

## Seven Revealing Statements by William Smith

Former Secret Chamber member at Nauvoo

7 pages (pps. 131-37 of the book, *The Secret Chamber*) Val Brinkerhoff, 2/6/2020

After the murder of his three brothers, Apostle and Patriarch William Smith did his best to expose the secret practice of spiritual wifery by members of the Twelve at Nauvoo. Joseph Smith was not part of this abomination, nor the Secret Chamber. William wrote a series of letters to the Nauvoo Saints, that he might expose what was really happening there. He turned on what he and others called “the Secret Chamber”, those leaders of the church in Nauvoo practicing spiritual wifery secretly behind Joseph and Hyrum’s backs. Some of William’s letters were printed in newspapers outside of Nauvoo, as the Secret Chamber controlled both of Nauvoo’s newspapers via John Taylor, editor of both papers and a secret chamber member. William’s revealing perspective are given in the following seven writings. They help reveal Brigham’s leadership over the secret chamber and Joseph’s innocence regarding polygamy.

Because William was revealing damaging information about the Twelve (like the Law Group), and about Brigham Young specifically and his desire for power, Young had William excommunicated as part of an on-going effort to **discredit** him. This was carried out publically by John Taylor, editor of both Nauvoo newspapers. Slandering one’s opponent is a favorite tactic among politicians, as lies mixed with half-truths often work. We know William didn’t see eye-to-eye with Joseph from time to time. At one point their heated exchange turned into a physical altercation. After Joseph’s murder, however, William admitted he had more than one wife. He was the only Smith family member who practiced spiritual wifery in the Nauvoo era. William’s mis-deeds and imperfections helped Taylor to discredit him and they have forever tarnished William’s overall reputation. The discrediting by the Utah church continues today, effectively keeping many of the Brighamite Saints from the revealing truths of what really happened in Nauvoo.

Had William not left Nauvoo, he and his statements may not have survived Young’s attempt to have him silenced. The seven writings provided hereafter include: (1) His last public speech at Nauvoo, where he first publically exposed the secret spiritual wifery of the Twelve, as well as his own; (2) A detailed “proclamation” to the Saints of what was really happening in Nauvoo; (3) A letter to the Saints attempting to awaken them to their plight; (4) His testimony in the very important *Temple Lot Case*, where he gave his reason for leaving the Twelve; (5) A letter to Apostle Orson Pratt; (6) A letter to Apostle Orson Hyde; And (7) William’s latter letter to his nephew, Joseph Smith III, then President of the RLDS Church, detailing how Joseph was pressured into destroying the Expositor press by John Taylor and Willard Richards. It was designed to purposely get Joseph arrested and thrown in jail, where Taylor and Richards could insure that Joseph and Hyrum would be removed from power. Together, William’s seven writings speak volumes about the real origins of polygamy in Mormonism.

**1. William Begins to Expose the Secret Chamber** After the murder of his brothers, William Smith spoke in public (his last as an Apostle) about his spiritual wifery in 1845 in Nauvoo. In it he revealed that he was secretly practicing spiritual wifery, along with other members of the Twelve at Nauvoo. The Law group also accused select members of the Twelve of this, just before the murders. William is the wild card played against Brigham Young and his followers. Once a part of Young’s secret chamber and holding “the secret priesthood,” he too practiced “spiritual wifery” secretly **with them**, but not under Young’s control and direction. He was a wild one doing his own thing. Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball were trying to manage the secrecy of it all and William was not cooperating. On August 17<sup>th</sup> of 1845, William spoke out publically against the secrecy surrounding his own practice of “spiritual wifery.” He did so in a speech at the Grove, called, “*The gospel according to Saint William.*” In it he said:

“...if a sister gives me her hand upon **the Spiritual Wife system**, to share with me the fate & destinies of time and eternity, I will not be ashamed of her before the public. That [which] I do in **the secret chamber** I would do in the broad daylight” (Aug. 17, 1845 speech in the Grove).

William’s speech at the Grove was referenced by two members of secret brotherhood, both were English converts, and both secretaries to church leaders within it. One was George Watt (secretary to Brigham Young). He recorded William’s entire speech in shorthand. The second was William Clayton (secretary of Joseph Smith and a spy for Heber C. Kimball). It is ironic that records kept by two men in the secret chamber, and by order of Brigham Young, are used here to expose it and Brigham Young as Master Mahan.

In all, six individuals used the term “**secret chamber**” to describe this secret combination at Nauvoo. They included, (1) the LORD in His 1831 prophecy (see D&C 38, verses 13 & 28); (2) Apostle William Smith here; (3) Emma Smith, wife of Joseph, and President of the Relief Society in Nauvoo; (4) Sidney Rigdon; (5) William Clayton; And (6) George Watt (Brigham Young’s secretary). In William Clayton’s Journal for the 17<sup>th</sup> of August 1845, we read:

“At the stand to day Wm. Smith preached to the saints the first chapter of ‘the gospel according to St Wm’ as he termed it. It was just a full declaration of his belief in the doctrine of a plurality of wives &c. The people appeared disgusted and many left the ground. His object was evidently to raise an influence against the Twelve especially Brigham and Heber for he intimated in strong terms that **they were practicing such things in secret** but he was not afraid to do it openly. His course to day will evidently hurt him in the estimation of the saints more than any thing he has done before.”

In this 1845 speech, William used the terms “spiritual wifery” and “secret chamber.” Both terms fly in the face of doctored accounts today that were written later by Young, Richards, Clayton, and other historians to claim that “plural marriage” was supposedly instituted by Joseph Smith in the doctored “revelation” said to be given him on July 12 of 1843. Young was instead practicing his version of Cochranite **spiritual wifery**. He later changed its name to the more acceptable, “plural marriage” and then “Celestial marriage” (see 13 names for the practice on p. 191).

William’s use of the term “spiritual wifery” (and by others in their journals at Nauvoo) clearly shows its connection to the early Cochranite movement, which originally coined the phrase. In addition, the term “secret chamber” clearly reveals the secrecy surrounding this practice, both in Cochranite tradition, and in association with Danite coercion, the secret blood oaths of Freemasonry, and Young’s new modified endowment (next chapter), wherein the secret priesthood and polygamy were central, related components. The term “plural marriage” was later inserted into historical documents after the fact to legitimize the practice, and to do so in connection with Joseph Smith, even though he spoke out against all such sexual sin right up until his murder. The new name was also tied to marriage, helping to further separate the Mormon practice of it from the Cochranites.

William Clayton’s Journal entries record William’s changed heart. Clayton was an English convert (brought into the new church by Heber C. Kimball). He became a scribe for Joseph Smith for a time. He was also a spy for Kimball (and Young) and a member of “the secret chamber.” Like others in it, he was also a Mason. In this brotherhood, secret blood oaths were administered to protect one another in their sins (see Moses 5:29-31). His conversion to Heber and Brigham’s version of Mormonism in England may have included plans to implement the practice of spiritual wifery later in Nauvoo. Four of the Twelve there eventually became Presidents of the church. All of them were polygamists, Masons, and members of the secret chamber at Nauvoo. These men were Brigham Young, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, and Lorenzo Snow. Few fruits originated in their leadership.

**2. William Smith’s Proclamation to the Saints** This “Proclamation” was printed in the Warsaw Signal newspaper in 1845. It revealed the activities of Brigham Young and other members of the secret chamber and what they were doing behind the backs of Joseph and Hyrum. It was the only way William could reach the Saints, as secret chamber member John Taylor was the owner, editor, and printer for the church publication - The Times and Seasons, as well as the City of Nauvoo’s newspaper, The Nauvoo Neighbor. Two months later, on October 19 of 1845, William Smith wrote a lengthy letter to the Saints. It is extraordinary in what it reveals. William’s letter was published in the Warsaw Signal, which exposed many in “the secret chamber.

“I will state unequivocally at the outset, that it is my firm and sincere conviction, that, since the murder of my two brothers, usurpation and anarchy, and spiritual wickedness in high places, have crept into the church, with the cognizance and acquiescence of those whose solemn duty it was to guardedly watch against such estate of things. Under the reign of one whom I may call a Pontius Pilate, under the reign I say of this B. Young, no greater tyranny ever existed since the days of Nero. He has no other justification than ignorance to cover the most cruel acts – acts disgraceful to anyone bearing the stamp of humanity; and this being has associated around him, men, bound by oaths and covenants, who are reckless enough to commit almost any crime, or fulfill any command that their self-crowned ‘head’ might give them.”

Prior to this important letter, William had requested a private meeting with Brigham Young. He was given a meeting, but it was anything but private. It featured many men gathered at the Masonic Lodge to intimidate him. Feeling he was not safe in his return to Nauvoo, William stated:

“I summoned my kind friends who watched over my safety for two or three weeks; The necessity of my doing this prompted me to write a letter to B. Young, stating to him that I did not feel safe in the hands of his police. The answer returned to me was from John Taylor, to the effect that I should meet the council the same day at six o'clock in the evening. Accordingly at the hour specified, I repaired to the place of meeting, not expecting, however, to find any one present save the ‘Twelve,’ or the Bishops. But on entering the room on the third story of the Masonic Hall, what was my surprize to find some fifty or sixty policemen all armed with their Bowie knives, pistols, and hickory clubs. How much more too, was my surprize, when after my entrance I found the door guarded, and the man whom I had supposed a particular friend of mine, chuckling with sparkling eyes to think he had me in his power. I was called upon by Brigham Young to make known my grievances...I told them that I considered my right to teach the church altogether unimpeachable...Further, that if the brethren did not want me or my councils, to announce such a sentiment and I would leave them. Let, said I, the Twelve say so -- Let the Bishops say so -- Let the police say so, and I am gone! But mark it, said I, where I go, there also the Smith family go, and with them also goes the Priesthood.”

“After I had spoken for nearly an hour to the foregoing purpose, Brigham Young arose, and although when he came into the room he had given me his hand, with a smiling countenance, launched forth in the following strain, with boisterous boldness: ‘I will let William Smith know that he has no right to counsel this church, **for I am the man!** I will let William Smith know also, that he shall not counsel the police; furthermore, that where the Smith family goes the church will not go, nor the priesthood either! And I will let William Smith know that **I am the president and head of this church**’ and strange to say all the police and the bishops, and the ‘Twelve’ who were present, said thereunto, ‘amen.’ The conclusion I drew from all this was, that it was an intentional hint to me that I had better leave... the brow-storm grew more palpable, not a smile, not a pleasant look greeted me, as I looked around on my old associates. Among those in the house I observed fifty or sixty of my well known brethren, but not one smile, amen, or consoling word reached me...”

“In noticing the claims of Brigham Young to superior power and authority, I would here observe that I heard my brother Joseph declare before his death, that Brigham Young was a man, whose passions, if unrestrained, were calculated to make him the most licentious man in the world, and should the time ever come, said he, that this man should lead the church, he would certainly lead it to destruction. What, my brethren, I would ask you, are the claims of Brigham Young to the keys of the church, above the rest of the ‘Twelve? **They are keys which Joseph never conferred on Brigham Young,** nor was power ever given to him to lead the church in his place as his **successor.** The church is hereby warned against any such pretensions, as **little Joseph, the son of Joseph Smith is the lawful heir to the office,** being the oldest son of the deceased prophet. I was present with Joseph at the last council that was held previous to the Twelve and others going on their electioneering campaign to the east and various other parts of the United States; it was at this time that I received my initiation **into the highest priesthood lodge,** was washed and anointed, and clad with the sacerdotal robe of pure white, and ordained to be priest and king, and invested with all the power that any man on earth ever did possess; power entitling me to preach the gospel, to bind up the kingdom of God on earth, among all nations, and people of every tongue. In consequence of these endowments and ordination received from under the hands of Joseph, I hold as much power and as many keys to seal and bind on earth, as can possibly belong to Brigham Young; this power was **conferred equally on all the Twelve,** and not therefore bestowed on one. The brethren must understand, too, that Brigham Young holds the presidency over the eleven men by age merely, and not by any legitimate authority, neither has he any superior keys; and the saints will bear in mind that a presidency over twelve men, admitted out of courtesy to age, does not make a man president, prophet, seer revelator, and perpetual head of the church, over a whole dynasty of people, to the exclusion of **the lawful heir, the heir by blood and by lineage.** Brethren, let my true position be known to you; reflect and you will clearly see that Brigham Young is not lawfully or legally the prophet or head of the church, and that to claim such a right is usurpation and an act of tyranny; it is robbing the innocent -- the widow and the fatherless. Further, the saints are informed that the old pioneers, fathers and founders of this church of Christ in this last dispensation, namely the Smith family, must and will stand at the head, as leaders of this dispensation in time and in eternity. **According to our book of covenants, the priesthood must be handed down from father to son.**”

“Again, the position of the ‘Twelve’ is defined in the same book, as merely a **‘traveling high council’** to open and make known the kingdom abroad, and **not as a local presidency**. Since the death of Joseph and Hiram, the church has never been organized, although the materials have been all on hand. Its present condition is that of a headless body. It cannot be perfect until there are three presidents. It is just as needful that the church have all its members, with a head to govern it, now as in the days of Joseph, or many years ago. Temples therefore reared up, and endowments given, by usurpers, or by a headless body, can be no other than imperfect. And is not probable, I would ask, that Temples, Nauvoo Houses and other buildings, however richly wrought and gorgeously and sumptuously furnished, such palaces may be reared up in wickedness, by means of cheating and defrauding the poor, by keeping up secret combinations for robbing and plundering the Gentiles – a Gadianton Band -- altogether contrary to the book of Mormon, how, I would ask, can it be expected that the Almighty will bless or suffer to prosper. How, I would ask, can it be expected that Divine endowments can be given in such houses, or that God will ever bless such a priesthood or such a people...”

“It is astonishing indeed to see the religious chicanery and hypocrisy of those men. In the first place Adams comes on east, bearing letters from Willard Richards and the Council of Nauvoo, announcing the deaths of Hiram and Joseph Smith, to the scattering ‘Twelve’ with advice to me not to return at present to Nauvoo, for fear of increasing the excitement; thus by my absence enabling them to use all efforts, to get the Church bound up to Brigham Young, as its president; the rest of the Twelve resigning all their power into his hands, and thereby rendering themselves powerless. Thus they thought to get a dig at me, having the bishops ready to say ‘amen!’ with **a police bound by covenants and oaths to protect the said Brigham Young**, as the president and head of the church, and to carry out all his measures. While this Brigham Young was pampering the church with the idea that although little **Joseph was the rightful heir to the priesthood**, and office of his father as prophet, seer, and revelator, that it was not prudent to mention this for fear of the little child's life...”

“The impression that B. Young was the successor and had even more power than Joseph, that things prospered better, etc., etc., was spread about in all directions. -- And to complete this man's reign of power, there was adopted, as I have before alluded to, the system of spiritual wifery, which was entered into secretly: and directions given to John Taylor and others to proclaim on the stand that all saints should call on Brigham Young for counsel notwithstanding I was by right a counselor of the church. It was, my brethren, in this way, that the cords were drawn tighter and closer. Men's wives and daughters were secretly married at night-time to this Young, H. C. Kimball, William Richards, and others, and, in the dark night, were attending the **secret lodges**, until most of the ‘Seventies’ were thus sealed and bound under a cloak of adopting children into their kingdoms. **All these measures were profoundly secret**, and the actors **were bound to protect** the noble fathers and LORDs. In addition to this every exertion was made to ordain every one in the shape of man, and induce them to join the ‘Seventies’ and thus become adopted **‘Brighamites.’** As soon as they had been induced to take the step, they soon found a reason for being no longer **Smithites...**”

“I call upon you, I say, to come out of this Brigham Young's power, and to denounce his claims and pretensions, for be assured, they are not of God. Discard, my friends, all such hypocrisy and secret works, all such deeds of darkness. For Gadianton Bands, secret combinations to murder, and plunder the gentiles, and trespass upon other men's rights, by discarding the marriage contract, can do nothing else than establish licentiousness, and corrupt the mortals of the rising generation. From all such abominations I proclaim myself free and independent, and I implore my friends again and again, especially those of the Smith family, to fly from this sink of iniquity and abomination, and assist in reorganizing the church of God on **the old and pure gospel of Mormonism**, and in accordance with the Book of Mormon, the Bible, and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants... Another matter may not be omitted, namely: that Brigham Young, John Taylor, and Willard Richards with the appointed bishops **have assumed the publishing of the Church Documents**, the Book of Covenants, and also Joseph's private history, as their own property entirely regardless of the rights of the Smith family as therewith connected.”

“Again, in addition to all this assumption of power **they have combined themselves into secret lodges, councils**, etc., where they concoct all their plans unknown to the common people of the church, out of this have arisen **the whittling and whistling societies** for disposing of strangers, and **the beastly anointing** [Aunt Peggy's privy closet] of all who oppose their plans... I did not leave that place too soon, for the very day of my departure it was whispered to me that a secret plot was already concocted for taking away my life... All these things combine with their **secret combinations** I conceive to be ample cause to induce me to disfellowship such men,

and to denounce all their measures. Joseph Smith inherited his priesthood by lineage, he being a descendant of Joseph, who was sold into Egypt, and the same priesthood is continued from father to son -- as was, also, my patriarchal office inherited from my father and brother Hyrum. And now, brethren, permit me to say, that so long as the sun, moon, and stars perform their successive revolutions, so long both on earth and hereafter, shall I have faith in the doctrine of **legal descent, lineage & blood**. . . The Twelve did not ordain me one of their number, nor decree my lineage in the Smith family, and I shall never suffer myself to be controlled by Brigham Young or any of his coadjutors. It was from a love of peace, my brethren and sisters, and from no other motive, that I have delayed the publication of these remarks. . . And now may the God of peace and abundant mercy abide with all the faithful . . . May He be present with all the honest in heart, and may He deliver the innocent from all fear, and prompt the pure-minded saint, to come out, and assist in building up the kingdom as it was at the beginning. That Zion may put on her beautiful garments, and see no more the wasting and destruction of her borders. . .” Young later excommunicated William for his remarks, see <http://olivercowdery.com/smithhome/BroBill/wmwwrite.htm>

**3. William’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Warning to the Saints** – *Printed in Two Newspapers* The following warning was printed in two newspapers in 1845; (1) the Missouri Reporter, St. Louis, Oct. 25, Vol. IV, #237, and (2) the Sangamo Journal, Springfield Illinois, Nov. 6, , vol. XV, No. 7. William wrote to the editor, “I wish to beg a place in your columns for the insertion of this article, as I am deprived of the privilege of speaking through the Mormon oracles (papers.) I do this, to correct the evils that now exist among that people denominated Saints in Nauvoo -- a place that for the last six months has been a resort for rogues and scoundrels, and a covert for thieves and murderers . . . my brethren, **the secret plans** and devices of those who have assured the leadership of the Church in that place . . . They have formed themselves into a **combination**, called a *city police*, with other *private councils*, &c., &c., by which to **suppress the liberty of speech** and endanger the lives of any who dare oppose their unhallowed purposes, or oppose their deep-laid plans to **fleece** the unwary and [more] faithful of the Mormon Church . . . At this important crisis of Mormon interests, when every exertion is being made by those eleven **wolves in** sheep's clothing, to continue the distress of their poor brethren, by **decoying them into the wilderness** [of the Mountain West], thereby the better enabling these ambitious tyrants to carry out their plans of robbery and murder to increase **their own wealth** and make the poor poorer -- at this crisis, I take the liberty to warn you, our brethren, in due time, that you may flee the awful vortex, and not be led by such men, or such false hopes as are held out in the circular of the so-called ‘Mormon Twelve,’ who, since the death of Joseph and Hiram, have contemplated the removal to the west, but not by the prophecy of Joseph or his counsel.

**The name of Joseph is made use of**, to carry out their plans, without the least authority; for Joseph taught no such doctrine. You must be cautious and believe no such things, and thus escape the devices of Satan! Save yourselves and property! You have only to look back a few short years or months, to see the sufferings of the Saints, many of whom during the past summer in Nauvoo have lived on potato tops and salt, and been constantly called upon by those men, until the last cent is gone. **When all is gone, they will tell you it is the Lord's -- you must sacrifice** -- that this is the only way to exalted glory. If you call for the return of money loaned, you are treated as **dissenters**, *whittled* and driven from their midst as unworthy members of their society . . . And will you, brethren and sisters, still be guided and flattered by them into further troubles and ruin? What credulity! My God, I would ask you, can it be possible that the experience of the past is not enough to show you the bad counsel and the impolitic course of such a move as is now advised? Look at the distressed, the aged and the infirm -- again to settle in so large a body! I should think the folly of such wild and imaginary schemes had been too plainly told in the history of the past. Again, it is evident that the designs of those men will ruin all who follow them. This manifest in the self-righteous and so very christian epistle which they have addressed of late to the Churches. ‘Israel,’ they say, ‘must be the head and not the tail.’ To translate this into its true meaning, it should read ‘Mormons must be the head,’ which plainly shows the reason why there are so many broils and evils attending them, and why those assumed heads wish to leave a land of government and go to some more infant and weakened power, in order to hide themselves from their crimes and defy the authority of every land, wherever they settle -- that they may be the head and have the sole control and under their own assumption of power, shield themselves from the penalty of their brutal acts, by their tyranny and absolute rule.

So let me warn you again, my dear brethren, against these uncalled-for moves, and speculating plans to rob you of your gold, your house, your wives and children, and to **make you slaves** . . . If our religion is good, it will benefit our neighbors; and if it be of God, it will be a light not hid under a bushel, but put on a candle-stick to give light unto all men and love our neighbors as ourselves. To do this, we must settle where, in different bodies and parcels, we can teach them our doctrine, and like our neighbors and brethren according to the flesh, build comfortable houses for worship, and study the course of economy and the art to please by works of righteousness. Thus our neighbors will bless us, and we become a glorious people in the midst of the earth, filled with joy and peace, and **Josephites**, in deed

and in truth; for it is thus the voice of the martyred Joseph speaks to all that respect his name or hold his memory sacred and dear; but not in favor of the wild and wicked plans of these apostate eleven, for their plans Joseph does not approve, nor do they have his approval. Ever and anon, you will hear from me again, dear brethren! With sentiments of esteem, I once more subscribe myself, Your friend and brother, And fellow-laborer in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, And Patriarch of the Church, William Smith. St. Louis, Oct. 25, 1845.”

**4. William’s Testimony in the Temple Lot Case** In 1893, William Smith provided testimony in the Temple Lot Case for the RLDS church. In it he provided reasons for why he left the changing church Young was putting in place. He stated, “The reason of the separation was that the church I had absolved myself from had changed the doctrine . . . in respect to several things, and especially in respect to the marriage relation. The first I ever noticed of the change in that regard was in 1845, at Nauvoo, Illinois; I refer to the practice of polygamy. The principal participants at that time were Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, John Taylor, Willard Richards, Orson Hyde, and Parley P. Pratt. They were the principal participants in that doctrine.

He added, “There were three or four propositions or doctrines that were introduced into the church after the death of my brother in June, 1844, under the council of a part of the Twelve. One point was—and it had never been taught previous to that time—that Adam was God, and also that Moses was a man-god. Another doctrine was that of ‘blood atonement,’ meaning that if a man disobeyed the propositions of that council, meaning the remaining Twelve, he had to pay for it by the forfeiture of his life and atone for the sin by the shedding of his own blood, or allowing it to be shed by others. That was blood atonement for you, and it had never been taught in the old church, nor had the Adam-God doctrine ever been taught in the old church. . . . Another point was the marriage question in regard to the plurality of wives that was taught after the death of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, my brothers. These new doctrines that I spoke of were what caused the separation between me and that body of people, and neither of them were taught previous to 1844 nor for some time after 1844” (p. 93).

“I left Nauvoo in 1845 because my life was in danger if I remained there, because of my objections and protests against the doctrine of blood atonement and other new doctrines that were brought into the church. After I left I published an account of my separation from the church and the causes which led up to it. I think it occupied sixteen pages. It gave the cause of my separation from the church, and contained a statement of the apostasy of the leaders of the church at Nauvoo. I had five hundred of these pamphlets [Proclamation to the Saints] struck off” (p. 98). See Testimony of William Smith, Temple Lot Case, 1893, <http://olivercowdery.com/smithhome/BroBill/wmwrite.htm>

**5. William’s Letter to Apostle Orson Pratt** On October 28, 1845, Apostle Orson Hyde of Nauvoo, wrote a letter to William Smith, who had fled from Nauvoo for his own safety and was in St. Louis. Orson called upon William to return to Nauvoo, “and abide in the council of your brethren”— which implied subjection to Brigham Young (see *Messenger and Advocate*, Pittsburgh, PA [December 1845], 413–414). On November 12, 1845, William replied, writing a strong letter of refusal. In part of it he stated, “My life and exertions will be in order to perpetuate the names of my father’s family, and with honor to my noble martyred brothers Joseph and Hyrum wipe away the disgrace, the stain, the evils that, since their deaths have crept into the church. And by the too frequent use of their names, the twelve are carrying out the most wicked, base and unhallowed purposes that could be devised **under the cloak of Joseph and Hyrum’s names**. Brethren! be assured that Joseph and Hyrum never would have sanctioned the present wicked plans of the twelve; their corruption their sink of iniquity, their removal to the wilderness, their doctrine of polygamy usurpation” (*Messenger and Advocate*, Pittsburgh, PA [Dec. 1845], 415–416).

**6. William’s Letter to Apostle Orson Hyde** “I am now prepared openly and boldly, to expose every secret evil which is practiced by Brigham Young and his brother leaders at Nauvoo, and elsewhere. I’m not now surrounded by an armed body of men, employed by the leaders of a Church to destroy the persons and property of those who honestly differ with them in religious opinion, and are bound by oaths to murder indiscriminately whoever may oppose the secret and wicked plans and practices of the immaculate Brigham Young. As a specimen of the moral degradation existing among you, I will mention Parley P. Pratt as a fit subject to introduce. You are well aware that this unassuming and righteous apostle came from the East, a few days since, in company with a female whose appearance and conduct bear sufficient evidence of his utter disregard of virtue or religion. This is not the only crime he is guilty of. His iniquitous conduct is well known in the East and speaks for itself. It is needless for me to enlighten you further upon the character of B. Young, John Taylor, W. Richards, and many others who are continually preaching the doctrine, and openly practicing adultery; for this you know too well . . . Scripture and reason teach us that those who are led by wicked rulers must necessarily be astray, and powerless as those who govern and direct them; for wicked rulers have

neither Priesthood nor power . . . Your invitation to return to the quorum of the twelve, I treat with that calm and dignified scorn which such barefaced hypocrisy justly merits. No sir, I return no more to such a den of thieves and quorum of iniquity. I am fixed in my course and firm as the Rock of Gibraltar; and I protest against your proceedings and conduct. I know there are many friends now in Nauvoo who are afraid to express their opinion, but it will not always be so . . . And by too frequent use of their names, the twelve are carrying out the most wicked, base and unhallowed purposes that could be devised under the cloak of Joseph and Hiram's names . . .” (see <http://olivercrowdery.com/smithhome/BroBill/wmwrite.htm>).

**7. Joseph’s Order to Destroy the Expositor Press** Those in the secret chamber at Nauvoo (pro-polygamists who were practicing “spiritual wifery” secretly behind Joseph’s back) knew that the destruction of the Expositor press violated the laws of freedom of the press. They were convinced it would lead to the imprisonment and potential murder of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. In 1879, former Apostle William Smith, then an old man, sent a letter to his nephew, Joseph Smith III (then President of the RLDS Church), in which he (William) revealed three important things tied to Joseph and Hyrum’s murder by the secret chamber.

(1) William stated that many of the Apostles were teaching polygamy among the Nauvoo Saints secretly prior to Joseph’s murder. Emma Smith (President of Relief Society over the whole Church) had concerns that spiritual wives doctrines were being shared with women under her care in Nauvoo in 1844. William quoted Emma, stating that, “some complaint had been made to her [Emma Smith] by females whom she had visited, that John Taylor, Willard Richards, and Brigham Young had been teaching some doctrines among the Saints privately that was going to ruin the Church, unless there was a stop put to it, as it was contrary to the law and rules governing the Church. Your father remarked that he would attend to the matter as soon as he got through with his troubles with the Laws and Fosters. But mark you their conversation took place only a few days previous to your father's death.”

(2) He added that two church Apostles - John Taylor and Willard Richards - had put pressure on the Prophet Joseph (as Mayor of Nauvoo) to get him to sign the order (by the City of Nauvoo) to destroy the press (Taylor also served on Nauvoo City Council). William knew this because he was present when both things occurred at the home of Joseph and Emma Smith. He was there to have breakfast with Joseph and Emma. William stated:

“What fixes the stain of guilt upon these parties named in this letter making them more criminally murderous, is the part that the City Council at Nauvoo took in getting up the ordinance which resulted in the destruction of the Expositor press. And I wish here to name the fact that the principal instigators in getting up that ordinance were **men who feared the revelations that this organ** (Expositor) was about to make of their secret and ungodly doings to the world. The persons who were most conspicuous in the work, and were the means of bringing on the scenes that finally resulted in the bloody tragedy which took place at Carthage Jail were no other than John Taylor and Willard Richards, **who by constant importunities** prevailed upon your father to sign his own death warrant by placing his name to that accursed ordinance which resulted in his death and the death of your Uncle Hyrum. To these importunities of Richards and Taylor **I was a witness, and was present** when Richards brought in the book containing the ordinance and asked for your father’s signature to make it a law in the City of Nauvoo. I remonstrated with Richards at the time, against my brother Joseph putting his name down in such a place, as it would most certainly result in his death. Richards, failing to secure your father’s name at this time, both he and Taylor **called on your father the next morning**, with feigned tears of desperation, expatiating upon the great necessity of having that Expositor removed, as a means to the further growth and prosperity not only of the City of Nauvoo, but of the cause of the Church abroad. Thus these men, with the sophistry of their lying tongues, like wolves in sheep’s clothing, ensnared the prophet from off his watch tower, and led him as a lamb to the slaughter, they promising, also, **to be his assistants in case he should fall into trouble, as a result of his name being placed to that ordinance. This accounts for the whys and the wherefores, that Taylor and Richards were both in jail at the time your father and your uncle Hyrum were murdered**” (William. B. Smith. Kingston, Caldwell Co., Mo., March 25th, 1879, published in The Saints' Herald 26 [April 15, 1879], p. 117).

(3) Richards and Taylor were in Jail with Joseph to see that he and Hyrum were removed from power. They were the back up plan in case the Carthage Greys did not take out the Smith brothers. William stated, “Thus these men...led him as a lamb to the slaughter, they promising, also, to be **his assistants in case he should fall into trouble**, as a result of his name being placed to that ordinance...” The conspiracy against the Smith’s had been strengthening over the years. William said, “Thus you see, by the secret workings and secret doings of these men for years gone by, the Church was robbed of her prophet and patriarch, by a most hellish plot that had been in vogue for not only months, but years previous to the time of their deaths” (see <https://restorationbookstore.org/articles/nopoligamy/jsfp-vol2/2chp14.htm>).