

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post-Manifesto Marriages

In *Dialogue*'s "Letters to the Editor" (40, no. 4 [Winter 2007]: v), David Timmins is the most recent example of authors and reviewers who misrepresent what they claim to have found or not found in one of my publications. Timmins writes: "Neither [Frank J.] Cannon nor his book *Under the Prophet in Utah* (1909; rpt. Boston: C. M. Clark Co., 1911), are cited in either Quinn's or Savages's articles."

The article in question is my "LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriages, 1890-1904," (*Dialogue*, 18, no. 1 [Spring 1985]: 9-105), which Timmins cites as the first sentence of his letter. The text of my article, page 40, referred to "George Q. Cannon, [and] his son Frank . . ." Associated with that reference was footnote 136, page 40, whose fourth line began: "Frank J. Cannon wrote . . ." (citing Cannon's book and its co-author Harvey J. O'Higgins). This footnote 136 then devoted fifteen lines to discussing what Cannon said and his accuracy.

I don't know whether Timmins is an example of reading only part of my publication he criticizes, or of carelessly skimming every page of it, or of willfully making misstatements, but the result is the same: a distortion of my published text.

Timmins claims: "Frank J. Cannon . . . wrote all anyone ever needed to know about the Church's continued practice of plural marriage, not only in Canada and Mexico, but here in the United States" (v). His letter also accepts

Frank J. "Cannon's assertion that it was Joseph F. Smith and his Smith kin who insisted on reinterpreting the Woodruff Manifesto as not affecting continued, underground plural marriages" (vi).

If Timmins *actually reads* my full article, especially its discussion of George Q. Cannon on pages 75-82, he will find the documentation for my statements: "From 1892 until President Snow stopped sending U.S. residents to Mexico for polygamous ceremonies in 1898, George Q. Cannon signed most of these letters" of authorization (76); that Counselor Cannon signed a recommend for a plural marriage to be performed in the Logan Temple in 1894 (77); that Frank J. Cannon himself unsuccessfully asked his father for permission to marry polygamously in 1894, which his mother Sarah Jenne opposed, asking instead that Abraham H. Cannon marry the new wife, the fiancée of Abraham's deceased brother (77-78); that in 1898 Counselor Cannon "commissioned Apostle Matthias F. Cowley to perform plural marriages in the United States for upper echelons of Church leadership without special recommends" (80); that, "until his death, Cannon continued sending prominent Church leaders to Cowley for polygamous marriages" (81)—which included two of his sons and two of his nephews (Angus J., Hugh J., George M. and Lewis M. Cannon—all married to post-Manifesto plural wives by Cowley). Moreover, to President Lorenzo Snow and the apostles in the Salt Lake Temple in 1900, Counselor Cannon expressed his intention of marrying a new polygamous wife so that he could