; there was also the Kingdom of God, or as it has come to be called the Council of Fifty. The Prophet organized this Council, which was composed of approximately fifty men, during the week of March 10, 1844. As with the Holy Order, members of the Council of Fifty referred to their fraternity by a variety of names, some even attempting to disguise references to it in their journals by spelling fifty backwards. i.e. council of YTFIF. Such devices are understandable, because members considered the Council's revealed name to be sacred, if not ineffable./25 Commonly members referred to the organization as the Council, or the Kingdom./26

While the Holy Order was an ecclesiastical body, the Council of Fifty was a parapolitical organization, whose purpose extended beyond the spiritual boundaries of the Church. According to John D. Lee, one of the original members, the Council was the "Municipal department of the Kingdom of God set upon the earth, and from which all law emanates, for the rule, government & control of all Nations Kingdoms & towns and People under the whole Heavens."/27 In an unpublished revelation to John Taylor the Lord stated: "I have established my Kingdom to be a shield and protection to my Church, to learn and comprehend my law, and to carry out my purposes, that my will may be done on earth as it is in heaven: the Church through the law and Spirit of the Gospel to preserve the virtue and purity of the Kingdom; and the Kingdom to preserve and protect the Church from the aggression of the wicked and

ungodly."/28 Another member, Benjamin F. Johnson, described the Council as the "outer wall or government around the inner temple of priesthood."/29

During the Nauvoo period the Council wrestled with the following secular problems: Joseph Smith's presidential campaign, the redress of wrongs inflicted on the Saints in Missouri; the formulation of plans for orderly removal of the Saints from Nauvoo; and the investigation of the "true foundations and principles of all governments."/30

For the membership of the Council of Fifty Joseph drew upon his closest associates, the same as he did for the Holy Order. As might be expected he brought members of the Holy Order into the Council of Fifty. Of the forty-six known members of the pre-Martyrdom Council, twenty-eight were also members of the Holy Order. But membership in the Holy Order did not mean an automatic invitation to the Council of Fifty. There were ten men in the Holy Order who were not in the Council, including the two counselors of the First Presidency, Sidney Rigdon and William Law. (See Chart II.)

Within these two secret organization the Quorum of the Twelve occupied a unique position -- it was the *only* priesthood quorum completely represented in both the Holy Order and the Council of Fifty./31 Such an unusual situation was not merely coincidental, because Joseph Smith used this quorum to forge an amalgamation of the two groups under the apostolic umbrella of the Twelve. Without such foresight by the Prophet, a power struggle between the two organization, following the Martyrdom, could have enveloped the Church in a crisis which would have torn it apart./32

Joseph Smith commenced this amalgamation with the second anointings of the Twelve. Brigham Young and his wife, Mary Ann, received their anointings on November 22, 1843./33 Following this anointing the Prophet directed Young to administer second anointings to each of the Twelve then living in Nauvoo. Between January 20 and 30, 1844, eight of the Apostles received this ordinance. Wilford Woodruff recalled this important period: "During December 1843 and January, February, and March, 1844, Joseph Smith gave the Twelve Apostles their Endowments, their First and Second Anointings, and taught them many things appertaining to the Kingdom of God."/34 Orson Hyde described the impact of these ordinances on the Twelve: "To us were committed the keys of the kingdom and every gift, key, and power Joseph ever had, confirmed upon our heads by an anointing./35 Having bestowed the keys of the kingdom on the Apostles through the fulness of temple ordinances, the Prophet charged the Twelve to shoulder the burdens of directing the Church and Kingdom. The

Prophet issued the so-called "last charge" to the Twelve before both the Holy Order and the Council of Fifty.

The meeting of the Council of Fifty, in which Joseph Smith charged the Twelve, was a momentous occasion, leaving a lasting impression on all those present.³⁶ Benjamin F. Johnson described the scene, when the Prophet "in the presence of the Quorum of the Twelve and others who were encircled around him" rose and spoke at length about "his life and sufferings, and of the testimonies he had borne."³⁷ According to Wilford Woodruff he spoke three hours with "his face...as amber, and he was covered with a power that [Woodruff] had never seem in the flesh before."³⁸ Finally the Prophet "said that the Lord had now accepted his labors and sacrifices, and did not require him any longer to carry the responsibilities and burden and bearing off of this kingdom, and turning to those around him, including the 12, he said, 'And in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ I now place it upon you my brethren of the council and I shake my skirts clear from all responsibility from this time forth.'"³⁹

Is it unreasonable to suggest that the men, including the Twelve, who were "encircled around" Joseph Smith, were members of both the Holy Order and the Council of Fifty, and that on this important occasion they had formed a prayer circle? Johnson described the scene more as a spectator than one in the circle around the Prophet, and the Prophet "rose" (from the attitude of prayer?) to address the Council. Clearly there was a relationship between the ordinances received in the Holy Order and the charge delivered before the Council of Fifty. This relationship becomes clearer once it is learned that the Prophet repeated the same charge before the Holy Order. Bathsheba W. Smith described this event:

In the year 1844, a short time before the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith, it was my privilege to attend a regular prayer circle in the upper room over the Prophet's store. There were present at this meeting most of the Twelve Apostles, their wives, and a number of other prominent brethren and their wives. On that occasion the Prophet arose and spoke at great length and during his remarks I heard him say that he conferred on the heads of the Twelve Apostles all the keys and powers pertaining to the Priesthood, and that upon the heads of the Twelve Apostles the burden of the kingdom rested, and that they would have to carry it.⁴⁰

In another statement Sister Smith testified that she also heard the Prophet "charge the Twelve with the duty and responsibility of administering the ordinances and Endowment and Sealing for the living and dead."/41

Joseph Smith by the actions before these two groups placed authority on the Twelve for administering both the Church and Kingdom. He unified the ecclesiastical and secular function of the Kingdom of God in earth, providing the means of succession by the Twelve after the Martyrdom. Brigham Young quoted the Prophet's testimony on the duality of the last charge: "Now where the 12 & Council [of Fifty] are there will be the Keys also."/42

The Holy Order and Succession

When Joseph Smith fell at Carthage Jail, ten of the Twelve Apostles were in missions in the East. Brigham Young's reaction, upon learning of the Prophet's death, was "whether Joseph had taken the keys of the kingdom with him from the earth."/43 This reaction is somewhat surprising, considering the anointings and charges given by the Prophet to the Twelve shortly before his death. Young's uncertainty was only momentary, for suddenly he slapped his knee and exclaimed, "The keys of the kingdom are right here with the Church."/44 >From that moment he never faltered in asserting the right of the Twelve to lead the Church. Indeed the Twelve testified repeatedly that they had received the keys of the kingdom through the fulness of temple ordinances, and that the prophet had charged them to exercise those keys./45

However, there were men in the Church who were unwilling to accept the leadership of the Twelve, and they challenged the Apostles' authority. Recently D. Michael Quinn has demonstrated that this leadership crisis arose because Joseph Smith left no clear succession procedure before the general Church membership./46 By only hinting in public at the doctrinal and organizational innovations he was making in the privacy of upper rooms, the Prophet's actions further confused the post-Martyrdom situation. With such a lack of understanding among the Saints about these new developments a challenge of the Twelve by men not fully aware of the new directions of the Church became inevitable. Indeed it was remarkable, if not miraculous, that the majority of the Saints responded favorably to the Twelve's claims, because it required their total "acceptance of authority conferred upon a select group of individuals without previous announcement or approval."/47

In the multifaceted struggle of succession the role of the Holy Order has been masked by the Twelve's position in the Church hierarchy. Many statements, made by the Twelve concerning succession, only make sense if they are placed

in the context of the ordinances and charges given to the Apostles before the Holy Order and the Council of Fifty. The role of the Council of Fifty in succession was minor, but the Holy Order played a significant part in the crisis, particularly in the attempts of Sidney Rigdon and William Smith to wrest control of the Church and Kingdom from the Twelve.

In order to grasp fully Sidney Rigdon's threat, it will be necessary to give the circumstances of his joining the Holy Order. By 1843 Joseph Smith had such little confidence in his First Counselor that he made an unsuccessful attempt to remove him from the First Presidency, and, if it was not William W. Phelps, Rigdon would have never been admitted to the Holy Order. Phelps "could not bear the thought of President Rigdon going into the world without his endowment."/48 Rigdon was "brought into the quorum before he left for Pittsburgh" at a prayer meeting, held on May 11, 1844./49 Although he "obtained his endowment," he did not receive a fulness of the ordinances, for he did "not receive all, only a small part."/50 According to George A. Smith, Rigdon "never received the Second Anointing."/51 Heber C. Kimball confirmed this when he testified that there were "more than thirty men who have got higher authority" than Rigdon./52

Following the abortive attempt to have himself appointed "guardian" to the Church, Rigdon sought to surreptitiously undermine the position of the Twelve. On the evening of September 8, 1844, he met in private with a group of close associates, to whom he administered apparently the initiatory ordinances of washing and anointing. Essentially he was attempting to organize his own holy order. Such a direct confrontation Brigham Young could not ignore. At a meeting between the two men on the following day Young ascertained for himself Rigdon's perfidy. That same day the Twelve met and disfellowshipped Rigdon, demanding his license. Rigdon refused to recognize the authority of the Twelve to disfellowship him, which forced the Twelve to call a public excommunication trial./53

This trial, held on September 8, 1844, whose minutes appeared in three consecutive issues of the *Times and Seasons* (September 15, October 1 and 15, 1844), can be best understood when the witnesses' remarks are placed in the context of the Holy Order. This is reasonable, because, although the Twelve were the chief accusers and witnesses at the trial, *all* of the men who testified were members of the Holy Order. Moreover the witnesses referred throughout the proceedings to a "quorum" which clearly was not the Quorum of the Twelve, nor to any other regularly constituted Church quorum, but a clandestine organization. Since William Marks identified himself with that quorum in his defense of Rigdon, it could not have been the Council of Fifty,

because he was not a member of that group, leaving only the Holy Order, of which he was a member./54 Moreover, the witnesses' testimony concerning that secret quorum corresponds to the known history and purpose of the Holy Order.

While there were a number of allegations against Sidney Rigdon, there were two which were the most serious. One charge was that he "ordained men illegally, and contrary to the order of the priesthood."/55 Parley P. Pratt testified that Rigdon "had been ordaining men to unheard of offices," who were in "no quorum, and under nobody's direction or authority," except Rigdon's./56 According to Orson Hyde, "he took the responsibility of ordaining prophets, priests and kings, contrary to any known usages in the church."/57 These "unheard of offices" of prophets, priests and kings were only unknown to the general membership of the Church, who were not privy to the ordinances of the temple administered in the Prophet's store, but to the members of the Holy Order there was no ignorance of these offices, as John Taylor's testimony indicated:

[Rigdon] has been ordaining men to the offices of prophets, priests, and kings; whereas he does not hold that office himself; who does not know that this is wrong? There is not an officer belonging to this church but what is acquainted with this fact. Can a teacher ordain a priest? Can a priest ordain an elder? Can an elder ordain a high priest, or any of the former an apostle? You all know that they could not, it is contrary to the order of God, and yet we find that President Rigdon, a man who ought to know better -- has been ordaining men to offices that he does not hold himself./58

Obviously the Twelve felt the weight of Joseph Smith's charge, delivered before the Holy Order, "of administering the ordinances and Endowment and Sealing for the living and the dead." Rigdon's attempt to circumvent that charge tore at the fabric of the priesthood, and it could only divide the Church. According to George A. Smith, that was Rigdon's very purpose: "[Rigdon] Seemed Determined to Scatter the Church and Led up a Party."/59 The Twelve's decisive response to Rigdon's actions, indicated their concern.

Serious as Rigdon's attempt to circumvent the Twelve in the administration of temple ordinances, there was also the allegation that he claimed to have received revelation to guide the Church. Orson Hyde wrote that Rigdon tried "to palm upon [the Church] a false revelation, which was 'that God had shown him that a guardian must be appointed to build up the kingdom to Joseph

Smith."/60 In presenting this revelation to the Church, Rigdon ignored a procedure established by Joseph Smith before his death. Brigham Young explained:

There is a quorum organized where revelation can be tested. Brother Joseph said, let no revelation go to the people until it has been tested here. Now I ask did Elder Rigdon call the quorum together and there lay his revelation before it to have it tested? No, he did not wait to call the quorum; neither did he call the authorities together that were here./61

What quorum could Rigdon have called together, other than the General Authorities, in order to present his revelation? Since Rigdon was not a member of the Council of Fifty, it could only have been the Holy Order. William Marks, a member of the Holy Order and Rigdon's apologist, claimed that, because of his late entrance into the Holy Order, Rigdon "did not know he should present his vision or revelation before the first quorum."/62 Another member of the Holy Order, William W. Phelps, refuted Marks' testimony by showing that, if Rigdon did not know the procedure, Marks did and he should have informed him of it./63 This exchange provides an indication of some of the private instruction given by Joseph Smith to the Holy Order, as well as showing the ecclesiastical importance of the group in the Prophet's mind. The result of the trial was the excommunication of Rigdon and those whom he had ordained prophets, priests and kings.

In order too understand William Smith's claim to succession and its relationship to the Holy Order, it will be necessary to describe in more detail Joseph Smith's position in both the Holy Order and the Council of Fifty.

On May 27, 1843, the day after the second meeting of the original nine men endowed by the Prophet, Joseph Smith stated in a private meeting: "The patriarchal office is the highest office in the church, and Father Smith conferred this office on Hyrum Smith, on his deathbed."/64 This private statement set the stage for the Prophet's public announcement, made on July 16, that he "would not prophesy any more, and proposed Hyrum to hold the office of prophet to the Church, as it was by birthright."/65 The Prophet added: "I am going to a reformation, and the Saints must regard Hyrum, for he has the authority, that I might be a Priest of the Most High God."/66 Apparently the Prophet desired that Hyrum should assume the leadership of the Church, while he stepped up to a higher organization centered in the temple ordinances he had just commenced administering. Willard Richards understood the new arrangement. When he wrote Brigham Young about the Prophet's reformation, he added

parenthetically that Joseph Smith "did not tell them he was going to be a priest now, or a king by and by."/67 Richards' statement can only be interpreted in the context of the initiatory ordinances and the second anointing, where men are appointed and ordained kings and priests. At the time of the public announcement of the reformation Joseph Smith was functioning as " a priest now" by his recent initiation of temple ordinances and organization of the Holy Order, and he would become "a king by and by" when he organized the Council of Fifty, where was actually ordained a king,/68 exercising secular dominion in the Kingdom of God.

In his history Joseph Smith wrote that he could "not reveal a fulness of these things at present," because of the unbelief of the people. By not fully explaining the nature of the reformation the Prophet caused confusion among the Saints, some of whom felt that he simply wanted to resign in favor of Hyrum. On July 17 a delegation of brethren called on the Prophet, telling him that the Church would not consent to Hyrum becoming their leader, and they pleaded with him not to resign. On this occasion, when the Prophet could have more fully explained the nature of the reformation, he was restrained from doing so, telling the delegation: "Have we not learned the Priesthood after the Order of Melchizedek, which includes both Prophets, Priests and Kings...I will advance your Prophet to a Priest, and then to a King -- not to the kingdoms of this earth, but to the Most High God./69 Although Joseph Smith established the Holy Order and the Council of Fifty, his death unfortunately curtailed further development of the reformation.

When the majority of the Twelve returned to Nauvoo after Joseph Smith's death, William Smith remained in the East. On August 27, 1844, he wrote to Brigham Young petitioning the Twelve to ordain him the Presiding Patriarch in Hyrum's place, stating he did not desire "a Succession as prophet in Joseph's place for no man on Earth can fill his place he is our prophet sear revealter Priest & King in time & in Eternity."/70 President Young acknowledged Smith's claim, and upon his return to Nauvoo in May, 1845, the Twelve ordained him the Presiding Patriarch of the Church.

Notwithstanding his initial statement of not wishing to succeed Joseph Smith's place, William Smith began making expansive claims about his authority, eventually finding a sympathetic ear in William W. Phelps, associate editor of the *Times and Seasons*. Phelps speculated in that newspaper that Smith's ordination as "Patriarch over the Church," qualified him to be President of the Church. In the next issue John Taylor, the newspaper's editor, corrected Phelps by showing that Smith was Patriarch *to* the Church, and that the Twelve's

ordination of Smith to that office precluded his presiding over them./71
Angered by Taylor's rebuttal, Smith responded by letter to Brigham Young:

My proposition is, my share of the Kingdom, and if you will publish in the [*Nauvoo Neighbor* and *Times and Seasons*] the true state of the case in regard to my office as Patriarch over the whole Church, this will give me a right to visit all branches of the Church, and intrude on no man's rights; and further to attend to all of the ordinances of God, no man at my head, I will reconcile all difficulties, and Elder Young can stand as President of the Church, and by my most hearty wish and consent./72

This letter clearly indicates that William Smith desired the office of priest and king in Joseph Smith's stead, in which he intended to "attend to all of the ordinances of God," with "no man at [his] head." If the Twelve would recognize this claim, then Smith would let Brigham Young become the President of the Church with Smith's "most hearty wish and consent."

Before the Twelve could respond to William Smith's letter, Lucy Mack Smith entered the controversy. Mother Smith claimed to have received three revelations, supporting her son William's position. Being a member of the Holy Order, she also knew of her other son Joseph Smith's instructions, that any new revelations should first be presented "to that quorum," and if approved they could then "be presented to the Church." At Mother Smith's request the leading figures in the Holy Order, seven of the Twelve, Bishops Miller and Whitney, and Reynolds Cahoon met with members of the Smith family on June 30, 1845. Brigham Young pointed out that William Smith was "aiming at power and authority and priesthood that did not belong to him" and "neither the Church, nor the Twelve would consent to [it]."/73 Indeed, Quinn has pointed out "the apostles could not confer upon William Smith the primary office of the patriarchal order held by Joseph Smith, Jr., for that was a position that transcended the ecclesiastical organization of the Church."/74 Mother Smith said that she "did not profess to be a revelator, only for herself and family, that she wanted peace, union and harmony."/75 Before leaving the Smith home, the Twelve drafted a response to William Smith's letter, which was approved by the members of the Smith family present, "as well as those of the council [Holy Order] who were present:"

As to your request in your letter we would say: we are perfectly willing and wish to have all things right, but there are some ordinances in the Church that cannot be administered by any person out of this place at present, but must be done here. As to

having the right to administer all ordinances in the world and no one standing at your head, we cannot sanction, because the President of the Church and each of our Quorum [the Twelve Apostles] are amenable to the quorum of which you are member."/76

That quorum, to which both the President of the Church and the Twelve were "amenable" in the administration of temple ordinances, could only have been the Holy Order. Apparently the Holy Order held a more important position in the Church at Nauvoo than has been recognized previously. It was the "first quorum" to be consulted concerning new revelation, while its leading figures, the First President and the Twelve with the assistance of other members, held the responsibility for administering the ordinances of the temple to the Saints. To Joseph Smith the Holy Order, as well as the Council of Fifty, was the inner circle of his most trusted and loyal associates, upon whom he placed the heaviest burdens of leadership following his death.

The Holy Order After the Martyrdom

The date when the Holy Order began meeting regularly after the Martyrdom cannot be determined precisely. A few of its members met for council several times during July, 1844.⁷⁷ Apparently the group's first prayer meeting was not held until after the return of the Twelve on August 6, 1844. Five days later "a few of the Quorum met at Brigham Young's house for prayer."⁷⁸ From that date until the completion of the Nauvoo Temple in the winter of 1845, the Holy Order met regularly for prayer, usually following the semi-weekly schedule of pre-Martyrdom days. These meetings were held, not in Joseph Smith's store, but in the member's homes, including Brigham Young, Parley P. Pratt, Willard Richard, John Taylor, and Joseph B. Noble.

Before the Martyrdom women attended the prayer meetings with their husbands, usually to participate in ordinances, but after the Prophet's death the sisters met infrequently with the Holy Order. On January 25, 1845, Helen Mar Kimball, the daughter of Heber C. Kimball, and three other women received their endowments.⁷⁹ At another prayer meeting the wives of Heber C. Kimball and Newel K. Whitney brought their babies for special blessings.⁸⁰ Except for special occasions such as these, women did not meet regularly with the Holy Order until after the completion of the Nauvoo Temple.

The Holy Order continued to meet and offer up prayers. Its members petitioned the Lord to frustrate their enemies, to heal the sick among the Saints, to provide for a bounteous harvest, and continually to bless "the posterity of Israel." Heber

C. Kimball testified: "In the matters of prayer...wherein we have asked the Lord, he has answered us in every instance."/81 He further stated: "There are from seven to twelve persons who have met together every day to pray ever since Joseph's death and this people have been sustained upon this principle."/82

The meetings of the Holy Order were distinct gatherings, kept separate from other meetings held by the Twelve. Heber C. Kimball's diary for 1845 contained many entries, indicating that the Holy Order kept its identity as a group. The following is a typical entry:

Met in council at W Richards. B Young G A Smith Bishop Whitney George Miller [John E] Page and [John] Tailor. Several letters read. One [from] general Deming and one from Wm Smith. General was in Prison. Closed at 12. at three we met at the same place for prair. nine present. Offered up the sign [signs] and praid that the Lord would bless Deming and deliver him from his Enimies, that our Enimies might be Cursed./83

Not only did the Holy Order meet for prayer, but they also considered Church business in some of their meetings. Heber C. Kimball noted that members of the Holy Order met almost daily for "council and prayer" throughout 1845./84 At a prayer meeting, held on July 3, 1845, the Twelve, Bishops Whitney and Miller, Levi Richards and William Clayton discussed a letter to Wilford Woodruff, which was "approved by [the] council."/85 On another occasion Kimball wrote: "Met for prayer in the morning -- in council all day -- prayer in the evening, we have continued our Council & prayer in the evening until 10 or 11 at night."/86 According to Kimball, at these prayer meetings "much business [was] done pertaining to the Church."/87

The major responsibility of the Holy Order was the completion of the Nauvoo Temple and the endowment of the Saints. On at least one occasion Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Newel K. Whitney met to inquire of the Lord whether the Saints should remain in Nauvoo and finish the temple. Brigham Young recorded: "The ansure was we should [stay]."/88 By November 26, 1845, workmen finished the interior of the attic story of the temple. The next day members of the Holy Order, both men and women, commenced making the final arrangements for administering the endowment. By the 29th they competed the carpeting of the floor, and that evening several of the men met for prayer in Brigham Young's office, the first prayer meeting held in the temple. The next morning twenty men, all members of the Holy Order, reconvened in the temple and dedicated the attic for ordinance work. Between December 1

and 9 the Holy Order labored daily in the attic, hanging canvas partitions which divided the main hall into the various departments of the endowment, arranging tables, chairs and other pieces of furniture, decorating the walls with maps, mirrors, and paintings and portraits of Church leaders, and making final adjustments to altars and other temple vessels used in the ordinances. By the evening of the 9th all was in readiness for the sacred ceremonies, entrusted to the Twelve and the Holy Order by Joseph Smith. That evening Heber C. Kimball petitioned the Lord in his diary that they would be inspired in "thare hearts with lite and knowledge so that they [might] not go rong in the ordances of the Holy Preasthood."/89

On the afternoon of December 10, 1845, the Holy Order administered the first temple ordinances in the Nauvoo Temple. All of those who received the ordinances on the 10th were members of the Holy Order, who, although they had already received their endowments, desired "to go through with [their] washings and Anointings again in the Temple of [their] God."/90 >From that date until the closing of the temple for ordinance work over 5,000 persons received their endowments. As the time neared for the closing of the temple, the Saints thronged the building, because of their anxiety to receive their endowments before leaving for the West. Brigham young's dedication to the charge of Joseph Smith can be found in his diary:

Such was the anxiety manifest by the saints to receive the ordinances of Endowment & no less on our part to have them get the keys of the Priesthood that I gave myself up entirely to the work of the Lord in the Temple almost night & Day I have spent taking no more than 4 hours upon an average out of 24 to sleep-- & but seldom allowing myself the time & opportunity of going home once a week."/91

The Saints not only received their endowments, but many of them also received the other ordinances introduced by Joseph Smith in his store. On January 7, 1846, the first couples were sealed together; eventually over 2,000 couples received the ordinance. The first adoptions of men to men in the priesthood were performed on January 11, with approximately 190 men receiving the ordinance. Over eighty children were sealed to their parents, the first being sealed on January 11. Second Anointings commenced on January 8. John D. Lee, the clerk who recorded these ordinances, stated that forty men received their anointings, while Hulda Barnes Kimball, who was anointed to Heber C. kimball, recalled that ninety individuals were anointed in the Nauvoo Temple./92 Many of the Saints, who received their endowments, were invited to attend the Sabbath meetings of the Holy Order. Hosea Stout and his wife

were among those who met on December 21: "[We] went to a meeting in the Temple at two o'clock which was the first time we ever met in a meeting of the Holy Order./93

Brigham Young organized the various quorums of the priesthood, as they received their endowments, into prayer circles. These quorum prayer circles met daily for prayer in rooms assigned to them in the temple. After the temple was closed, Joseph Young organized two prayer circles among those men who remained temporarily to complete the temple for dedication. These two circles also met daily for prayer. On April 30, 1846, one of these men, Samuel W. Richards, wrote in his diary:

Met at sundown in the temple for prayer as usual, after which (with our clothing) we repaired to the lower room for the purpose of dedicating the same. 30 men selected for that purpose were present After some conversation and singing[,] a prayer circle was formed immediately in front of the Melchizedek [Priesthood] stand. O. Hyde was President, and Joseph Young, mouth after which those present were seated in the stands to represent the order of the Priesthood.. and a Dedicatory prayer was offered by O. Hyde to which all responded "amen." After the prayer was ended all shouted with loud voice,"Hosannah, Hosannah, Hosannah to God and the Lamb, Amen, Amen and Amen!" which was repeated three times./94

Thus under the direction of two members of the Holy Order, Orson Hyde and Joseph Young, the Nauvoo Temple was dedicated. This was the culmination of the charge, delivered by Joseph Smith to the Twelve to prepare the temple and endow the Saints. As the Saints abandoned Nauvoo, the Holy Order appeared to fulfill its purpose. Without a priestly successor to Joseph Smith and the dispersion of its original members along the settlements in the Rocky Mountain West, the Holy Order slid into near oblivion. Only a vestige of the organization survived with the prayer circles among the Church's priesthood in the West./95

Endnotes

1.. Wilford Woodruff wrote in his diary that the priesthood would "meet in the LORDS house annually to attend to the most Solemn ordinances of the house of GOD & receive the visions & great things of the heavens." (Dean C. Jessee, "The Kirtland Diary of Wilford Woodruff," *BYU Studies*, 12 [Summer 1972]: 389.)

2. The only major modification to these ordinances occurred in 1894 when Wilford Woodruff received a revelation limiting the rite of adoption, while expanding the scope of sealing children to parents. See: Gordon Irving, "The Law of Adoption: One Phase of the Development of the Nauvoo Concept of Salvation, 1830-1900," *BYU Studies*, 14 (Spring 1974): 294-314.
3. Heber C. Kimball, Journal 91, MS. in Church Historical Department, undated entry.
4. Joseph Smith. *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, Brigham H. Roberts, ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1969), 4:604. Hereafter cited as Smith. *HC*.
5. *Ibid.*, 5:1-2. In this publication the names of Marks and Law do not appear. However, in the original manuscript (Manuscript History of the Church, Book D-1, p. 1328.) there are two blank spaces, evidently left for their names. Undoubtedly their names were omitted, because of their later apostasy from the Church., Both Law and Marks were included by Heber C. Kimball in his diary (Journal 91, undated entry.), and by George Miller in a letter published in W. H. Mills, "De Tal Palo Tal Astilla," *Annual Publications of the Historical Society of Southern California* Los Angeles, 1917), 10:120-121.
6. Smith. *HC*, 5:1-2.
7. Elden J. Watson. *Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 1801-1844* (Salt Lake City: Privately printed, 1968), p. 116; and L. John Nuttall, Journal, MS. in Brigham Young University Library, Feb. 7, 1877.
8. Kimball, Journal 91, undated entry.
9. Mills, "De Tal Palo Tal Astilla," 120-121.
10. Watson. *History of Brigham Young*, 120-121.
11. Leonard J. Arrington, "Oliver Cowdery's Kirtland, Ohio, 'Sketch Book.'" *BYU Studies*, 12 (Summer 1972): 416-417; and Heber C. Kimball, Journal 93, MS. in Church Historical Department, Dec. 9, 1845.
12. Joseph Fielding. Diary 1843- 1859, MS. in Church Historical Department, p. 52.

13. Parley P. Pratt to Heber C. Kimball, June 17, 1842, MS. in Parley P. Pratt Papers, Church Historical Department.
14. *The Return*, 2 (Apr. 1890): 252.
15. Hyrum L. Andrus, *They Knew the Prophet* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1974), p. 123.
16. Joseph Smith. *Diary 1843-1844*, MS. in Church Historical Department, Sept. 28, 1843.
17. Andrus *They Knew the Prophet*, p. 123.
18. *Journal of Discourses* (Liverpool: Latter-day Saint Book Depot, 1855-1886), 5:84.
19. Wilford Woodruff, *Journal 1843- 1844*, S. in Church Historical Department, Feb. 4, 1844; and Smith. HC, 6:196.
20. Watson *History of Brigham Young*, p. 157.
21. Woodruff, *Journal 1843-1844*, Jan. 7, 1844.
22. Watson, *History of Brigham Young*, p. 156.
23. Andrus. *They Knew the Prophet*, p. 123. This event probably occurred in April, 1843, when Law and his wife were excommunicated. It is tempting to identify the hesitant member as William Marks, who was also becoming estrange with the Church leadership. After the Martyrdom, Marks broke with the Twelve, sporting Sidney Rigdon, and he later joined the Strang schism. In 1860 he assisted in ordaining Joseph Smith, III, President of the RLDS Church, serving as a counselor in the Smith's presidency from 1863 to his death in 1872.
24. Kimball, *Journal 93*, Dec. 21, 1845. After the Saints left Nauvoo, George Miller broke with the Twelve and left the Church, but he was apparently never excommunicated. Thus, of the original nine men, who were endowed by Joseph Smith, three later apostatized.
25. Wilford Woodruff felt that the name was so scared he wrote part of it in shorthand. Woodruff, *Journal 1847-1853*, may 29, 1847.) For minor variations in the name, see: *Minutes of the Council of Fifty*, MS. in Brigham Young

University Library, Apr. 10, 1880; Abraham H. Cannon, Journal, MS. in Brigham Young University Library, Oct. 9, 1884; Robert G. Cleland and Juanita Brooks, eds., A Mormon Chronicle: the Diaries of John D. Lee, 2 vols. (San Marina: Huntington Library, 1995), 1:98; and Unpublished revelation to John Taylor, dated June 27, 1882, MS. in John Taylor Papers, Church Historical Department.

26. Shortly after the organization of the Holy Order, members referred to it as the "council" (Smith. HC, 6:35,39,45), but this title was soon replaced for the more commonly used "quorum." It seems that individuals, who belonged to the Holy Order and the Council of Fifty, referred to the former as the "quorum," and the latter as the "council" to distinguish between them.

27. Cleland and Brooks, Mormon Chronicle, 1:80.

28. Unpublished revelation to John Taylor, dated June or July 1882, MS. in John Taylor Papers, Church Historical Department.

29. Autobiography of Benjamin F. Johnson, MS. in Church Historical Department, p. 94.

30. Watson. History of Brigham Young, p. 164.

31. All of the Apostles, except John E. Page, received their endowments before the Martyrdom. Page received his on January 26, 1845. (Kimball, Journal 91, Jan. 26, 1845.)

32. Some of the members of the Council of Fifty did challenge the Twelve, basing their claims on the prerogatives of the Council to govern the secular affairs of the Kingdom in connection with the "last charge" given by Joseph Smith. For a discussion of these claims and the succession crisis, see: D. Michael Quinn, "the Mormon Succession Crisis of 1884," BYU Studies, 16 (Winter 1976): 206-209.

33. One source, under the date of January 11, 1844 (Watson. History of Brigham Young, p. 158), records Brigham Young's second anointing. However, in Joseph Smith's diary the following entry is found under the date of November 22, 1843: "Prayer meeting in the eve at the old house. B. Young [a brief shorthand entry] &c." The shorthand entry is similar to others in the diary, which clearly refer to second anointings. The first of such entries is found in the October 22, 1843 entry, under which an unidentified individual as written, "wife anointed." Other entries do not have such an explanatory notation, but

the shorthand characters are obviously the same, except in few cases. In the Smith diary under the date of January 14, 1884, the following was added in the margin "H.C.K. [Heber C. Kimball] & G.A.S. [George A. Smith] in historians office G.S.L. [Great Salt Lake] Jan. 4, 1857, says B.Y. [Brigham Young] & wife Mary Anointed." This notation, made thirteen years after the fact, is open to question. Wilford Woodruff's journal does not mention such an ordinance on January 14, 1844, nor does Willard Richards' diary. As a matter of fact Joseph Smith was not even present at the prayer meeting held on January 14, because of illness. (Smith. HC, 6:176.) It seems unlikely that the President of the Church would be absent when the President of the Twelve received his second anointing.

34. *Testimony of Wilford Woodruff, dated Sept. 21, 1883, MS. in Church Historical Department.*

35. *The Return, 2 (Apr. 1890): 253.*

36. *After forty-three years President Wilford Woodruff testified that the Prophet's "declaration and charge is still ringing in my ears." (Wilford Woodruff, letter (Mar. 26, 1887) to Heber J. Grant.)*

37. *Autobiography of Benjamin F. Johnson, p. 96.*

38. *The New Era, 2 (Jan. 1972): 66.*

39. *Autobiography of Benjamin F. Johnson, p. 96.*

40. *Joseph Fielding Smith, Origin of the "Reorganized" Church and the Question of Succession (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1951), p. 74.*

41. *Hyrum L. Andrus. Principles of Perfection (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1970) p. 319.*

42. *John D. Lee, Journal 14b, MS. in Church Historical Department, May 3, 1846.*

43. *Millennial Star, 26 (June 4, 1864): 359.*

44. *Ibid.*

45. *Times and Seasons*, 5 (Oct. 1844): 686; *Ibid.*, (Nov. 1, 1844): 698, 700, 693; *Millennial Star*, 5 (Mar. 1845): 151; *The Return*, 2 (Apr. 1890): 253; *Smith. HC*, 7:264; *nd The New Era*, 2 (Jan. 1972): 66.
46. Quinn, "Mormon Succession," pp. 187-233.
47. *Ibid*, p. 233. For a good study of the evolution and institutionalization of apostolic succession, see: Reed C. Durham and Richard Heath. *Succession in the Church* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1970).
48. *Smith HC*, 7:238.
49. *Times and Season*, 5 (Oct. 1, 1844): 663.
50. *Ibid.*, (Sept. 2, 1844): 638.
51. *Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, MS. in *Church Historical Department*, Dec. 18. 1857.
52. *Times and Seasons*, 2 (Oct. 1, 1844): 663.
53. *Ibid*, (Sept. 15, 1844): 649-650.
54. For Marks' testimony, see *Ibid.* (Oct. 15, 1844): 685-686. Benjamin F. Johnson wrote that Marks was not a member of the Council of Fifty. (Benjamin F. Johnson, "An Interesting Letter," dated 11, 1911, to George F. Gibbs, p. 7)
55. *Times and Seasons*, 5 (Oct. 1, 1844): 661.
56. *Ibid.* (Sept. 15, 1844): 652.
57. Orson Hyde. *Speech of Elder Orson Hyde...Upon the Course and Conduct of Sidney Rigdon* (Liverpool, 1845): p. 21.
58. *Times and Season*, 5 (Oct. 15, 1844): 661.
59. George A. Smith, *Journal 1841- 1845*, MS. in *Church Historical Department*, Sept. 3, 1844.
60. Hyde. *Speech*, p. 21.
61. *Times and Seasons*, 5 (Sept. 15, 1844): 649-650.

62. *Ibid.* (Oct. 1, 1844): 665.
63. *Ibid.* (Oct. 15, 1844): 686.
64. *Minutes of a Meeting, held May 27, 1843, MS. in Church Historical Department, as quoted in Quinn, "Mormon Succession," P. 202.*
65. *Smith HC, 5:510.*
66. *Ibid. Hyrum Smith's authority was based on his positions as Presiding Patriarch and Associate President of the Church. In 1841 the Lord appointed him a "prophet, and a seer, and a revelator" as the presiding Patriarch, holding the "sealing blessings" to the Church. (D&C 124:94-95.) As the Associate President he also held the "Keys of the Kingdom of heaven, or the church militant." (Manuscript History of the Church, Book A-1, p. 11.)*
67. *Smith HC, 5:512.*
68. *Zion's Harbinger and Baneemy's Organ, 3 (July 1853): 53; and George Miller, Letter (June 1855), pp. 17-18, in John Zahnd Papers, New York Public Library.*
69. *Joseph Fielding Smith, ed. Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1963) p. 318.*
70. *William Smith, Letter (May 15, 1844) to Brigham Young, as quoted in Quinn, "Mormon Succession," p. 202.*
71. *Times and Seasons, 6 (May 15, 1845): 905-906; and Ibid. (June 1, 1845): 920-922.*
72. *Brigham H. Roberts. Succession in the Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Publishing Co., 1894) p. 22.*
73. *Ibid., p. 21.*
74. *Quinn, "Mormon Succession , p. 203.*
75. *Roberts. Succession in the Presidency, p. 23.*
76. *Ibid.*

77. Smith. *HC*, 7:175,220,202.
78. Willard Richards, Journal, Mar.- Aug., 1844, MS. in Church Historical Department, Aug. 11, 1844.
79. Heber C. Kimball, Journal 92, MS. in Church Historical Department, Jan. 25, 1845.
80. Willard Richards, Journal, Dec. 1844-Sept. 1845, MS. in Church Historical Department, June 26, 1845.
81. Kimball, Journal 93, Dec. 2, 1845.
82. Kimball, Journal 91, Oct. 21, 1845.
83. *Ibid.*, June 25, 1845.
84. See numerous entries in Kimball, Journal 91, through the latter part of 1845.
85. Kimball, Journal 91, July 3, 1845.
86. *Ibid.*, Oct. 11, 1845.
87. *Ibid.*, Oct. 27, 1845.
88. Brigham Young, Diary 1837-1845, MS. in Church Historical Department, Jan. 24, 1844.
89. Kimball, Journal 93, Dec. 9, 1845.
90. *Ibid.*
91. Brigham Young, Diary, 1844-1846, MS. in University of Utah Library, Jan. 17, 1846.
92. Richard O Cowan. *Temple Building: Ancient and Modern* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1971) < p. 29; Deseret News. *1975 Church Almanac* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1975), p. F4; John D. Lee. *Mormonism Unveiled* (St. Louis:Byran, Brand and Co., 1877), p. 169; and Oliver B. Huntington, Journal, MS> in Brigham Young University Library, Jan. 12, 1881.

93. Juanita Brooks, ed. *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout, 1844-1861* 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1964), 1:98- 99.

94. Samuel W. Richards, Journal, Typescript, Apr. 30, 1846, in the N. B. Lundwall Collection, Brigham Young University Library, Microfilm reel no. 5, item no. 2.

95. D. Michael Quinn, "History of Mormon Prayer Circles," Unpublished research paper, Church Historical Department.

Chart I

Members of the The Holy Order, 1842-1845

Note: The chart prepared for the original paper gave the dates on which these individuals received the various ordinances. Since this paper was written, considerable more information has become available concerning this subject. Since the original chart had a number of errors in both names and dates, I have substituted this chart, which gives names only without dates.

James Adams and Harriet Denton Adams

Almon W. Babbit

Louisa Beaman* (plural wife of Joseph Smith)

John M. Bernhisel
Reynolds Cahoon and Thirza Stiles Cahoon
William Clayton and Margaret Moon Clayton*
Alpheus Culter and Lois Thethrop Culter
Elizabeth Davis Durfee* (plural wife of Joseph Smith)
Joseph Fielding and Hannah Greenwood Fielding
Olive G. Frost* (plural wife of Joseph Smith)
John P. Greene
Orson Hyde and Nancy Marinda Johnson Hyde (plural wife of Joseph Smith)
Zina Dianatha Huntington Jacobs* (plural wife of Joseph Smith)
Charles Hyde*
Heber C. Kimball and Vilate Murray Kimball
Helen Mar Kimball* (plural wife of Joseph Smith)
Joseph C. Kingsbury* and Sarah Ann Whitney Kingsbury (plural wife of Joseph Smith)
Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner* (plural wife of Joseph Smith)
William Law and Janes Silverthorne Law
Cornelius P. Lott and Permelia Darrow Lott
Amasa M. Lyman and Mary L. Tanner Lyman*
William Marks and Rosannah Robinson Marks
George Miller and Mary Catherine Fry Miller
Ruth Moon* (Plural wife of William Clayton)
Isaac Morely and Lucy Gunn Morley
Joseph B. Noble* and Mary A. Beaman Noble*
John E. Page* and Mary Judd Page*
Orson Pratt
Parley P. Pratt and Mary Ann Frost Pratt* (plural wife of Joseph Smith)
William W. Phelps and Sally Waterman Phelps
Levi Richards
Willard Richards and Jennetta Richards Richards
Sidney Rigdon
Lucy Decker Seely* (plural wife of Brigham Young)
Sylvia P. Sessions *(plural wife of Joseph Smith)
Agnes Coolbirth Smith
George A. Smith and Bathsheba W. Bigler Smith
Hyrum Smith and Mary Fielding Smith
John Smith and Clarissa Lyman Smith
Lucy Mack Smith
Joseph Smith, Jr., and Emma Hale Smith
Samuel H. Smith
William B. Smith

Eliza R. Snow* (plural wife of Joseph Smith)
Orson Spencer and Catherine Curtis Spencer
John Taylor and Leonora Cannon Taylor
Mercy Fielding Thompson
Harriet Page Wheeler Decker* (mother of Lucy Ducker Seely)
Newel K. Whitney and Elizabeth Ann Smith Whitney
Lyman Wight
Wilford Woodruff and Poebe Carter Woodruff
Lucien Woodworth and Phebe Watrous Woodworth
Brigham Young and Mary Ann Angell Young
Joseph Young and Jane A. Bicknell Young
Fanny Young Murray

*Admitted to the Holy Order after the death of Joseph Smith.

Chart II

Members of the Council of Fifty, 1844

Author's Note: At the time this paper was written a accurate list of the members of the Council Fifty as of June 1844 was unavailable. In sources available to the author in the 1970's neither Sidney Rigdon nor William Marks were considered members of the Council. The following names comprise an accurate list of members at the time of the Prophet's death.

George J. Adams
Almon Babbitt*
Alexander Badlam

Samuel Bent
John M Bernhisel*
Edward Bonney
Uriah Brown
Reynolds Cahoon*
William Clayton*
J. W. Cooledge
Alpheus Cutler*
Marinus Eaton
James Emmett
Amos Fielding
Joseph Fielding*
Jediah M. Grant
John P. Greene*
Peter Haws
D. S. Hollister
Orson Hyde*
Samuel James
Benjamin F. Johnson
Heber C. Kimball*
Philip B. Lewis
Cornelius P. Lott*
Amasa M. Lyman*
William Marks*
George Miller*
John D. Parker
William W. Phelps*
Orson Pratt*
Parley P. Pratt*
Charles C. Rich
Levi Richards*
Willard Richards*
Sidney Rigdon*
O. P. Rockwell
Elias Smith
George A. Smith*
Hyrum Smith*
Joseph Smith, Jr.*
John Smith*
William Smith*
Erastus Snow

Orson Spencer*
John Taylor*
Ezra Thayre
Lorenzo D. Wasson
Newel K. Whitney*
Lyman Wight*
Wilford Woodruff*
Lucien Woodworth*
David Yearsley
Brigham Young*

*Also a member of the Holy Order.

The following men were members of the Holy Order during Joseph Smith's lifetime, but not the Council of Fifty: Joseph C. Kingsbury, William Law, Isaac Morely, Joseph B. Noble, and Samuel H. Smith.

The 7, 14, 21, and 28 December 1845 Meetings of the Nauvoo, Illinois, Holy Order

[Unless otherwise indicated, all manuscript sources are housed in archives, historical department, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.]

1.7 December 1845; Sunday

Joseph Smith, Jr., History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 7 vols., ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d ed., rev. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1973), 7:538:

Sunday, 7.--I met with the Twelve and others in the Temple. We partook of the sacrament, exhorted each other and prayed.

Heber C. Kimball Diary, date, in Stanley B. Kimball, *On the Potter's Wheel: The Diaries of Heber C. Kimball* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books in association with Smith Research Associates, 1987), 163-65 (italicized portions indicate words not included in Helen Mar Whitney's publication of her father's diary in "Scenes in Nauvoo, and Incidents from H. C. Kimball's Journal," *Woman's Exponent* 12 [15 June 1883], 2:10):

Sunday, De. the 7, 1845. Snow falling. The weather more mild. After Brexfast I went to Br. Hills and got my Watch. From thence I went to David Fulmers and Sealled two Sisters to him fore time and Eternity. Gave some council and then returned to the Temple whare I found my wife. Bishop Whitney and wife went in with me. I arived at 10 found 6 or Eight present. O. Spencer come in my room and read my proclamation to me and my wife.

Present B. Young, Mary Ann [Young]; Heber C. Kimball, Vilate Kimball; Orson Hide, Marinda Hide; O. P. Pratt, Mary Ann Pratt; John Tailor, Leonora Tailor; G. A. Smith, Barshebe [Bathsheba] Smith; Willard Richards.

High Preas [and wives] present John Smith, Clarrisa; A. Cutler, Lois; R[eynolds] Cahoon, Thirza; N. K. Whitney, Elizebeth Ann; Cornelius Lott, Permila; I. Morly, Lucy, O. Spencer, Catherine; Wm. Claton, Agness Smith; George Miller, Mary Cathrine; Joseph Young, Sister Tomson, Levi Richards, Mary Smith, Joseph Fielding, W. W. Phelps, Sally; Joseph Kingsburay, L. Woodworth, Phebe; John Berunisel [Bernhisel].

The following Persons are members of the Holy Order of the Holy Preasthood having Recieved it in the Life time of Joseph and Hiram, the Prophets. Elder B. Young went and gave the Brethren and Sisters present a view of the Seprate rooms, and the object of them, then pute up the Veil and choe [showed] the Order of it. The Brethren and Sisters clothed half past one, commenced our meeting at two Oclock. Meeting [opened] by prair by Joseph Fielding, sung humn and Elder John Tailor spoke a chort time then H. C. Kimball spoke. Elder B. was sick and had to retire to his room and lay down on his couch. Then Elder O. Hide gave a chort exortation. After he closed, him [hymn] sung. Then H. C. K. [Heber C. Kimball], N. K. [Newell K. Whitney] brock [broke] Bread. Blessed by H. C. K. Elder B. Young come in pertaock [partook], carid around by N. K. Wine, blest by Joseph Young, Carrid round by N. K. Singing while the wine going round. Then El. P. P. Pratt rose and spoke on a simeler object before the pople. W. W. Phelps spoke. It was 3 Oclock when we partook of sacrement. Great Solemnity rested on the Breth and sisters, great union in our meeting. Seven present have not had thare Last [or second] Anointing. L. Woodworth and wife, Sister Tomson, Wm. Claton, Joseph Kingsbury, John Benhisel, Sister Marinda Hide, Agness Smith, the wife of Don [Carlos] Smith [deceased]. John Smith our Patriarch spoke a chort time them Elder B. Young Said this quorum should meet heare evry Sabath and take of the Sacrament. The Br. and Sisters ware completly clothed. Elder B. Young gave us good council. We offerd up the Signs Little after fore, got through at five. G. A. Smith mouth. When he got through all went home in good spirrits. My wife spent part of the Eve with with J. Kingsbury.

Willard Richards Diary, date:

Sunday Decr. 7. I went to the Temple at eleven o clock and remained until dusk had the sacrament for the first time in the Temple

II14 December 1845; Sunday

Joseph Smith, History of the Church, 7:545-46:

The Twelve and others with our wives met in the attic story of the Temple.

After prayer and singing, Elders Isaac Morley and Charles C. Rich administered, and we partook of the sacrament.

I introduced the subject of establishing rules for the preservation of order in the House of the Lord which were agreed to and ordered to be printed.

There is too much covetousness in the church, and too much disposition amongst the brethren to seek after power and has been from the beginning, but this feeling is diminishing and the brethren begin to know better. In consequence of such feelings Joseph [Smith] left the people in the dark on many subjects of importance and they still remain in dark. We have got to rid such principles from our hearts.

I referred to the manner in which the corner stones of this Temple were laid as published in the Times and Seasons, and said that the perfect order would have been for the presidency of the stake to lay the first or southeast corner; the high council the second or southwest corner; the bishops the northeast corner; but the high priests laid the southwest corner, though they had no right to do it. I spoke of the brethren making objections to persons being permitted to receive the ordinances, and added, that when objections were made I should feel bound to determine whether the person making the objections was a responsible person, and if he is not, I should do as I pleased about

listening to the objections; but if he was a responsible person I should listen to them.

To constitute a man responsible he must have the power and ability not only to save himself but save others; but there are those who are not capable of saving themselves and will have to be saved by others.

When a man objects to another receiving the ordinances he becomes responsible to answer to God for that man's salvation; and who can tell but if he received the ordinances he would be saved, but if we refuse to give him the means he cannot be saved and we are responsible for it.

There is no law to prevent any man from obtaining all the blessings of the priesthood if he will walk according to the commandments, pay his tithes and seek after salvation, but he may deprive himself of them.

After much profitable instruction we united in prayer, Orson Hyde being mouth.

Meeting adjourned for one week.

Heber C. Kimball/William Clayton Diary, date, in George D. Smith, ed., An Intimate Chronicle: The Journals of William Clayton (Salt Lake City: Signature Books in association with Smith Research Associates, 1991), 211-15 (note: Helen Mar Whitney did not include this entry in "Scenes in Nauvoo, and Incidents from H. C. Kimball's Journal"):

The following brethren and sisters assembled to the Attic Story of the Temple according to appointment viz., Pres Brigham Young & Mary Ann Young, Heber C. Kimball & Vilate Kimball, Parley P Pratt & Mary Ann Pratt, Orson Hyde [sic]. Orson Pratt & Nancy M. Pratt, George A. Smith & Barsheba W. Smith, Amasa Lyman & Loisa M. Lyman, John Taylor & Leonora A [sic] Taylor, John Smith & Clarissa Smith, Newel K. Whitney & Elizabeth A. Whitney, George Miller & Mary C. Miller, Alpheus Cutler [sic] Isaac Morley & Lucy Morley, Wm W. Phelps & Sally Phelps, John M. Bernhisel, William Clayton, Joseph C. Kingsbury, Franklin D. Richards, Samuel Bent & Lettice Bent, Agness M. Smith & Mary [Fielding] Smith, Mercy R. Thompson & Tirzah Cahoon, Lucian Woodworth & Phebe Woodworth, Orson Spencer & Catherine C. Spencer, Cornelius P. Lott & Joseph Fielding, Joseph Young.

Soon after 11 o'clock those who were present were ordered by the president to clothe themselves, which being done and seated at 20 minutes after 11 o'clock sang, "Adam Ondi Ahman" &c. After which we bowed before the Lord and President Young offered up prayers. We next sang "Glorious things of thee are spoken" &c. When bread and wine having been provided by Bishop N. K. Whitney Elders Isaac Morley and Charles C. Rich were called upon to administer the sacrament. They broke the bread which was then blessed by Isaac Morley and passed round by Charles C. Rich, who also blessed the wine and passed it round likewise.

We then sang, "O happy souls who pray" &c. and "Come all ye sons of Zion." After which President Young introduced the subject of having rules of order to govern all who come here and to regulate our works, printed. He wished to know the minds of the quorum whether they thought it best. It was voted unanimously that we think it wisdom to have some rules printed for that purpose.

It was also unanimously voted that President Young introduce the rules.

He then explained that he had some rules draughted [drafted] last evening, but they were now at the office to be printed ready for tomorrow, he however explained the majority of them explaining also the order he wished carried out, and then took a vote whether this quorum will sustain him in this regulation.

The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

He then observed that he should henceforth have all the cloth which was intended for robes, garments and aprons, brought and either cut or made in this Temple under the superintendance of those who know how to do it right. There are now scarcely two Aprons alike nor two garments cut or marked right, and it is necessary to observe perfect order in this thing and it never can be done unless we take this course.

A conversation then ensued on the distinction of office or power, between a president of Seventies, and a member of the High Council or a High Priest. It arose in consequence of some of the High Council having been washed and anointed by some of the presidents of Seventies and inasmuch as there had been some considerable difference in the views of the brethren in regard to the difference of authority between the High Council and Seventies, President Young concluded it would be wisdom to have the subject understood at this early stage of business so as to prevent any feelings or dispute arising on the subject hereafter.

He stated that the Seventies are ordained Apostles, and when they go forth into the ministry, they are sent with power to build up the Kingdom in all the world, and consequently they have power to ordain High Priests, and also to ordain and organize a High Council.

Some of the High Priests have been ready to quarrel on the subject, supposing they had power and authority above the Seventies, and some in their zeal for power, have abused and trampled on the feelings of some of the Seventies.

There is too much covetousness in the Church and too much disposition amongst the brethren to seek after power and has been from the beginning, but this feeling is diminishing and the brethren begin to know better. In consequence of such feelings Joseph left the people in the dark on many subjects of importance and they still remain in the dark. We have got to rid such principles from our hearts.

He then referred to the manner in which the corner stones of this Temple were laid as published in the Times and Seasons and then stated that the perfect order would have been for the presidency of the Stake to lay the first or South East corner. The High Council the 2nd or South West corner. The Bishops the North West corner and the Priests the North East corner, but added the High Priests laid the South West corner, but they had no right to do it.

He then introduced the subject of the brethren making objections to any person being permitted to receive the ordinances, and added that when the objections were made he should feel bound to determine whether the person making the objections was a responsible person, if he was not he should do as he pleased about listening to the objections, but if he was a responsible person he should then listen to the objections.

To make a man a responsible man he must have the power and ability not only to save himself but to save others, but there are those who are not capable of saving themselves and will have to be saved if they are saved at all by those who are capable of doing it. An objection from such would have no weight on his mind.

When a man objects to another receiving the ordinances, he becomes responsible to answer to God for that mans salvation. And who knows but if he received the ordinances he would be saved, but if we refuse to give him the means he cannot be saved and we are responsible for it.

There is no law to prevent any man from obtaining all the blessings of the priesthood if he will walk according to the commandments, pay his tithes and seek after salvation, but he may deprive himself of them.

After much important instruction from the president the signs of the Holy Priesthood were offered

up and prayers. Elder Orson Hyde being mouth after which the company were dismissed till next Sunday with strict orders to be here and dressed precisely at 11 o'clock.

At 2 o'clock P.M. agreeable to appointment nearly all those new members [of the Holy Order] who have received the ordinances the past week assembled in the upper department to receive instructions in regard to the ordinances and their duty to be observed henceforth and forever.

At the same hour President Young, H. C. Kimball, P. Pratt, O. Pratt, O. Hyde, J. Taylor, G. A. Smith, A. Lyman, N. K. Whitney, G. Miller, W. W. Phelps, Wm. Clayton and P[hineas] H. Young retired into President Young's Room. The President appointed W. W. Phelps and P. P. Pratt to instruct the brethren and sisters now waiting, which was done and much good instruction given by them. They were especially instructed more fully into the nature and importance of the blessings and powers of the Holy Priesthood which they have received, and it was enjoined upon them not to talk out of doors, but to be wise and prudent in all things.

They were also informed that no one will be admitted into these rooms during the time we are to work except those who are called to assist, unless they are invited by those who have authority.

At a quarter to 5 they were dismissed by blessing from Elder Taylor.

At the same time this was going on those who were in President Young's room were listening to a number of letters which were read together with the report of the trial of J. B. Backenstos as published in the Peoria Register.

About 5 o'clock nearly all the company having left the house President Young and others of the Twelve went down to the lower story of the Temple to council together on the arrangements of the Pulpits. The following persons remained and slept in the Temple over night, viz. President Young, A[lbert]. P. Rockwood, J[ohn]. D. Lee and David Candland.

Brigham Young Journal, date:

...about 11. 0. the breth. met for service & I presented the rules of order after singing & prayer accepted. We then partook of the sacrament spent the rest of the day with the brethren in giving them instruction and offering prayer's to the most High

III. 21 December 1845; Sunday

Heber C. Kimball Diary, date (note: italics indicate material not included in Helen Mar Whitney's "Scenes from Nauvoo, and incidents from H. C. Kimball's Journal"):

According to appointment on Sunday last, a meeting was held in the east room this day of all those who could clothe themselves in the garments of Priesthood, 75 persons were present, Elder H. C. Kimball presiding. The names of those- present so far as the clerks could ascertain them are as follows H.C. Kimball, Vilate Kimball John Taylor Leonora Taylor-- P.P. Pratt, Mary Ann Pratt Orson Pratt, Sarah M. Pratt--Amasa Lyman Maria Louisa Lyman George A. Smith, Bathsheba W. Smith, John Smith, Patriarch, Clarissa Smith Alpheus Cutler, Lois Cutler Reynolds Cahoon, Tirzah Cahoon, George Miller, Clarissa Miller C.C. Rich Sarah D. Rich -W.W. Phelps Sally Phelps Samuel Bent, Theodore Turley F.D. Richards Jane S. Richards.-- David Fullmer, Rhoda Ann Fullmer Reuben Miller F. Nickerson Simeon Carter--Lydia Carter Thomas Grover Caroline E. Grover G. W. Harris Lucinda Harris William Felshaw, Mary H. Felshaw, James Allred-- Elizabeth Allred Elizabeth Taylor Steven Markham Levi Richards--Wm A Sanqer, Mary Sanger Louisa Sanger William Crosby, Sally Crosby, Joseph Fielding & wife (Hannah Fielding) Elijah Fordham, Anna B. Fordham William Weeks Caroline Weeks David Candland L.R. Foster, Mary Smith Mercy R. Thompson John M. Bernhisel Erastus Snow Ezra T. Benson & wife John Pack & wife --Cynthia Durfee, Eliza R. Snow-- James Taylor, Joseph L. Heywood & wife William

Cahoon & wife and 2 others whose names were not obtained. ----

At 5 minutes before 11, the song "Glorious things of thee are Spoken" was sung. Father John Smith then made a few remarks, blessed the bread and it [was] handed round by Bishop Geo. Miller, the Wine was blessed by Geo. Miller and handed round by him. While the wine was passing round, Elder George A. Smith arose and addressed the congregation. He thanked God for the privileges this day enjoyed and spoke of the difficulties under which the church had labored to attain the blessings we now enjoy. Another thing he thanked God for, already had more than 500 persons passed through [the endowment], and therefore if half of them should be like the foolish virgins, and turn away from the truth, the principles of the Holy Priesthood, would be beyond the reach of mobs and all the assaults of the adversaries of the Church. Order was one of the laws of Heaven, then ought to be no whispering here, no difficulty ought to be mentioned, whatever transpires here ought not to be mentioned any where else.

When we pray to the Lord we ought to come together clad in proper garments and when we do so, and unite our hearts and hands together, and act as one mind, the Lord will hear us and will answer our prayers. Our garments should be properly marked and we should understand those marks and we should wear those garments continually, by night and by day, in prison or free and if the devils in hell cut us up, let them cut the garments to pieces also, if we have the garments upon us at all times we can at any time offer up the signs [and tokens]. He then related an instance of some children being healed & cured of the whooping cough in one night, through the prayers of himself and Elder Woodruff, in Michigan, while they were there on a mission. Said that whenever they could get an opportunity they retired to the wilderness or to an upper room they, did so and offered up the signs, and were always answered. It would be a good thing for us to put on our garments every day and pray to God, and in private circles, when we can do so with safety.

We are now different from what we were before we entered into this quorum. Speedy vengeance will now overtake the transgressor. When a man and his wife are united in feeling, and act in union, I believe they can hold their children by prayer and faith and will not be obliged to give them up to death until they are fourscore years old.

Sometimes mere trifles destroy the confidence which each ought to have in the other. This prevents a union of faith and feeling. The apostacy of Thomas B. Marsh was caused by so small a thing as a pint of strippings and his oaths brought the exterminating order which drove us all out of Missouri. The woman ought to be in subjection to the man be careful to guard against loud laughter, against whispering, levity, talebearing. He expressed his unfeigned love for his brethren, and his confidence in their endeavors to keep these rules.

"The Spirit of God" was then sung.

Elder Kimball next addressed the meeting. He concurred in all that had been said, the observation of these things is most essential. About 4 years ago next May nine persons were admitted into the Holy order 5 are now living. B. Young W. Richards George Miller N. K. Whitney & H. C. Kimball two are dead [James Adams and Hyrum Smith], and two are worse than dead [William Law and William Marks]. You have not got all you will have if you are faithful and keep your tongue in your mouth. You are pronounced clean, but were you pronounced clean from the blood of this generation? NO! not all of you, only some few who have deserved it. Females were not received when we first received the Holy order. Men apostatized, being bed by their wives, if any such cases occur again, no more women will be admitted. He spoke of the Necessity of Women being in subjection to their husbands. I am subject to my God, my wife is in subjection to me and will reverence me in my place and I will make her happy. I do not want her to step forward and dictate to me any more than I dictate to President Young. In his absence I take his place according to his request. Shall we cease from loud laughter and mirth? Will you never slander your brother or sister? I will refer your minds to the covenants you have made by an observance of these things, you will have dreams and visions. In the coming week we will take through 100 a day, we want no man to come in here unless he is invited, or on business. Let those having cloth to make up send it

here and we will make it up and put it to good use. Women should be appointed to attend to the washing and anointings of the High Priests wives. There is a large lot ahead. You are not yet ordained to any thing, but we have the clay here, it is mellow and we shall soon put it on the wheel. If any brother divulges any thing we shall cut him off. We shall not be with you long. We cannot rest day nor night until we put you in possession of the Priesthood. We want you now to make up garments for yourselves. I want my own robe back again. If we have made you clean every whit, now go to work and make others clean. We will have a screw [screen?] put up before the vail, and will make an office of my room, and have a stairway leading down from it. No person will be allowed to take people through the vail but those appointed.

Let women wait upon women and let men wait upon men, then no jealousies will arise. He closed at 5 m[inutes]. before one.

Elder P. P. Pratt approved of what had been said & said a few words about the fasion of our robes, his own robe, which was like those first used, was not sewed up at the sides, neither was it of more than one breadth.

Elder Kimball showed the right fashion for a leaf, spoke of Elder Richards being protected at Carthage Jail, having on the robe, while Joseph and Hyrum and Elder Taylor were shot to pieces, said the Twelve would have to leave shortly, for a charge of treason would be brought against them for swearing us to avenge the blood of the anointed ones, and some one would reveal it and we shall have to part some day between sundown and dark.

George Miller said that when near the camp of General Hardin, he was shot at, and the Sentinel