

# “The Highest Class of Adulterers and Whoremongers”: Plural Marriage, the Church of Jesus Christ (Cutlerite), and the Construction of Memory<sup>1</sup>

*Christopher James Blythe*

*“Anyone who says Father Cutler ever sanctioned, upheld, or practiced polygamy are ignorant, unlearned, dishonest, or deceived, for they took false reports for facts, not knowing the truth.”<sup>2</sup>*

The Mormon polygamous passage was not traversed solely by those who sided with Brigham Young. Plural marriage was part of the legacy handed down from the Nauvoo experience and as Joseph Smith III once stated, “nearly all of the factions into which the church broke had plural marriage in some form.”<sup>3</sup> There were certainly exceptions to this rule—Sidney Rigdon and Charles B. Thompson, for example, never practiced plural marriage. However, polygamy and questions about its origins and extent could not easily be ignored by any of the sects.

In fact, polygamy served and continues to serve as a means by which one variant of Mormonism positions itself against another. Although some of those who would become members of the Church of Jesus Christ (Cutlerite) were involved in the plural marriage experience in Illinois and Iowa, by the time of its official inception in 1853, the church had rejected the practice. This article

traces the evolving memory of and public reaction to plural marriage among the Cutlerites in an effort to understand how a religious movement conceptualizes and re-conceptualizes its past in order to solidify its identity in the present.

Studies of memory—that is, how a community remembers and represents its own past—have already proved useful to scholars seeking to understand Mormon culture. Both Kathleen Flake and Stephen C. Taysom have demonstrated how the LDS Church has “forgotten” its polygamous passage via emphasizing other distinctive historical moments (e.g., Flake’s argument concerning the first vision)<sup>4</sup> or whitewashing these events in Mormon popular histories (e.g. Taysom’s discussion of Gerald N. Lund’s *The Work and the Glory* series).<sup>5</sup> A similar approach also informed David Howlett’s compelling study of how the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (now known as the Community of Christ) came to remember the practice of polygamy, as their cousins came to forget it.<sup>6</sup>

As these scholars have already emphasized, memory is a crucial component of how institutions define themselves and police their borders. The particular lens through which a group chooses to see its past shapes its members’ understanding of who they are in the present. As David Lowenthal has stated, “the past as we know it is partly a product of the present; we continually reshape memory, rewrite history, refashion relics.”<sup>7</sup> “History” as we are using it here refers to the crafting of the past via available source materials. Neither the process of constructing memory nor the writing of history is unbiased, but the latter is “based on empirical sources which we can decide to reject for other versions of the past,” whereas the former is shaped more by the present requirements of the community’s self-definition.<sup>8</sup>

This article is divided into two major parts. The first section is devoted to a history of the proto-Cutlerite—that is, the movement as it existed as a colony before organization as a church—involvement with polygamy. Here we will count wives and husbands and measure the extent of overall knowledge of polygamy during the period. The second section is devoted to a history of the Cutlerite—that is, the movement after the official founding date of the Church of Jesus Christ—memory or representation of polygamy.

The history of Cutlerite understandings of polygamy—their

memory of Mormonism's polygamous past—can be divided into three major periods. The first period, between 1853 and 1864, was characterized by a collective and institutionally enforced silence, which attempted to mute those voices who knew of polygamy's past. During this period, the Cutlerites were *haunted* by the memory of polygamy, even when (or perhaps, particularly because) it was unacknowledged in public. As we will see, there were unavoidable reminders of a polygamous past in their midst.

A second period was initiated at Alpheus Cutler's death and brought on by the growing intensity of RLDS missionary work that closely equated the community with their apparently unfortunate past. Gone was the policy of silence on polygamy altogether. A new strategy emerged in its place, one in which the church openly denied and distanced itself from any involvement in past polygamy. As we will see, such public denials hid residual private anxieties in the second generation. Regardless, it was during this period that the community's collective aversion to polygamy led the Cutlerites to form their own identity—by pushing against the Brighamites, with their corrupt marital practices, while simultaneously seeking to respond to the insinuations made by RLDS missionaries, former Cutlerites, and neighboring non-Mormon communities.

A third period began with the twentieth-century arrival of Cutlerites to Independence, Missouri. In their new environment, where they were surrounded by a variety of Mormon sects, identity formation became all the more important. Likewise, the twentieth century presented new contradictions to the Cutlerites' narrative of plural marriage from another source: professional historians. Scholars published en masse concerning Joseph Smith's many plural marriages; later in the century, they even turned their attention to Alpheus Cutler. The Cutlerites responded in the form of official church histories and even found allies in other movements' apologetic histories. In effect they moved from doing memory, presenting the past from their personal knowledge, to the claim that they could construct the past from historical documents. Likewise during this period, the effort to construct identity by pushing against the Brighamites was intensified and as a result, Brigham Young and other historical Mormon figures began to appear as stock villains. The history of the Church of Jesus

Christ offers us a view of how one denomination has tried both to preserve and to construct a heritage rooted in the past—a heritage which has shifted and been re-imagined over the course of its history.

### A Twenty-First Century Encounter

On June 4, 2002, I held my first and only interview with Stanley Whiting, president of the Melchizedek Priesthood of the Church of Jesus Christ. Like many students of Mormonism, I stumbled across the church in the writings of Danny Jorgensen and D. Michael Quinn and wanted to know something about this small group of believers who claimed to have maintained the Mormonism of Nauvoo intact into the twenty-first century. As I sat in the Whitings' living room in Blue Springs, Missouri, I found something very tender in the elderly gentleman, who would periodically remark that I looked just like his grandson. We spoke for several hours as he bore testimony of the Restoration in general and the history of the Cutlerites in particular. He had recently traveled to visit the rebuilt Nauvoo Temple, before it was dedicated, and kindly expressed the similarities of our faiths, especially the fact that both communities maintained what he referred to as "the upper room work" or simply "the priesthood."

We had only spoken a few minutes, when he looked at me, smiled, and said, "Now I'm picking on you now and I don't want you to take this personal, but you belong to the Utah [Church] . . . to us, one of the grossest sins in the world is polygamy." He went on to express his irritation with scholars who had persistently tried to "destroy our integrity" in reference to whether Alpheus Cutler and the early Cutlerites were polygamists or not. He continued, "And we have got proof in our records that we don't show to people what happened clear back through Alpheus Cutler. Alpheus Cutler was claimed by the church—your church—as having twenty-seven wives, eighteen wives." He raised his hands, exasperated. "I don't pay any attention to that. He only had one wife and that's Lois."<sup>9</sup>

Six years later, when I finally presented some of my research on the Cutlerites at a conference of the John Whitmer Historical Association, I remembered Whiting's concerns and for that reason decided to avoid any mention of polygamy at all. Instead, I

was excited to probe the singular ecclesiology of the faith. However, by the end of the session, I was reminded of the interest and controversy in questions concerning the Cutlerite involvement in plural marriage. After finishing the public Q&A, I was approached by several scholars who wanted to discuss the topic. One senior scholar, who had inadvertently offended a Cutlerite a year previously, simply asked if I felt it was accurate to say that Cutler practiced polygamy. Another asked in hushed tones whether the records mentioned anything about their plural marriages. When I answered in the negative, he commented that the records were probably doctored or the important portions left unavailable; otherwise, he speculated, we would find the information “we all” suspected was there.

Despite the guaranteed interest in such a project, I had decided I would leave the subject of plural marriage for someone else to unravel. I wanted to avoid the controversy. Yet, as I continued my research, I came to think that the Cutlerites’ experience and reaction to polygamy was and remains a crucial part of their story. Specifically, I began to look for a way that would allow me to tell the story of Cutlerite polygamy in a historically accurate way—drawing on all of the available source material, while being responsible as a scholar to both my subject and my audience, and even sympathetic to the Cutlerite plight.

Ultimately scholars still do not have access either to those hypothetical documents that Stan Whiting claimed would exonerate Cutler from the allegations leveled against him or to those that the above-mentioned historian suggested would add even further exciting details of polygamy’s heyday. Yet the records we do have paint a more complicated and compelling portrait of the movement than we could gain from being able to add to or subtract wives from the story. Instead, the history of Cutlerism’s reaction to polygamy is one of coping with a memory silenced, repressed, and deliberately forgotten, but ultimately important to the Cutlerite construction of identity.

### **The History of the Cutlerites and the Cutlerites in Mormon History**

Alpheus Cutler, a Latter-day Saint since 1833, grew to prominence in Nauvoo as a member of the city’s High Council, one of

the temple committee, and the temple's "master builder." As a confidant of Joseph Smith, Cutler was entrusted with Nauvoo's emerging esoteric theology. On October 12, 1843, he was initiated as a member of the Holy Order (also known as the Anointed Quorum), through what would come to be known as the temple endowment. On November 15, 1843, he was sealed to his wife, Lois, and subsequently the couple received the ceremony referred to as the "fullness of the Melchizedek Priesthood." Although he was not one of the original members of the Holy Order endowed in 1842, he was only the sixth man to receive this capstone anointing, one week before the first of the twelve apostles, Brigham Young, received the rite.

On March 11, 1844, Alpheus Cutler was chosen as one of the charter members of the Kingdom of God, frequently referred to as the Council of Fifty, a religiopolitical society designed to promote the Saints' political interests, including interactions with governments, Joseph Smith's candidacy for the presidency of the United States, and colonization efforts. The Kingdom was tied to Mormon millenarian expectations and was intended to function as a worldwide government during the millennial reign of Christ. One responsibility associated with the Council of Fifty was the effort to bring the Mormon gospel to the Native Americans. During this period, Cutler received an assignment to conduct such a mission in Kansas.<sup>10</sup>

As a member of the High Council, Cutler played a key role in supporting the leadership of the twelve apostles following Smith's death. This support included participating in the excommunication of supporters of rival movements.<sup>11</sup> He also served in the temple, administering the ceremonies of the Holy Order to the rest of the Latter-day Saints. Once the westward migration began, Cutler served as the president of the Municipal High Council in the settlement of Winter Quarters. By the end of 1847, he was eager to fulfill the assignment he had previously received as a member of the Council of Fifty. With Brigham Young's support, he established a mission to the Native Americans, and in the following months relocated to Silver Creek, Iowa, where he served as the branch president.<sup>12</sup>

The period from the undertaking of this mission to the official founding of the Cutlerite church in 1853 could be termed the

Proto-Cutlerite period, in which those who accompanied Cutler on his mission began to see themselves as distinct from the rest of Mormonism. In time, the separation between those who accompanied Cutler, with their focus placed on converting the Native Americans, and other Mormons, who were focused on the trek west, led to increasing tensions between the two communities. By the time Young had re-established the first presidency and planned for the colonization of the Great Basin, the proto-Cutlerites had begun to see messianic possibilities for their movement in general and for their leader, Alpheus Cutler, in particular. They saw themselves as responsible for building relationships with the Native Americans—relationships that would result in the re-establishment of the Saints in Missouri. Though the rift had its origins in what Richard Bennett has referred to as “difference over place and priorities,” in time it blossomed to encompass competing mental worlds of Mormonism’s future.<sup>13</sup>

Lamanism, as Mormons in the surrounding area termed the proto-Cutlerites’ message, was seen as a heretical threat to the Church. Following a series of investigative trials with the regional High Council directed by the apostle Orson Hyde, the official sanction for the Native American mission was withdrawn. Many of those who were active in the mission were excommunicated; eventually, on April 20, 1851, Alpheus Cutler was excommunicated as well.<sup>14</sup> Not long thereafter, the proto-Cutlerites abandoned their missionary efforts due to a lack of conversions and overwhelming hardship.<sup>15</sup>

In 1852, the colony relocated to southwest Iowa, where they founded the town of Manti. On September 19, 1853, Alpheus Cutler announced that he had had a revelation to re-organize the Church of Jesus Christ.<sup>16</sup> Beginning on that date, his followers were re-baptized and a new church leadership body was selected. The community prospered, numbering a few hundred at its height. In the late 1850s, the Cutlerites attracted the attention of another movement founded only a few months before their own: the “new organization,” later known as the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. The evangelistic group quickly depleted a large chunk of the Cutlerites’ membership.<sup>17</sup> With pressures from the encroachment of RLDS ministers and



the death of Alpheus Cutler in 1864, the Cutlerites decided once again to relocate, this time to Minnesota, where they founded the town of Clitherall.

The Cutlerites struggled at the end of the nineteenth century, especially following their renewed encounter with Josephite missionaries, to the point that the church rarely held meetings. With the death of Chauncy Whiting in 1902, there was an eight-year hiatus of any meetings of the organization until Isaac Whiting, his successor, accepted his position. For these reasons, there is a fourteen-year gap in the organization's minutes before they begin again with a notice that the church "started anew in 1910."<sup>18</sup> Few of the first generation of Cutlerites remained to assist in this renewal.

In 1930, a group of Cutlerites relocated to Independence, Missouri, an action which inadvertently resulted in schism. Although the Cutlerites were divided between two rival churches for some time, one in Minnesota and one in Missouri, the only surviving community by the 1950s was in Independence, where the church currently resides. For the past hundred years, the community has never been more than a handful of believers, often on the verge of extinction.

The Cutlerites attract a unique degree of interest from scholars and armchair historians compared to the other churches of the Restoration. Among the most compelling components of the Church of Jesus Christ is its connection with Nauvoo esotericism. After all, Cutler's claim stemmed from secret commissions received as part of the Council of Fifty and the Anointed Quorum, his reception of the Second Anointing, and most importantly, the perpetuation of the Nauvoo-era endowment into the present. Mormons of various factions have fantasized that the Cutlerites exist in a timeless state, unchanged since Nauvoo. Some wonder what the ceremonies performed on the second floor of their meeting house encompass, and if knowledge of them would demonstrate what the twelve apostles of the LDS Church must have changed since Nauvoo. For example, one writer has noted that the Cutlerites' ceremony was evidence that Masonic elements were additions made by the Brighamites—regardless of the fact that he had no access to details of the Cutlerite ceremony.<sup>19</sup> Although the trope of Cutlerites as the keepers of Nauvoo eso-



tericism is what undoubtedly piques our communal curiosities into the smallest remaining nineteenth-century sect, there is no reason to question whether the Church of Jesus Christ has somehow escaped the impact of time and space.<sup>20</sup> The history of all known institutions includes change over time.

Our historical curiosity also has something to do with our tendency to position the Church of Jesus Christ on a constructed spectrum of the Restoration. We are used to thinking of the LDS Church as the proponents of Nauvoo Mormonism with its emphasis on temple rites and, historically, plural marriage, on one side of the spectrum, and the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, who vehemently opposed polygamy, on the other. We have come to popularly think and speak of the Cutlerites as existing in a space somewhere between these two poles, part LDS since they maintain Nauvoo esotericism, and part RLDS in that they reject plural marriage. There are two problems with this comparative methodology employed to understand the Cutlerites: first, this spectrum is much too simplistic; second, it tries to come to terms with the Cutlerites through analogy rather than by examining the tradition on its own merits. Of course, my comments are not designed to discourage our interests in the Church of Jesus Christ, only to encourage us to suspend what we think we know about the community in order to gain a perspective fully positioned in the sources at our disposal.

### **Polygamy in Nauvoo and Silver Creek (1845–approx. 1851)**

Before we can use the Cutlerites as a case study in memory construction, we should look at the historical moment to which the new institution was reacting. The first subject we need to probe is to what extent the available records suggest Cutlerites were involved in plural marriages. Should scholars speak of the proto-Cutlerite period as a polygamous phase in the sect's history? What knowledge did individual Cutlerites have about plural marriage, in their own sect or among the followers of Brigham Young, prior to Orson Pratt's 1852 announcement?

When exactly Alpheus Cutler was introduced to plural marriage as sponsored by Joseph Smith or other ecclesiastical leaders is uncertain. However, his membership in the Holy Order and Nauvoo's High Council would have positioned him with plenty of

opportunities to learn of the practice. For example, Cutler may have been in attendance when Hyrum Smith read the July 12, 1843, revelation before the Nauvoo High Council on August 12, 1843. Unfortunately, there was no attendance taken during the historic meeting and Cutler was absent the following week.<sup>21</sup> Because the Holy Order was populated with many of those who were involved in early plural marriage, Cutler would have also been able to discover the practice through these associations. That he remained unaware of polygamy until after Joseph Smith's death seems highly unlikely.

It is certain that by 1845 Cutler had become fully immersed in the world of post-martyrdom plural marriage. His twenty-year-old daughter, Clarissa Cressy Cutler, married the apostle Heber C. Kimball on February 29, 1845. (Cutler's seventeen-year-old daughter, Emily, also married Kimball, but not until December 1845.) On August 9, 1845, Kimball, in turn, performed the ceremony that sealed Cutler to his first plural wife, the recently divorced ex-wife of Orrin Porter Rockwell, Luana Hart Beebe.<sup>22</sup> On January 14, 1846, following a general policy for those couples that had previously been sealed outside of the temple, Alpheus had his sealing to Luana, as well as his earlier sealing to Lois, performed again within the edifice. The same procedure was followed with the re-performance of Cutler's higher anointings, although this time with both Lois and Luana accompanying him in the rite.<sup>23</sup> On February 3, 1846, Cutler was sealed to five additional women: Margaret Carr, Abigail Carr, Sally Cox, Disedy Caroline McCall, and Henrietta Clarinda Miller.<sup>24</sup> Cutler's new wives received their anointings on the same day.

Of these seven women, we only have a record of three accompanying him during the Native American mission. Alpheus Cutler had children with only one of his plural wives, Luana. Danny Jorgensen's research has uncovered three children born to the union between 1846 and 1850 or 1851. In order to conceal their paternity, the two children to survive childhood did not use the last name Cutler. Jacob Lorenzo, a son born in 1846, was given Cutler's mother's maiden name, Boyd, and Olive Luana, a daughter born in 1850, used the surnames of Luana's two later husbands alternately.<sup>25</sup>

Alpheus Cutler, his wives, and his daughters appear to have

been the only actual participants in plural marriage from the group of individuals in Silver Creek who eventually became Cutlerites. However, during the proto-Cutlerite period, there was one other polygamist family connected to the community: F. Walter Cox, one of Cutler's counselors, and his three wives. Luman H. Calkins, Cutler's other counselor and the bishop of the Silver Creek Branch, though not technically a polygamist, was also sealed to multiple women in the Nauvoo temple, as he was sealed to both his current and his deceased wife.<sup>26</sup>

Yet as Jorgensen's research has demonstrated, this was far from the extent of the colony's polygamous ties. Many of those who would become Cutlerites participated in the Nauvoo Temple experience and began the trek westward to Winter Quarters, where polygamy was becoming an increasingly public affair.<sup>27</sup> Although Jorgensen may have overstated the situation when he wrote that early Cutlerites possessed an "intimate, detailed directly experiential knowledge" of plural marriage, their associations make it unlikely that many of Cutler's followers needed Cutler to introduce them to plural marriage, as they would have already learned of the practice either by rumor or by personal experience with the rest of the Brighamites.<sup>28</sup>

Further, there were several Cutlerites with relatives who practiced plural marriage either in Nauvoo or later in Utah. In most cases these were female relations polygamously married to men who continued to accept the leadership of the twelve apostles. There were also at least two additional male polygamists related to the community. Chauncy Whiting, Alpheus Cutler's eventual successor, was never a polygamist, but his brother Edwin Whiting was sealed to three women in the Nauvoo Temple.<sup>29</sup> One of Edwin's wives also had ties to the community. Mary Elizabeth Cox Whiting's brother, Amos Cox, would also become a Cutlerite. In fact, three of Amos's siblings were polygamists and his own father-in-law had been sealed to eight women in the Nauvoo Temple.<sup>30</sup> Finally, Calvin Beebe, who would act as the branch president of the Farm Creek Branch of Cutlerites, performed plural marriages in the Nauvoo temple.

The proto-Cutlerites were also aware of Alpheus Cutler's and F. Walter Cox's practice of plural marriage. As will be shown, Cox

made very little effort to conceal his polygamous status. Of course, asserting that all Cutlerites knew about Cutler's polygamy would be a dangerous assumption. It is possible that knowledge of Cutler's relationships were only shared with the community's elites, a practice that would have had a strong precedent in 1840s Nauvoo.

However, it is evident that there were those who knew detailed information about Cutler's marriages. Iva Gould, a Cutlerite descendant who belonged to the RLDS faith, recorded her experience of probing her parents and grandparents for information concerning polygamy. In an undated (twentieth-century) letter, she wrote:

I asked my folks some of the questions about the Cutlerites that you asked yesterday. They said it was common belief in the early days that Alpheus Cutler had been a polygamist, though the present generation of Cutlerites deny it. My father said that at one time on a short journey he stopped at the home of Mrs. [Luana Beebe] Boyd who told him she was one of the wives of Alpheus Cutler, that she had been a poor girl without relatives to care for her and Cutler told her if she would be sealed to him he would support her.

On reaching home my father asked my grandfather, Francis Lewis Whiting, a brother of Chauncey Whiting, if it was true that Father Cutler had more than one wife. He answered reluctantly, "I suppose it is true that he had three wives." And when I asked if Mrs. Boyd was one of them, he said, "Yes, I suppose she was." He was a staunch Cutlerite and did not like to admit it but was too honest to deny it. My grandmother then said that Father Cutler got rid of his wives before he started the church, that he took one of them on a mission to the Indians and she died there. Another he gave away to a man who wanted to marry her.<sup>31</sup>

This is a crucial source mainly because it is the only record—although secondhand—from a first-generation Cutlerite affirming Cutler's polygamous status. For such a late document, it is surprisingly accurate. The three wives spoken of would have included the three who remained with Cutler in Iowa: Lois Cutler, Cutler's public spouse; Luana Hart Beebe, who remarried with Cutler's apparent consent; and Henrietta Clarinda Miller, who died around 1851, during the Cutlerites' Native American mission.<sup>32</sup>

### **“Alpheus Cutler Decided to Put Away His Plural Wives”**

By 1851, the man who had once had seven women sealed to

him in the Nauvoo Temple had completely abandoned the practice. When a pair of Brighamite missionaries returned to Utah from Clitherall, Minnesota, in the 1880s, they noted their surprise that the Cutlerite community denied that “Joseph Smith ever taught or practiced plural marriage.” A report of their experience, published in the *Deseret News*, stated that “Cutler himself had three wives before he left the Church, two of whom he abandoned on leaving.”<sup>33</sup> These missionaries had left Clitherall with the understanding that Cutler had left his wives when he *left the Church*. So far as I have been able to ascertain, this is the only time a reason—Cutler’s excommunication—was assigned, if only by implication, to the ending of Cutler’s polygamous lifestyle.

The first historical study to address how Alpheus Cutler became a monogamist was Clare B. Christensen’s self-published history, *Before and After Mt. Pisgah*. Christensen notes that in 1851, Mills County, Iowa, instituted a new piece of anti-polygamy legislation, which resulted in F. Walter Cox’s arrest. In reaction to the threat of incarceration, he reached a compromise with the courts that he and his wives would move from Iowa. Although Christensen does not cite his sources, he explains that Cutler also faced charges from the county. In Christensen’s words:

Alpheus Cutler was 67 years old. Life was not easy for him. He was a stone mason in a land where there was little stone to build with. Confronted with problems from the law, Alpheus decided to put away his plural wives. Not knowing what else to do, at least two of his wives although disowned, continued to live as part of the community.<sup>34</sup>

Subsequent historians followed Christensen’s explanation—often citing his statement that Cutler “put away his plural wives.” Unfortunately, the current narrative as promoted in Biloine Young’s *Obscure Believers* goes so far as to suggest that the dissolution of Cutler’s marriages occurred abruptly and cruelly in 1851. Young writes:

Like Abraham sending Hagar into the wilderness, Cutler, with a single pronouncement, cast off the five women he had pledged to support and protect. There is no mention of where the five found the basic necessities of food and shelter, who befriended them or how they managed to survive. Four of Cutler’s five plural wives simply disappear from Cutlerite history as if they had never existed.<sup>35</sup>

Young's narrative is based solely on her reading of Christensen, particularly her interpretation of the twentieth-century historian's words "put away."

We will arrive at a better understanding of the events that led up to the end of these six marriages over the course of five years, if we place them in their proper historical context. First, it should be remembered that only three wives accompanied Cutler to the Indian mission and, thus, we should be very open to the fact that four women may have already ceased to see themselves as Cutler's wives. The fate of the two remaining plural wives is discussed in Iva Gould's account above. If any wives were "put away," it was likely only Luana, whom Cutler arranged to be remarried to one of his followers. While the annulment of Cutler's marriage to Luana may have signaled the end of polygamy for the community, it is also helpful to examine the fate of his four other sealings.

Cutler's Nauvoo temple sealings were performed in two parts: first, the (re-)sealings of his first wife and Luana Hart Beebe occurred on January 14, 1846, followed in February by his sealings to Margaret Carr, Abigail Carr, Sally Cox, Disedy Caroline McCall, and Henrietta Clarinda Miller. Because these five women were not present for the ceremony to be performed in January, it seems likely that they made the decision to be sealed to Cutler sometime during those three weeks.

What we know about polygamy in this period suggests that such speedy courtships were far from an anomaly. The zeal to perform temple ceremonies during the three months in which the Nauvoo temple was available meant that many relationships were arranged with very short notice. Even monogamous arrangements were brought together on short notice in order to assure one's access to the rituals. Mosiah Hancock, who was only eleven at the time, was sealed to a twelve-year-old girl and later remembered that the couple was instructed "not to live together as man and wife until we were 16 years of age." He explained, "The reason that some were sealed so young was because we knew that we would have to go West and wait many a long time for another temple."<sup>36</sup>

What was the motivation for such speedy courtships? With less emphasis on romantic love and more emphasis on the salvific basis of such unions, historian Lawrence Foster notes that women

sought “status and relationships in the afterlife,” as well as economic support for the impending excursion westward.<sup>37</sup> This perspective helps explain why four of Cutler’s marriages did not endure. According to the Iva Gould statement, Luana Hart Beebe cited her own poverty as her motivation, and Cutler’s promise that “if she would be sealed to him he would support her” was a prime factor for the union.<sup>38</sup> Yet if temporal welfare was the draw for the thirty-one-year-old Luana, who was recently divorced with five children, others may have been attracted by the salvific component of a ritualistic relationship. Luana’s marriage was, of course, unique. She had been Cutler’s wife for several months by the time she was sealed in the Nauvoo temple. The ceremony re-performed there certainly came with the assumption that a literal familial relationship would continue.

Although it has been debated, age does seem to have played a role in whether relationships arranged and ritually sealed in Nauvoo would lead to a typical marital relationship thereafter. This largely had to do with another motivation for plural marriage, sexual reproduction. The five women who were sealed to Alpheus Cutler on February 3, 1846, ranged in age widely: 74, 65, 51, 43, and 23 respectively. It was only the youngest, Henrietta, who remained with Cutler until her death in 1851. At the age of twenty-three, it would have likely been expected that the union would produce children.

The difficulty of maintaining these Nauvoo temple marriages was felt by those who traveled to Utah as well. Cutler’s son-in-law, Heber C. Kimball, was a prime example. According to Fanny Stenhouse’s popular exposé, Kimball had once stated (for effect, no doubt) that besides the wives he had in Salt Lake City, he also had “about fifty more scattered over the earth somewhere. I have never seen them since they were sealed to me in Nauvoo, and I hope I shall never see them again.”<sup>39</sup> Although Kimball, in actuality, did not have fifty estranged ex-wives, he did have ten of these Nauvoo temple marriages annulled with an additional “six [wives who] are unaccounted for after the move West.” His biographer has attributed this lacuna to “the unusual [i.e. salvific] and pragmatic [i.e. economic] nature of these marriages.”<sup>40</sup>

In any case, rather than “a single pronouncement” made in



1851, we should see Cutler's polygamous relationships, like many others begun in Nauvoo and certainly those established during the winter of 1845–1846, as tenuous from the start. By 1848, he seems to have already gone from seven wives to three. These relationships were entered into with a spirit of zeal that, with the exception of Luana and Henrietta, ended perhaps as quickly as it had begun.

The new legislation that outlawed polygamy should not be seen as the single cause behind Cutler giving up polygamy. After all, Cutler could have followed F. Walter Cox's example, relocated, and preserved his wives. Rather, Cutler's decision to end his relationship with Luana Hart Beebe may have been justified by a new piece of legislation, but likely reflects his own personal aversion to plural marriage.

Cutler's lived experience likely played a role in his growing distaste for plural marriage. A great deal had occurred since he had knelt at the Nauvoo Temple's altar. There were the broken marriages of his two daughters and their husband, Heber C. Kimball, who had left to participate in the trek west.<sup>41</sup> Both women had remarried in 1849. Although we don't know the details of Cutler's life as a polygamist, simply by numerical calculations, he may have felt like a failure in the new system. Four of his wives had not accompanied him to Silver Creek. And if the impossibility of a successful polygamous lifestyle wasn't enough, the cholera epidemic had robbed him of Emily, Clarissa, and his youngest wife.

It was a combination of both internal and external pressures that mounted to cause Alpheus Cutler to "put away" plural marriage. By 1851, Alpheus Cutler was a monogamist and two years later formed a monogamous church. One first-generation Cutlerite, Sylvester J. Whiting, a half of a century removed, claimed that "After Father Cutler reorganized the church in 1853 he, by the authority of the holy priesthood, vetoed polygamy till the coming of Christ. . . . Anyone who says Father Cutler ever sanctioned, upheld, or practiced polygamy," he continued, "are ignorant, unlearned, dishonest, or deceived, for they took false reports for facts, not knowing the truth."<sup>42</sup> Although Whiting was himself mistaken, or perhaps even lied about Cutler's marital status, there

is no evidence to suggest that polygamy continued into the Church of Jesus Christ once the new organization was formed.

In fact, it should be noted that there is no evidence that any plural marriages were formed amongst those who became Cutlerites following the Nauvoo Temple period. There is also no contemporary record to suggest that Alpheus Cutler ever taught plural marriage. For this reason, the brief interaction with plural marriage could and would be quite easily seen by first-generation Cutlerites as an unfortunate aftermath of the Nauvoo temple experience.

### **Enforced Silence in Manti, Iowa, 1853–1864**

In September of 1853, in the newly organized town of Manti, Iowa, Alpheus Cutler looked into the sky to see two half-moons with their backs to one another. His followers later believed that Cutler had been awaiting this sign since 1844, when Joseph Smith had told him that the manifestation would one day appear. It was at this time that Cutler should re-organize the church. On September 19, 1853, the Church of Jesus Christ officially came into existence.

Of course, it is not as if a new people was entirely created on that day. There was a direct continuation between the Cutlerites' theology previous to 1853 and the theology that emerged afterward. However, the moment was sacralized for the growing body of rebaptized Cutlerites. If before they had coalesced around their (now-abandoned) mission to the Native Americans, they could now coalesce around the effort to build the church organization and see themselves as completely independent from their Brighamite critics.

Because of this event, it became possible for Cutlerites to conceptualize their community as beginning in 1853 and thus unmoored by the disturbing memories of the past decade. Their collective memory could theoretically start afresh on the date that also featured the membership's rebaptism. The earlier period was no longer relevant, as made clear by the symbols of renewal. The suspicion that references to the polygamous past of the community have been "scrubbed" from the church minutes and other records during this period may hold some truth. What is unmistakable is that the records unintentionally reveal how the Cutler-

ites themselves developed a taboo forbidding any discussion of this most controversial element of their history. A controversy that occurred in May and June of 1863 poignantly demonstrates this process.

On May 17, 1863, Joseph Fletcher spoke during the morning session of a church conference. The minutes state simply, "A few words by Father Fletcher," not recording what the subject of Fletcher's sermon was. According to the record of the afternoon session, Fletcher spoke again and "occupied the time upon the subject spoke of in the forepart of the day and closed." F. Lewis Whiting spoke next and suggested that instead of preaching, they should hold a prayer meeting. The minutes conclude that "it was thought advisable so to do."<sup>43</sup>

The following month, on June 28, 1863, Fletcher took the stand again during a service. He complained that the church had taken away his privilege to preach. According to the minutes, "he was told that it was not so, it was only that particular subject relative plurality." Fletcher persisted that he "had a right to preach on what subject he pleased, and if he could not have the privilege here he would go into the world where he could have the privilege, and still persisted in preaching that or nothing." The congregation's president, Almon W. Sherman, who was also the son-in-law of Alpheus Cutler, argued that he "did not consider in that thing, that [Fletcher] was actuated by the spirit of the Lord." However, he suggested that the only way to move forward was for the two to "lay the matter before Father Cutler, and let him decide." The congregation voted unanimously for this resolution and the meeting immediately closed. The minutes conclude with an emended postscript: "The matter above mentioned was settled. Father Cutler decided that it was not wisdom to meddle with that subject, so the matter was dropped."<sup>44</sup>

We do not know from what vantage point Joseph Fletcher approached his preaching on plural marriage; however, it was apparent that the church members agreed that it should not be discussed. And, more importantly, it was apparent that Alpheus Cutler forbade it himself.

Memory was carefully and institutionally regulated. The effort to mute the past seems to have functioned as a means of avoidance. Cutler and his followers experienced real trauma in their encoun-

ter with plural marriage. By discouraging public discussion, they ensured that the practice, along with its accompanying pain and angst, was not confronted and relived by the community.

Yet the decision to suspend the practice and place the conversation on hold may have only been conceived of as a temporary solution to their difficulties. Sylvester Whiting's statement that Alpheus Cutler "by the authority of the holy priesthood, vetoed polygamy till the coming of Christ" suggests that the Cutlerites saw the decision to suspend the practice (and their conversation of it) in light of their millenarian expectations. In other words, because Alpheus Cutler was God's representative on Earth he held the authority necessary to lay aside the issue of plural marriage until Christ would appear to deal with it for them—both in reference to the laws of the state and the burden of the practice itself. Similarly, in the Brighamite experience, historian Dan Erikson has suggested that the belief that the second coming was imminent may have played a role in the widespread support for the LDS Church's issuing of the 1890 Manifesto.<sup>45</sup>

Efforts to control social memory—to force forgetting, as in the case of the 1850s Cutlerites—frequently prove a much more difficult task than institutions would hope to be the case. Avery F. Gordon's *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* looks at these attempts to cover the past and their frequent futility. She describes her project in the following words:

I used the term *haunting* to describe those singular yet repetitive instances when home becomes unfamiliar, when your bearings on the world lose direction, when the over-and-done-with comes alive, when what's been in your blind spot comes into view. Haunting raises specters, and it alters the experience of being in time, the way we separate the past, the present, and the future. These specters or ghosts appear when the trouble they represent and symptomize is no longer being contained or repressed or blocked from view.<sup>46</sup>

As much as the silence benefitted the church, one thing is certain: an absence of discussion did not mean that the community had forgotten about plural marriage. There were plenty of remaining specters who were all too visible. There was Joseph Fletcher, but also the Brighamites and Josephites who refused to obey the community's rule. Unfortunately for the Cutlerites, there were also two not-so-subtle reminders of their own polyga-

mous roots remaining in the community: the progeny of Heber C. Kimball and his two wives, Emily and Clarissa Cutler. The community coped by insulting the youths, referring to them by well-known polygamist names such as Brigham or Heber. In the words of Abram Alonzo Kimball, the son of Heber and Emily:

My brother and I were repeatedly ill-treated by Uncle's family and were continually persecuted and called names for being polygamy children in order to tantalize us. The men of the family would call us "Bastard", "Brigham", "Heber", etc. and on the slightest provocation they would threaten to send us to Utah, telling us that the Mormons would soon settle us.<sup>47</sup>

Further evidence that the topic was off-limits was that although Abram knew he was the son of a Utah polygamist, he was not sure which of the well-known church leaders had once been married to his mother.<sup>48</sup> Thus, the Kimball children were raised in a similar fashion to Cutler's own polygamous children, who were also unaware of their parentage.

In later years, as Cutlerites began to speak about polygamy, they still maintained their hesitance to discuss Cutler's wives. As Iva Gould's father intuited that the "staunch Cutlerite," Francis Lewis Whiting, "did not like to admit it," the anxiety felt over offering this disturbing and privileged information was high. The silence resulted in the second generation and those not in the know holding onto a "common belief" that Cutler was once a polygamist. These rumors were discouraged and did not continue for long. Because collective memory must be preserved and memorialized in order to endure, in time, the enforced silence resulted in a legitimate forgetting. As sociologist Paul Connerton noted, when dealing with "collusive silence brought on by a particular kind of collective shame there is detectable both a desire to forget and sometimes the actual effect of forgetting."<sup>49</sup> The taboo did not serve as it may have been intended—as a temporary solution to cognitive dissonance—but as an implicit, enduring rejection of plural marriage. This is not to say that specters of polygamy would rest for long.

### **The Clitherall, Minnesota, Period, 1864–1902**

With the death of Alpheus Cutler, the Church entered a tenuous period in which the sect's leadership worried over their ability

to maintain the organization. In their effort to regain their equilibrium, the Cutlerites decided that the first step was to abandon Manti, Iowa. Their relocation was designed to place geographic distance from the RLDS ministry and the ex-Cutlerites who had joined their ranks. But equally important was for the Cutlerites to forge and strengthen their communal identity through pushing against their competitors. On one hand, this meant defining themselves against the Josephites—namely, the Josephites’ rejection of Joseph Smith’s Nauvoo ritual system. On the other hand, this meant defining themselves against the Brighamites by breaking their silence on plural marriage.

In addition to their own internal anxieties over plural marriage, which were intensified by their interactions with RLDS and LDS ministers, during this period the Cutlerites were also affected by and reacting to two overlapping discourses. First, they were a captive audience and later minor actors in the conflict between Josephites and Brighamites over whether it was Joseph Smith or Brigham Young who first instituted plural marriage. Second, during a period of intense national attention on the Utah territory, they felt the burden of being seen as closet Brighamites. Both of these discussions encouraged the Cutlerites to break the previous taboo against speaking about polygamy; the latter even encouraged them to bring their voices into the public square.

Concerning the first discourse, the early Cutlerites quickly embraced the idea that Brigham Young, rather than Joseph Smith, had instituted plural marriage—an idea principally although not exclusively promoted by the Reorganization. The tentativeness of this approach was revealed as Brighamites undertook an effort to collect various affidavits from those involved in Nauvoo polygamy, including Smith’s numerous widows. It was after becoming familiar with a heated exchange between Lyman O. Littlefield, a popular Mormon author, and Joseph Smith III that Sylvester Whiting sought his sister’s opinions on the matter.

Several Cutlerites had maintained correspondence with their relatives. Letters from Chauncey and Sylvester Whiting to their Brighamite relatives included frequent references to religious matters—often with an effort to justify their decision to follow Alpheus Cutler. They did not, however, turn to these apostate kin

for help in understanding spiritual matters. It was a last resort when, in 1886, Sylvester Whiting drafted a letter to his sister, Emmeline Cox, the plural wife of F. Walter Cox. Just as he had never sought her advice before, he had also never discussed with her the intricacies of polygamy. He penned:

I should like to ask your opinion in regard to when and who started polygamy as there is such a dispute between the Josephites and the Utah Mormons on that question. I see in L. O. Littlefield's statements that some 8 or 10 women testify that they were sealed to Joseph or Hyrum as his wives and I have heard Cordelia Morley was sealed to Joseph before she was to Walter. I wish you would ask her and then tell me if it [is] so and what your opinion is in such an order of things. Confidentially I am not prepared to say that there is not such an order of some kind or other. Of course I can't see how there could be and not conflict with the law.<sup>50</sup>

The rumors were true. Cordelia Morley, Emmeline's sister wife, had in fact been sealed to Joseph Smith for eternity, with her future husband, F. Walter Cox, standing as Smith's proxy. Afterwards, Cox and Morley were married for mortality. Cordelia's story is an interesting one. She had rebuffed a proposal from Joseph Smith in the spring of 1844, but had reconsidered at the insistence of her intended husband.<sup>51</sup> Whether Emmeline responded to her brother's plea is unknown. Appealing to the views of a backsliding sister suggests the urgency of Whiting's desperation, but his request for confidentiality about his own questions is perhaps the most revealing. It demonstrates the anxiety experienced by someone who was publically opposed to polygamy while at the same time harboring doubts as to the correctness of his position. It was clearly not an acceptable position to entertain the possibility of the existence of "such an order of some kind or other."

Whiting's comments also reveal the extent of Cutlerite knowledge. It is unlikely that Whiting did not know about Cutler's marriages, despite later denials. But his questioning was not directed as to whether Cutler was once a polygamist—he knew better—but whether Joseph Smith or Brigham Young had introduced the practice. Because Cutler did not marry his second wife, Luana Hart Beebe, until after Smith's death, it may have been thought (perhaps accurately) that Cutler was influenced by the apos-



ties—likely Heber C. Kimball, who not only married two of Cutler’s daughters but who also performed the ceremony between Cutler and Beebe.

Whiting’s letter presents a rare moment of honesty expressing his own uncertainty about the subject of plural marriage. He was not expressing the party line. Like Joseph Fletcher’s attempt to break the rule of silence in the 1853–1864 period, this letter reflects a typical rupture in institutionally directed forgetting—another specter come to the surface and a symptom of a broader anxiety likely not captured in the historical record. A community experiences genuine cognitive dissonance when new narratives are introduced that seemingly contradict known events. Memories of polygamy preserved through rumors or gossip about who was involved haunted the Cutlerites. The ghostly hand of the Josephite missionaries inflated these concerns, but the RLDS church also offered new ways to conceptualize the past that the Cutlerites found appealing.

The Josephite campaign against plural marriage seems to have aided the Cutlerites in their effort to find an acceptable history. The aversion to discussing plural marriage was initially founded upon the awareness that Cutler (as well as other close friends and relatives) had been polygamists, and furthered by the community’s uncertainty over who had begun the practice in the first place. However, with the decision made that the blame should rightfully be ascribed to Brigham Young, a response to polygamy could be offered. Perhaps there were other Cutlerites who, like Whiting, confidentially continued to question their absolute disavowal of polygamy, but the public face of the movement was one of absolute certainty. As historian David Lowenthal stated, “the most vividly remembered scenes and events are often those which were for a time forgotten.”<sup>52</sup>

During the intense period of national interest in the “Mormon Question,” the Cutlerites worked to publically distinguish themselves from the Brighamites, who naturally, based on their size, dominated the nation’s impression of Mormonism. Chancey Whiting, serving as the church’s president and public spokesperson, responded. In an 1885 article he wrote in response to questions from the local *Fergus Falls Journal*, he inserted the entire

length of Doctrine and Covenants section 111, setting forth the pre-Nauvoo monogamous policies of the Church. At this time, Whiting also attributed the break with the Brighamites to the issue of polygamy. “And now, under these considerations, and being assured that we had no need to break the laws of the land to keep the laws of God, we could not fellowship with or follow a people who encouraged or practiced such things.” He assured the readers of the newspaper that “some of the Salt Lake elders say that our little society is among the hardest opposers to the polygamy question of any people that they had conversed with.”<sup>53</sup>

In 1889, Chauncey Whiting inferred from an article published in the *Minneapolis Tribune* concerning the Mormon Question that “by all appearance a large portion of the censure, was intended to reflect heavily upon the society commonly known as the Old Clitherall Mormons, or Cutlerites.” He noted that

the polygamy question [was] so carefully noticed as to lead the people [to believe] that the Clitherall Mormons are believers in, and practicing the doctrine on the sly seems almost too simple for any thinking mind to brook, and more especially as we are living in the heart of civilization, and surrounded with respectable and intelligent inhabitance, who have eyes to see, and ears to hear, and hearts to understand, and where law and justice can be administered to the guilty according to the criminality of the offense.<sup>54</sup>

He further explained his continued exasperation that despite numerous responses to regional newspapers, confusion still existed over their stance on polygamy.

Nevertheless, I will again affirm that this people are not guilty of the crime, neither are they believers in the doctrine. Hence with all boldness and clear conscience we denounce polygamy, with all its kindred evils, not only to the outside world (as accused) but to the inside church (if I may speak) in the most strenuous emphatic terms.<sup>55</sup>

Journalists painted the Cutlerites with a Brighamite brush. Whiting’s response strategy was to distance the small sect from any and all Brighamite associations. His ongoing assurances that Mormonism should not be equated with polygamy took on many forms. Most importantly, it included the construction of an origin story in which a rejection of plural marriage was the cause behind the Church of Jesus Christ’s founding. Cutlerites were “among

the hardest opposers to the polygamy question”—just ask the Brighamites. He also used the language of morality commonly employed against Mormon polygamy, referring to “polygamy, with all its kindred evils”—evils that Whiting expected his audience to already know. Furthermore, he employed the language of law. Polygamy was a crime and Cutlerites would not fellowship with criminals.

The general refusal to acknowledge the Cutlerite story was particularly aggravating for Whiting. He appealed to common sense: how could they conceal their plural marriages while “living in the heart of civilization”? His rhetorical strategy of disavowing polygamy to both “the outside world” and the “inside church” assured them that he was not involved in a strategy of doublespeak. Yet the Cutlerites continued to feel that their own versions of events were ignored. It was likely this grievance that caused Chauncy Whiting to proclaim in an 1889 church meeting that he “did not know of any one [in Clitherall] that advocated polygamy.”<sup>56</sup>

The portrayal of the Cutlerites as part and parcel of a monolithic, polygamous Mormonism frustrated the sect’s efforts to define itself. As a result, the Cutlerites felt pressure to clarify their identity, a process that occurred not only in the public forum but also through everyday encounters with outsiders. Despite their attempt to geographically distance themselves from other forms of Mormonism, Cutlerites continued to have periodic visitors from both the LDS and RLDS faiths—visitors who were both a threat and a blessing to the community’s future.

The most obvious example of this can be seen in the direct criticism of the Brighamites. Humor such as that employed in reference to Abram and his brother, Isaac, was also used to deflect the efforts of LDS missionaries to the community. On April 12, 1885, a meeting was held in which the Cutlerites discussed their treatment of other Restoration churches: specifically, the council discussed “our often speaking in a joking way of having more than one wife and of calling their preachers nicknames, etc.” The Council concluded “that all these things were wrong and must be stopped as they were apt to hurt feelings and lead the wrong way, etc.”<sup>57</sup>

Of course, we should not read this effort to encourage politically correct language as a sign of a new ecumenical approach. This was designed to prevent direct conflict between the communities—conflict which was closer to the surface at some times than at others. In private meetings, the Cutlerites did not mix words in reference to the Brighamites. In a meeting held on July 10, 1886, the Cutlerite council discussed its decision to deny a Utah elder's request to preach in the church's meeting house. According to F. L. Whiting, this decision was made "as they viewed the Utah church to be the highest class of adulterers and whoremongers of any religious church on the face of the earth." He was followed by Warren Whiting, who commented that "there was not one word in the bible to prove polygamy." Finally, Chancey Whiting, Cutler's successor in the church presidency, stated that "he did not fellowship either the Josephite, or the Utah Church, and did not know of any one here that advocated polygamy."<sup>58</sup>

Despite their opposition to the licentious practices of the Brighamites, Cutlerites had a much more volatile relationship with members of the RLDS organization. Like journalists who portrayed the Cutlerites as crypto-polygamists, Cutlerites saw the RLDS as working diligently to contradict their community's telling of its own history. RLDS refusal to accept the Cutlerite denial of involvement in plural marriage was only one example of this tendency. During the lifetime of Alpheus Cutler, RLDS missionaries questioned Cutler's claim to be a member of a group of seven men invested with sacerdotal authority, arguing that it was only a committee to discuss political affairs. Perhaps most threatening was the claim by former Cutlerites that Alpheus Cutler had initially prophesied that Joseph Smith III would succeed his father. Based on this telling of the Cutlerite past, RLDS apostle T. W. Smith argued that the church in Clitherall should be referred to as the "Whiting faction, for they are not Cutlerites any more than Josephites, i.e., do not keep Cutler's teachings any more than they do Joseph Smith's."<sup>59</sup>

Although there are few overt references to Cutlerite polygamy from RLDS sources during this period, there is evidence to suggest that there was a sense that the organization had been tainted by its polygamous past or perhaps its polygamous present. Former Cutlerites, such as Iva Gould, came with stories passed down

from the early days in Nauvoo and Silver Creek. One Cutlerite noted that the Josephites frequently claimed that “the quorum” involved with the sect’s upper room work taught “immorality.”<sup>60</sup>

The ongoing suspicion erupted into a controversy following the conversion of Wheeler Baldwin, a former Cutlerite, to the RLDS Church. The church had instituted a policy that recognized baptisms performed previous to the death of Joseph Smith, if and only if the individual did not lend his support to the practice of polygamy. Wheeler Baldwin had been baptized in 1831 and thus would have qualified; however, members of the Reorganization, including apostle Charles Derry, objected post-facto based on their suspicions that Baldwin had become embroiled in polygamy while a member of the Church of Jesus Christ.

On August 14, 1863, Joseph Smith III penned a letter to Derry in response to the situation:

I am sorry that you meet with so much confusion and contention, but much of it, almost all is so very uncalled for, and growing out of a mistaken notion that every man is in duty bound to rectify the evils he sees in his brother, regardless of his own, so he sets about it and loses his time and throws both into the grasp of the evil one, and no good is done to either. They who caul at Bro. W. Baldwin’s authority and standing, if busied about the making of their own election sure, would have little time to find fault, and indeed would find less cause to do it. Bro. B. is an old member of the church, has never been legally disposed [sic] of his membership, and when with the Cutlerites supposed they were the only ones striving for the Kingdom, and if in his manner he strayed into acknowledging polygamy, his connections with us is a renouncement of that eror, if he was guilty which I do not believe, and behind that recaption no man can legally go, for in it we burry [sic] the past and do misdeed.<sup>61</sup>

Joseph III’s willingness to give the Cutlerites the benefit of the doubt over polygamy influenced references to the community that found their way into print. This did not, however, mean that the associations were entirely repressed; they would appear periodically in Josephite literature.

Cutlerites necessarily defined themselves against both Josephites and Brighamites in the nineteenth century, as they do in the present. The strategy employed differed depending on the front. Pushing against the Brighamites took shape in public and private opposition, sometimes including intolerant rhetoric. Yet, for all

the repugnance Cutlerites felt against the Latter-day Saints, it was the Josephites whom they saw as their own persecutors. As Terry Givens has pointed out, a sense of “persecution more often serves to strengthen resolve than to stifle it.”<sup>62</sup> We should think of these processes of identity formation, of course, as a movement attempting to preserve its vulnerable membership rolls, but also as a means to alleviate the cognitive dissonance of multiple histories of the past.

### **Theological Consequences for the Late Nineteenth Century**

On March 10, 1844, Joseph Smith publically taught the idea of familial sealings, using Alpheus Cutler as a hypothetical example.

Let us suppose a case; suppose the great God who dwells in heaven should reveal himself to Father Cutler here by the opening heavens and tell him I offer up a decree that whatsoever you seal on earth with your decree I will seal it in heaven, you have power then, can it be taken off No, Then what you seal on earth by the Keys of Elijah is sealed in heaven, & this is the power of Elijah.<sup>63</sup>

A decade later, early Cutlerites accepted—if they did not embrace—the concept that there were rites that when performed by priesthood authority would enable the family unit to endure beyond death. Jorgensen has pointed to the sect’s patriarchal blessings for relics of this belief. For example, one blessing states that the recipient and her husband will be “sealed together that no power of earth or hell can separate you in time or in eternity.”<sup>64</sup> We can also find oblique references to the concept in the minutes of Cutlerite meetings. For example, one Cutlerite assured his estranged spouse that she would belong to him in the hereafter.

Within thirty years of Alpheus Cutler’s death, however, marital or other familial sealings were no longer a component of Cutlerite teachings. Although refutations of such sealings would not appear until the mid-twentieth century, the second Cutlerite prophet, Chancey Whiting, did not place much stock in the idea. At the death of his wife, he wrote to Brighamite relatives that “Perhaps the Lord called h[e]r home to dwell with h[e]r dear children who had gone before h[e]r. Of these matters however I will not decide but leave it for Him whose right it is to judge.”<sup>65</sup> The following year, he drafted another letter:

I suppose that there is a great many who comfort themselves with a view that after death they will meet, and enjoy the society of their friends and loved ones in a bright, beautiful and glorious mansion on high, and that too in the presence of the Lord of life and glory. . . . Could I know that with my relation and friends I would be more at peace and rest.<sup>66</sup>

The demise of the ideas of eternal marriage occurred in parcel with and perhaps as a result of the church's rejection of plural marriage. Although these concepts were not always presented in tandem by Joseph Smith and were eventually parsed out in twentieth-century LDS theology, their nineteenth-century predecessors came to believe that the endurance of monogamous marriages was based on the condition of contracting a second marriage. This connection may have engendered a sense that suspending one idea—plural marriage—meant suspending the other, eternal marriage.

In addition, the performance of sealing ceremonies held an inevitable potential for at least the existence of theological or ritual plurality. For when a widower was sealed to his second spouse, he was in effect becoming a polygamist—if only in the religious imagination.

Finally, we should note that it is likely not a coincidence that Chauncy Whiting's verbalized doubts about eternal marriage occurred during a time period in which plural marriage was being openly criticized and rebuffed. In other words, it seems likely that the era of silence set aside the discussion of eternal marriage as well as polygamy. When the matter was first discussed in the 1880s, three things had changed. First, the Cutlerites had come to accept the Josephite narrative for the origins of polygamy; second, Alpheus Cutler had died; and third, they had lost a collective memory preserving Smith's teachings on the matter. This is not to say that first-generation Cutlerites had forgotten that sealings took place. They hadn't, but the importance for their own story had been discarded. As a result, the practice could perhaps be questioned as an appendage to the overall criticisms of plural marriage, and in the next generation was entirely rejected. In 2002, Stanley Whiting pointed me to the twenty-second chapter of the Gospel of Saint Matthew, in which it stated that "in the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage;



they will be like the angels in heaven” (Matthew 22:30). Like plural marriage, sealing had become a matter set apart for contest.

Changes in how one aspect of the past is remembered can have large effects on other related matters. The historian David Lowenthal commented, “To exorcise bygone corruptions even one’s own treasured relics may have to be destroyed.”<sup>67</sup> Such was the case with the doctrine of eternal marriage.

### **Writing History in the Twentieth Century**

In the twentieth century, Cutlerites have continued to define themselves against the Brighamite practice of polygamy, even after the Brighamites themselves rescinded the practice. With the Cutlerite renewal of 1910, there were a number of statements offered to explain that even the founding of the institution was fundamentally anti-polygamous. It was at this time that Sylvester Whiting first issued the idea that “by that authority [of the Kingdom] Father Cutler vetoed the doctrine of plural wives or polygamy until the coming of Christ.”<sup>68</sup> The new narrative colored the story of the Cutlerites, as related in a local history published in 1916. According to the non-Cutlerite author, following the martyrdom, “those who rejected the polygamous doctrine of Young separated from him and chose as their leader one Cutler.”<sup>69</sup> Finally, during this era, the Cutlerites were able to insert their voice effectively into the public forum, if only on a regional level.

The new meetings continued with various statements against polygamy. For example, on October 2, 1910, Isaac Whiting “said polygamy is of the devil for it is contrary to the law of God.”<sup>70</sup> Such statements would have been at home in an earlier era, but the renewal brought in additional ideas, often drawing on the Brighamite hierarchy as stock villains who had among other things sought to kill Alpheus Cutler via poisoning.<sup>71</sup> The renewal of the church occurring alongside a renewal and intensification of anti-Brighamite discourses appears as a tool to aid in the ever-dwindling community’s retrenchment.

In the succeeding decades, as the body of the Cutlerites came to be predominately located in the Independence area, they found themselves as part of a multi-denominational landscape built around the Temple Lot. As a result, it became increasingly important to explain who they were in the face of so many peoples

sharing competing stories. During this period, the Cutlerites began to publish their own writings and to communicate with other sects.

The trope of the intentionally dishonest and scheming Brighamites continued as an essential part of the Cutlerite story during this period, as evidenced by the first full-length public church history, *Alpheus Cutler and the Church of Jesus Christ*, written by Rupert J. Fletcher, then president of the church, and his wife, Daisey Fletcher. Of most importance, the Fletchers wrote:

Shortly after assuming the new roles of leadership some of these men began collecting as many as possible of the historical records of the church, journals of the elders, minutes of the conferences, and council meetings, etc. Soon they were busily engaged in correcting, revising, and editing all that came into their hands. In many cases the records were deliberately altered to conform to new doctrines and practices not taught in the church before. Others were suppressed or destroyed, so the true story of all that happened in Nauvoo may never be known.<sup>72</sup>

Commenting on the apparent success of the apostles, they noted that “beneath the surface there lurked evils that were bound to erupt into conflict sooner or later. The moral structure of the church was being undermined.”<sup>73</sup>

This telling of the story explains why there were nineteenth-century documents that suggested both Joseph Smith and Alpheus Cutler were polygamists. Viewed in one light, the accusation made little sense—not because early Brighamites wouldn’t have altered records when preparing publications, for example—but from the Brighamite point of view the idea that Cutler was a polygamist was a compliment. Cutler’s marriages were not portrayed as illicit in the sources, but as legitimately sealed in the temple by Heber C. Kimball and Parley P. Pratt, both highly respected apostles in the church’s hierarchy. In another light, the portrait is of Brigham Young deliberately introducing corruption, knowing full well the sinister nature of his plan and finding it necessary to trump up evidence against those that might try to question or expose him. The image is a vibrant one. The charge against the early Brighamite hierarchy is designed to vindicate Smith and Cutler, but it also implicitly continues a more subtle argument—that the

Cutlerite reading of the past is correct and untainted. This conversation has naturally continued into the present.

This revisionist perspective also influenced how Cutlerites came to relate to Mormon scholarship in the latter part of the twentieth century. Indeed, Mormon historians are a part of Mormon history, a fact that is clearly evidenced in the past twenty-five years of the Cutlerite experience. If for a time the Cutlerites were almost ignored by the scholarly community, with the rise of new Mormon history the Church of Jesus Christ became a frequent example in the work of such LDS historians as D. Michael Quinn and Richard Bennett, as well as the focus of at least nominally-RLDS historians Danny Jorgensen and Biloine Whiting Young. These historians were eager to plot the Cutlerites into the Mormon succession crisis that followed Joseph Smith's death by focusing on the usual areas of conflict: priesthood keys, temple ceremonies, secret councils, and, of course, plural marriage.

Specifically, as of 2002, the most important published works that aimed to understand the Cutlerites were written by Jorgensen and Young, two scholars who like many earlier critics had family roots in the Cutlerite community and presumably an agenda in the present.<sup>74</sup> The Cutlerite response to this more recent scholarship has been an intensified angst against the telling of the Cutler-as-polygamist narrative and what some have interpreted as a mistrust of scholars.

From the Cutlerite perspective, this new assault, which drew on the same stories used a generation before to discredit the faith, had simply continued in a new form—now armed with academic language and citations. Yet the Cutlerites were far from defenseless. As they had in the past, they developed strategies to deal with competing histories. The new genre of new Mormon history was a threat to more than just the Cutlerites. Conservative members of the Reorganization also struggled against the growing tendency of RLDS historians to accept the idea that Joseph Smith—not Brigham Young—was the originator of plural marriage. This meant that the Cutlerites now had intellectual allies in securing their understanding of the past. The resources of the Restoration branches, specifically Richard Price's *Joseph Smith Fought Polygamy*, a well-documented (though many would argue historically inaccurate) study, strengthened the church's sense of

the past. The two volumes, the church's history and Price's volume, were both marketed on the church's website in the first part of this decade and represent a dual effort to respond to the less-than-desirable alternative histories of the faith.

Yet more important than scholarly texts that defend the Cutlerite position was the claim to possess irrefutable oral histories and primary source material that vindicated the movement's collective memory. The earliest statement I have discovered to promote this strategy was a letter written by Amy L. Whiting in the 1960s. Addressing the claim that Joseph Smith was a polygamist, she wrote: "Some of our close ancestors were in the church in Joseph's day, and were working with him and knew him personally and positively knew that he never did advocate that doctrine of polygamy . . . even some of our school books teach that Joseph Smith was the founder of that doctrine of polygamy but it is absolutely false."<sup>75</sup> As cited above, Stanley Whiting offered the same solution in 2002, access to special sources of historical knowledge. This new strategy took seriously the contest as it was occurring, from the Cutlerite perspective, in the historical enterprise of Mormon studies, but it also re-verified that the only voice that truly mattered for understanding the Cutlerite past was the Cutlerite voice.

As a twenty-year-old Latter-day Saint sitting in Stanley Whiting's living room, it felt strange to be confronted with Mormonism's polygamous past. After all, Brighamites have long since given up the practice of plural marriage as part of their identity. Yet for Cutlerites, the issue of plural marriage is a matter of the present just as much as it is one of the past.

The title for this article, "The Highest Class of Whoremongers and Adulterers," was taken not from a quote describing the Cutlerites, but from one Cutlerite's reference to the practice as propagated by their competitors, the Brighamites. As a result, this brief quote captures the core of the Cutlerite experience with polygamy. As Rupert J. Fletcher and Daisy Whiting Fletcher accurately stated, an essential mission of the early Cutlerite church was to "eradicate any taint of plural marriage" that, from their perspective, had infected so much of Mormonism. Whether it was the reason for the church's founding or whether it emerged in

quick succession thereafter is unimportant; this was the community's defining mission. The continual push against polygamy and those specters that continued to appear defined them as much as any other trait. For Cutlerites, the polygamous passage was a means for the community to find identity.

What is at stake in the midst of this emotionally-charged subject is the ability to claim access to and legitimacy from a sacred past. The Cutlerite sense of chosen-ness could only be preserved on claims to an accurate understanding of the past. As a people who see themselves as responsible for bringing forward the teachings of Nauvoo, particularly surrounding the upper room work, into the present, any chink in the armor of the community's past is a real danger on the mission of the present.

As scholars we should, of course, understand the Cutlerites' sensitivity to those that challenge the official story on the relationship of their community with polygamy. For one thing, it is not entirely accurate—once the church was founded, it was always a monogamous organization—but more importantly, the crypto-polygamist has been a major trope used against the Cutlerites from both non-Mormons and Mormons of various denominations for over one hundred fifty years. The fierce response is a sigh of exasperation. The ongoing denials are a means of defense against a world that seems to assume the Cutlerite voice cannot be an accurate one.

### Notes

1. The author would like to express his appreciation to Christine Elyse Blythe, Danny Jorgensen, and Benjamin Park who read early drafts of this paper and offered their critiques.

2. Quoted in Biloine Whiting Young, *Obscure Believers: The Mormon Schism of Alpheus Cutler* (Pogo Press, 2002), 195.

3. Joseph Smith III, letter to Joseph Davis, October 13, 1899, quoted in Joseph F. Smith Jr. and Richard C. Evans, *Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage: A Discussion* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1905), 49.

4. Kathleen Flake, "Re-placing Memory: Latter-day Saint Use of Historical Monuments and Narrative in the Early Twentieth Century," *Religion and American Culture* (Winter, 2003); also *The Politics of American Religious Identity: The Seating of Senator Reed Smoot, Mormon Apostle* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

5. Stephen C. Taysom, "A Uniform and Common Recollection: Joseph Smith's Legacy, Polygamy, and the Creation of Mormon Public Memory, 1852–2002," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 35, no. 3 (Fall 2002): 113–144.

6. David J. Howlett, "Remembering Polygamy: The RLDS Church and American Spiritual Transformations in the Late Twentieth Century," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 24 (2004): 149–172.

7. David Lowenthal, *The Past Is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge University Press, 1985), 26.

8. *Ibid.*, 212–213.

9. Interview with Stanley Whiting, June 4, 2002.

10. For a discussion of the Cutlerites as an outgrowth of the Council of Fifty, see D. Michael Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994), 192–212.

11. Fred Collier, *The Nauvoo High Council Minute Books* (Hanna, Utah: Collier's Publishing, 2005), 156–57.

12. For a discussion of this period, see Danny Jorgensen, "Conflict in the Camps of Israel: The 1853 Cutlerite Schism," *Journal of Mormon History* 21 (Spring 1995): 25–64; and "Building the Kingdom of God: Alpheus Cutler and the Second Mormon Mission to the Indians, 1846–1853," *Kansas History* 15 (1992): 192–209.

13. Richard E. Bennett, "Lamanism, Lymanism, and Cornfields," *Journal of Mormon History* 13 (1986–87): 49–50.

14. Quinn, *Mormon Hierarchy*, 208.

15. Jorgensen, "Building the Kingdom of God," 206–207.

16. For a discussion of the organization of the Cutlerite church, see Christopher James Blythe, "The Church in the Days of Alpheus Cutler: New Insights into Nineteenth-Century Cutlerite Ecclesiology," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 29 (2009): 73–93.

17. See Barbara Bernauer, "Gathering the Remnants: Establishing the RLDS Church in Southwestern Iowa," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 20 (2000): 4–33; Danny Jorgensen, "The Scattered Saints of Southwestern Iowa: Cutlerite-Josephite Conflict and Rivalry, 1855–1865," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 13 (1993): 80–97.

18. Mss 2394, Church of Jesus Christ (Cutlerite) Collection (1853–ca. 1970), L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (hereafter cited as Cutlerite Collection), Box 2, Folder 5, 14.

19. Christopher Warren, "Eugene O. Walton and the Restored Church of Jesus Christ: A Brief Historical and Theological Evaluation," *Restoration: The Journal of Latter Day Saint History* 7:4 (October, 1988): 6.

20. It should be noted that the principal scholars of the Cutlerites,

including Danny Jorgensen, Biloine Whiting Young, and Mike Riggs, have often been able to avoid this problem.

21. Nauvoo High Council Minutes, August 12 and 17, 1843, LDS Church Archives. In affidavits offered by those in attendance, Cutler is only sometimes listed. See Gary James Bergera, "Illicit Intercourse, Plural Marriage and the Nauvoo Stake High Council, 1840–1844," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 23 (2003): 59–90.

22. Journal of Heber C. Kimball, August 9, 1845, in Stanley B. Kimball (ed.), *On the Potter's Wheel: The Diaries of Heber C. Kimball* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1987), 133.

23. *Book of Anointings*. See Devery S. Anderson and Gary James Bergera (eds.), *The Nauvoo Endowment Companies, 1845–1846: A Documentary History* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2005), 415.

24. *Ibid.*, 459.

25. Danny L. Jorgensen, "The Old Fox: Alpheus Cutler, Priestly Keys to the Kingdom, and the Early Church of Jesus Christ" in *Differing Views: Dissenters in Mormon History*, edited by Roger D. Launius and Linda Thatcher (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 162.

26. Anderson and Bergera, *The Nauvoo Endowment Companies*, 463–464.

27. Richard E. Bennett, *Mormons at the Missouri, 1846–1852* (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 195.

28. Jorgensen, "The Old Fox," 170.

29. George D. Smith, 630.

30. *Ibid.*, 609.

31. Iva Gould, undated letter quoted in Biloine Whiting Young, *Obscure Believers: The Mormon Schism of Alpheus Cutler* (Lakeville, Minn.: Pogo Press, 2002), 197–198.

32. Danny Jorgensen suggests that Henrietta's death may have been caused "from cholera of childbirth." Danny Jorgensen, "Building the Kingdom of God: Alpheus Cutler and the Second Mormon Mission to the Indians, 1846–1853," *Kansas History* 15 (1992): 206.

33. "In Minnesota and Wisconsin, Among the Cutlerites, Rigdonites, and Mobberites," *Deseret News* XXXIII (October 15, 1884), 3.

34. Clare B. Christensen, *Before and After Mt. Pisgah* (Salt Lake City: privately published, 1979), 183.

35. Young, *Obscure Believers*, 57.

36. Mosiah Hancock Journal, LDS Church Archives.

37. Lawrence Foster, *Religion and Sexuality: The Shakers, the Mormons, and the Oneida Community* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984), 198. Historian Kathryn M. Daynes has noted of the period that "no evi-



dence points to marriages entered into solely because of romantic love, companionship, or sexual attraction, although these may have developed as a result of the marriage.” Daynes, *More Wives Than One: Transformation of the Mormon Marriage System, 1840–1910*. (Urbana: University of Illinois, 2001), 38.

38. Iva Gould, undated letter quoted in Biloine Whiting Young, *Obscure Believers: The Mormon Schism of Alpheus Cutler*, 197–198.

39. Mrs. T. B. H. [Fanny] Stenhouse, *An Englishwoman in Utah: The Story of a Life’s Experience in Mormonism* (London: Sampson Low, Mars-ton, Searle and Rivington, 1880), 211.

40. Stanley B. Kimball, *Heber C. Kimball: Mormon Patriarch and Pioneer* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 123

41. Richard E. Bennett, “Lamanism, Lymanism, and Cornfields,” *Journal of Mormon History* 13 (1986/87), 50.

42. Quoted. in Biloine Whiting Young, *Obscure Believers: The Mormon Schism of Alpheus Cutler*, (Pogo Press, 2002), 195.

43. Minutes of conference, May 17, 1863, box 2, folder 5, 48, Cutlerite Collection.

44. Minutes of church service, June 28, 1863, box 2, folder 5, 51, Cutlerite Collection.

45. Dan Erickson, “*As a Thief in the Night*”: *The Mormon Quest for Mil-lennial Deliverance* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1998), 204.

46. Avery F. Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*, new edition (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008; first published 1997), xvi.

47. Abraham A. Kimball Reminiscences and Journal, 1877–1889, LDS Church Archives, 6 .

48. *Ibid.*, 18–19.

49. Paul Connerton, “Seven Types of Forgetting,” *Memory Studies* 1 (2008), 67.

49. Cited in Christensen, *Before and After Mt. Pisgah*, 433–434.

50. Cordelia Morley Cox Autobiography, Typescript, L. Tom Perry Special Collections.

In the spring of 1844, plural marriage was introduced to me by my parents from Joseph Smith, asking their consent and a request to me to be his wife. Imagine, if you can, my feeling, to be a plural wife. Something I never thought I could ever be. I knew nothing of such religion and could not accept it, neither did I then. I told Joseph I had a sweetheart; his name was Whiting, and I expected to marry him. He, however, was left by the wayside. He could not endure the persecutions and hardships. I told the Prophet I thought him a wonderful man and leader, but I wanted to marry my sweetheart. After Joseph Smith’s death, I was visited by some of his most intimate

friends who knew of his request and explained to me this religion, counseling me to accept his wishes, for he now was gone and could do no more for himself. I accepted Joseph Smith's desire, and 27 January 1846, I was married to your father in the Nauvoo Temple. While still kneeling at the altar, my hand clasped in his and ready to become his third plural wife, Heber C. Kimball tapped me on the shoulder and said, "Cordelia, are you going to deprive the Prophet of his desire that you be his wife?" At that, Walter Cox said, "You may be sealed to the Prophet for eternity and I'll marry you for time." Walter was proxy for Joseph Smith, and I was sealed to him for eternity and to Walter for time.

52. Lowenthal, *The Past Is a Foreign Country*, 205.

53. *The Saints Herald*, 51, no. 47 (Nov. 23, 1904), 1096.

54. Box 2, Folder 9, 63–64, Cutlerite Collection.

55. C. Whiting, letter to editor of *Battle Lake Review*, Box 2, Folder 9, 64–65, Cutlerite Collection.

56. Minutes of Council, July 10, 1886, Bpx 2, Folder 3, p. 32, Cutlerite Collection.

57. Minutes of Council, April 12, 1885, Box 2, Folder 3, p. 6, Cutlerite Collection.

58. Minutes of Council, July 10, 1886, Box 2, Folder 3, p. 32, Cutlerite Collection.

59. T. W. Smith, letter to "Dear Bro. Oliver," July 19, 1875, *Herald* (August 15, 1875): 501.

60. Minutes of church service, May 14, 1911,, Box 2, Folder 6, p. 37, Cutlerite Collection.

61. Joseph Smith III, letter to Charles Derry, August 14, 1863, Joseph Smith III Papers, P15, f2, Community of Christ Library-Archives.

62. Terryl Givens, *Viper on the Hearth: Mormons, Myths, and the Construction of Heresy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 60.

63. Wilford Woodruff Journal, March 10, 1844, LDS Church Archives.

64. Pliney Fisher Patriarchal Blessing Book, 58, quoted in Danny Jorgensen, "Fiery Darts of the Adversary: An Interpretation of Early Cutlerism." *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 10 (1990): 69.

65. C. Whiting, letter to "Ever respected relations and friends," May 5, 1893, LDS Church Archives.

66. C. Whiting, letter to sister Emeline, July 24, 1894, LDS Church Archives.

67. Lowenthal, *The Past Is a Foreign Country*, 67.

68. Minutes of church service, June 21, 1910, Box 2, Folder 6, 15, Cutlerite Collection.

69. Eben E. Corliss, *Reminiscences of the Early History of Otter Tail County* (1916), 15.

70. Minutes of Council, October 2, 1910, Box 2, Folder 6, 20, Cutlerite Collection.

71. "History of the Church of Jesus Christ Cutlerites, Book 319," Box 2, Folder 8, 46, Cutlerite Collection.

72. Fletcher and Fletcher, 37-38.

73. *Ibid.*, 38.

74. For an autobiographical discussion of Young's Cutlerite roots, see Biloine W. Young, "Minnesota Mormons: The Cutlerites," *Restoration* 2: 3 (July 1983): 1, 5-12.

75. Amy Whiting, "A Brief History of the Church of Jesus Christ," Box 2, Folder 8, p. 61, Cutlerite Collection.