

The Trial of Apostle John W. Taylor

Minutes of a meeting of the Twelve Apostles held in the Salt Lake Temple, February 22, 1911, at 10 A.M., at which were present: President Francis M. Lyman, Heber J. Grant, Hyrum M. Smith, Charles W. Penrose, George F. Richards, Orson F. Whitney, David O. McKay, Anthony W. Ivins and Joseph F. Smith Jr.; also by request John W. Taylor in answer to the following summons:

Salt Lake City, Utah, Feb. 15, 1911.

Elder John W. Taylor,
Salt Lake City, Utah.
Dear Brother:

By these presents you are summoned to appear before the Council of the Twelve Apostles in the Salt Lake Temple at 10 A.M. on Wednesday February 22, 1911, to vindicate yourself of the claim entertained by your brethren that you have married a plural wife within the last six years contrary to the discipline of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and that you have aided and encouraged others to enter such a relationship. You will also be required to answer any and all questions that may be put to you by the Council upon these points, to tell us the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Do not fail to appear as we shall be in session there and then to receive you.

I am, Respectfully
Your brother,
Francis M. Lyman,
In behalf of the Council.

The meeting was opened by singing and prayer.

President Lyman said: We have met to consider Brother Taylor's case. We want to be deliberate but do not want to take too much time, no more than is necessary. We want Brother Taylor to have every liberty to say everything that he has to say on his case and in the investigation of his manner to say everything that he has to say and to be respectful to us and we to him, and I hope the investigation will not be disagreeable. If it is necessary to take more than one day we shall take it. I take it for granted that we are ready to take up the matter and that you, Brother John, are ready.

John W. Taylor: Yes sir.

President Lyman: A few months ago, I think within the last Brother John W. Taylor had married a plural wife and that she was his type-writer, that the girl had a baby and that John W. Taylor was the father of the child and that he had married her. We have also come to understand that Brother Taylor and Brother Cowley had authorized Patriarch Wolff, formerly of Cardston, to perform plural marriages; a number of parties called on him and learned that he claimed his authority came from Brothers Taylor and Cowley. That stirred it up a little and we knew that Brother Taylor would know all about these matters and we concluded to summons him and he could tell us, and if he has been falsified against he can clear himself and if it is true he will have the courage to acknowledge it, and to this end the summons as above mentioned was served on him by Brother Ivins. I believe we are prepared now Brother John to hear your answer.

Brother Taylor then presented his answer in written form as follows:

Salt Lake City, February 22, 1911.
President Francis M. Lyman
and Members of the Council
of the Twelve Apostles, of the
Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter-day Saints.
Dear Brethren:

Your communication of February 15th, 1911, is received. In reply I'll say:

I believe all that God has revealed with regard to the eternity of the marriage covenant, and the celestial order of marriage. I accept as true all the revelations received by the Prophets of the Lord upon this subject. Certain interpretations of the rules of the Church with regard to these matters have been made, and have been presented to and approved by vote of the people; as far as consistent with my obligations to my family, I desire to be in harmony with the same.

I deny having aided or encouraged others to enter into polygamous marriages since my resignation as a member of the Council of Apostles.

I object to being compelled to give evidence personally at my own trial about my family affairs, on the ground that it is contrary to the revelation of God and the Constitution of the United States, which I myself of, and request that they be respected.

Sincerely yours,
John W. Taylor.

President Lyman: The first complaint and most serious one is the plural marriage to your type-writer, a girl by the name of Sandberg, we would like to know regarding it.

John W. Taylor: I would like to say, brethren, that you have taken the initiative in this fight, I have not and I come as one of your brethren, but with

no hope or desire of being connected with this Council at any time in the future and I wish to rest my case upon the statement in my letter and in doing so I wish to be respectful in all that I say in the matter. I have never spoken against my brethren. I would like to rest my case upon the statements in the above letter unless you have some witnesses against me. I have denied encouraging other people to enter into this relationship.

President Lyman: Brother Penrose I have almost forgotten how we came to learn of Brother Wolff, I remember talking with him to some extent about how he got the authority to perform plural marriages, whether the brethren laid their hands on him as in the case of ordaining him a Patriarch, or in the case of Patriarchal blessings. He said they had simply told him he could perform the plural marriages. When Brother Taylor, myself and Brother Card went to Ottawa, in Canada, in 1888, to see the Minister McDonald about protecting our people who were compelled to leave Utah on account of the persecution and he said whatever the law would permit we could do and be protected in it and the law would permit us to bring one wife there and as many children as we wanted, but two wives of one man could not live in Canada and we so reported to the people there and to the Brethren here, and I was very much surprised when I heard of Brother Wolff inasmuch as he was present when the above report was made, and as I remember was made Bishop of a ward organization at that time. I told Brother Wolff that he had no excuse whatever for doing this marrying and I also told his sonhe president's office, at which time, however, I didn't understand the son had taken a plural wife. Now you know, Brother Taylor, about this?

J. W. Taylor: I do not think it would be wise for me to even speak about that here. I would rather assume the responsibility than talk upon such a delicate point. I do not care what becomes of me, I haven't the least regard, as far as I am individually concerned. You may not believe what I say when I state that I have always felt that there are duties which devolve upon one to keep still under some conditions which are more responsible than others. I don't think Brother Cowley had anything to do with it. I acknowledge that I had a conversation with Brother Wolff on this matter and there were others of the brethren present and I believe the conditions justified it. I don't believe that I could tell you the whole truth without implicating others which I don't think it would be well to do and I think it would be well to allow the thing to set as at present, and I will assume the whole responsibility. I am not interested much in Canada now, but a law was passed there about two years ago which is very drastic against polygamy and those who have entered this relationship. It subjects the people to the confiscation of their property and banishment if proven guilty. So I would suggest that things be not stirred up too much in that direction, this I simply mention as a matter of information.

A. W. Ivins: Do you think that is the reason why the thing should be dropped?

J. W. Taylor: Yes, sir.

President Lyman: Will you explain why you authorized Brother Wolff to perform plural marriages.

J. W. Taylor: I only authorized him to perform one and this was a case of merit, but I told him to investigate very thoroughly before performing the ceremony; to travel with the man, sleep with him and talk with him for three months and to investigate very thoroughly. I simply delivered a message to him from some in authority. The same as when I was travel Henry Smith years ago, he performed certain ceremonies and rites and I performed others for reasons which we understood at the time. I only authorized Brother Wolff to marry Brother Levitt.

President Lyman: I haven't heard so much about Brother Taylor as I have about Brother Cowley. Do you know where Brother Cowley is at present?

J. W. Taylor: I understand he is in Oregon selling steel ties. I think I could get a letter to him.

H. M. Smith: I would be willing to allow Brother Taylor to assume the responsibility he speaks about if it would rest with him, but it would not, it rests with the Church.

C. W. Penrose: Do you remember the exact words you said to Brother Wolff? Did you not intimate that he would perform other marriages?

J. W. Taylor: I don't think I would.

President Lyman: Did you feel authorized yourself?

J. W. Taylor: No, I did not.

President Lyman: I asked Brother Wolff if the people came to him with recommends and he said no they came to him with word from Brother Taylor and Brother Cowley.

J. W. Taylor: Brother Wolff is a faithful brother and has done a great deal of good for the Church and I think if there matters pertain to the marriages in Canada could be let go it would be for the best. That I may not be misunderstood or accused of lying I want to make a statement. I have performed two ceremonies, but they are old ones and Brother Lyman and President Smith are acquainted with them. I assume the responsibility for it. I think they were before Presidents Smith's administration and they were very heartily approved of by the brethren when they were reported. I would like to inquire if any of the brethren you have had before you have said that I had done any marrying?

President Lyman: No, not one of them. And I have always said that I did not think you had done much of it, only where you have taken a wife yourself.

C. W. Penrose: What about those on the trip through Arizona and Mexico with Brother John Henry Smith?

J. W. Taylor: On that trip we married over ninety couples and a good many of them were plural marriages, this was in 1897. The two cases I referred

to could also be put on the old list since 1890, but not since 1904.

C. W. Penrose: Brother Taylor has pleaded to one of the charges, that he has not aided in these plural marriages, but does not want to answer the other.

J. W. Taylor: I do not want to say anything on that, but leave the matter with you, I prefer to claim this privilege which I mention in my answer.

H. M. Smith: So you think this thing is going on or have you any knowledge of its going on now?

J. W. Taylor: I think it has stopped and is not going on and that it would be a dangerous thing to agitate the question at this time. I think the Church is in an awkward position at this time.

President Lyman: Do you think the Church is to blame for this, or are the ones who are encouraging it? Are there any conditions that would justify it? Do you feel it would be right for you to do it?

J. W. Taylor: I do not wo you think it would be wrong for me to go and get another wife?

J. W. Taylor: It would depend upon the circumstances.

H. M. Smith: In view of the fact that the Church has taken a very emphatic stand against this thing and said that it cannot be done, and still some of the people have assumed to perform and encourage these marriages in face of this position. Do you think they are justified in this?

J. W. Taylor: I do not want to discuss my own case it is up to you and the brethren to pass upon that. I am living among the Philistines and you brethren are among the "Mormons". There is one thing that is much more serious in my mind than polygamy and I am not mentioning it to aid me in my case at all. When the enabling act was passed there were two things that we promised, one thing was that polygamy would be stopped and the other that Church influence would not be used in politics. My father received a revelation which, however, was never presented to the Church, and I refer to this not because it is a revelation to my father, I don't think a revelation because it came through him was any greater than one received through any other president of the Church, but because it seems to pertain to this question.

The revelation follows:

September 2[7th], 1886.

You have asked me concerning the new and everlasting covenant and how far it is binding upon my people.

Thus saith the Lord Call commandments that I have given must be obeyed by those calling themselves by my name, unless they are revoked by me, or by my authority, and how can I revoke an everlasting covenant? For I, the Lord, am everlasting, and My everlasting covenant cannot be abrogated nor done away with, but they stand forever.

Have I not given my word in great plainness on this subject? Yet have not great numbers of my people been negligent in the observance of my law and the keeping of my commandments? Yet I have borne with them these many years, and this because of their weakness, because of the perilous times.

And, furthermore, it is now pleasing to me that men should use their free agency in regard to these matters; nevertheless I, the Lord, do not change, and my word, and my law, and my covenants do not.

And as I have heretofore said by my servant Joseph: All those who would enter into my glory must and shall obey my law and have I not commanded men, that if they were Abraham's seed and would enter into my glory they must do the works of Abraham? I have not revoked this law nor will I, for it is everlasting and those who will enter into my glory must obey the conditions thereof.

Even so Amen.

The revelation was read by Brother Penrose.

J. W. Taylor: There are two things I am drawing your attention to. I am not in politics and very little in the Church, but I do this as a matter of privilege. This revelation is either true or it is false. Assuming that it is true, it seems to me that it would be better to offer leniency on the side of the Lord, if you are going to offer any leniency than on the side of politics. There is a very large number of the people who feel outraged at the way they have been treated with politics in this state. There are men who have reached the point, at this time with the least little agitation would do something rash. I regret exceedingly that others are attacking the Church and I hope you will not mention my name in any way as connected with those men. I loath Frank Cannon, Dubois, Kerns, and those connected with them and look upon them as contemptible curs. I mention these things as one desiring the advancement of the Church, and as one who was at one time closely connected with it. There is ten times the feeling over the breaking of the compact made with the government regarding Church influence in politics that there is over the polygamous marriages. I mingle among all classes of people which is not the case with you brethren, and therefore believe my impressions are correct. As an illustration, Sister Susa Y. Gates came down to Provo where I am living and called the sisters together and told them that the Brethren wanted them to vote the Republican ticket. I have heard statements made which lead me to believe that some men would take the life of a person with very little provocation on account of the feeling on this

question. My own opinion is that the difficulties this people are experiencing is through using Church influence in politics.

C. W. Penrose: I suggest that we leave politics alone.

J. W. Taylor: I would like to ask if you think a man who has been married since 1890 is living in adultery?

President Lyman: I don't think that matter has been passed upon, but the Church does not recognize marriages since 1890, or does not shoulder any responsibility for unlawful cohabitation.

J. W. Taylor: Brother Lyman, what do you think of the revelation to my father.

President Lyman: If you ask me if I believe in the plurality of wives, I would say that I believe it is true and will always be so, but the Lord may suspend the practice of it and how much of the responsibility remains with the people and with the government, I don't know. I am living with my wives now all the time, but I don't hold the Church responsible for it, but shoulder the responsibility myself. In 1900 President Snow said there was no miages. You were present when President Snow was sustained as President of the Church, and he made the statement that there should be no more plural marriages performed with the permission of the President of this Church, and a short time later published to the world through the Deseret News this statement. Have you (to Brother Taylor) been authorized since President Snow's presidency to perform or authorize any plural marriages?

J. W. Taylor: That I would prefer not to answer, as it would lead to something else. My view is that the Lord was anxious to put everybody upon his own responsibility and take the responsibility from the Church.

President Lyman: That is what the people have done and rejected the law of Plural marriage. Up to the issuance of the Manifesto it was never taught that it would be given up, I didn't think it would for a minute, still I believed the manifesto of President Woodruff was from the Lord. The law will stand forever, but the practice was discontinued.

J. W. Taylor: I believe it. I do not want to sew up the mouth of the Lord so to speak.

President Lyman: I believe the Lord expects us to keep our word with the government and with the people. (He referred to President Snow's remarks when he was selected President of the Church, by the Council of the Twelve) I have no fault to find with the revelation.

C. W. Penrose: Do you understand the free agency referred to in the revelation gives any one the privilege of taking a plural wife?

J. W. Taylor: I take it that it refers to the individual and relieved the Church of the responsibility and placed the responsibility upon the individual.

President Lyman: When did you find this revelation?

J. W. Taylor: I found it on his desk immediately after his death when I was appointed administrator of his estate.

H. M. Smith: I have enjoyed the little visit with Brother Taylor and apologize for the injustice I have done him in feeling that he would not come before us if he were summoned.

A. W. Ivins: I would like to inquire what Brother Taylor meant when he said it was a very inopportune time to deal with his case, or the Canadian cases on account of the political situation.

J. W. Taylor: I want to put you clear on that, whatever I have said about politics you can count that out, that had nothing to do with my case. I simply wanted to disburse (sic) your minds if any of you had the impression, that I was not connected in any way with any of these men who are fighting against the Church. You can do what you think is right with me, you have the authority.

Upon motion meeting adjourned for one week.

Benediction by Hyrum M. Smith.

Minutes of a meeting of the Council of the Twelve, held March 1st 1911, at 10 A.M. at which were present: President Francis M. Lyman and Elders Heber J. Grant, Hyrum M. Smith, Charles W. Penrose, George F. Richards, Orson F. Whitney, David O. Mckay, Anthony W. Ivins and Joseph F. Smith Jr. of the Council, also John W. Taylor.

Singing: Truth Reflects Upon Our Senses.

Prayer: Charles W. Penrose.

Singing: Page 224 of the Hymn book.

President Lyman: In your answer here Brother Taylor, in the last few lines you object to giving testimony personally at your own trial contrary to the revelations of God and the Constitution of the United States. I was wondering what revelation you referred to?

John W. Taylor: There is a revelation in the Doctrine and Covenants which says there shall be nothing required of the Saints which is contrary to the Constitution of the United States.

Brother Penrose read article five of the amendments to the Constitution of the United States which provides that a citizen shall not be required to testify against himself.

J. W. Taylor: I am not pressing this point only to this extent that it is up to you to deal with me as you see fit. I object to discussing my case in any phase and admit that I am becoming a little careless as to the out come. I do not want to disturb your feelings at all in this matter or I don't want to stay in the Church an If my case disqualifies me in any way I am willing to be relieved of my Church membership. I do not want to say anymore regarding my family affairs than I have already said and I don't know what more I could say.

President Lyman: Who has advised you in this matter.

J. W. Taylor: My attorney, John M. Cannon, asked me if I wanted to take advantage of this clause in the constitution.

President Lyman: Do you think any one can solemnize plural marriages with authority now.

J. W. Taylor: I feel under certain circumstances they could, but it would depend upon the circumstances.

President Lyman: What conditions?

J. W. Taylor: I fully explained that last time.

C. W. Penrose: What are your views with regard to that revelation?

J. W. Taylor: I am not the one to pass upon that revelation, I think you are the ones to do that.

C. W. Penrose: What I desire to get at is as to how you view the matter, whether you have been guided by that in your case. You brought the revelation to us and it has never been accepted by the Church, or presented to it.

J. W. Taylor: I think the only thing to do is to go to the presiding Priesthood of the Lord and get his idea on it and get him to inquire of the Lord what His mind is regarding it.

C. W. Penrose: I don't think Brother Taylor should come here and tell us what we need to do; but what I wanted to know is what he thought the President meant by that revelation whether the man was placed upon his own responsibility by that revelation and the president and the Church relieved of all responsibility or not.

A. W. Ivins: Do you know how extensively this revelation has been circulated in times past and has guided people in their actions in this regard?

J. W. Taylor: Brother Joseph Robinson came to me and asked for a copy of it upon the suggestion of Brother Cowley and he got it from Brother Badger. Brother Joseph F. Smith Jr., also got a copy, but I don't know how many have got copies from these.

A. W. Ivins: You don't know what inference was placed upon it in early times.

J. W. Taylor: No I don't know.

A. W. Ivins: I asked this question because I have heard some of the brethren interpreted this revelation in this way and I would like to find out to what extent they had the endorsement of the Church in view of this revelation and what was the reason those brethren went to Canada and Mexico. Do you know what they based their belief upon as they seemed to be sincere. Whether it was from this revelation or from the President of the Church, or from what the ground was taken that they could come in contact with the law of the land and still win out. I would like to know from Brother Taylor, what he knows about this and if they were justified in it.

J. W. Taylor: President Smith has come out on numerous occasions with the statement that there have been no marriages of a polygamous nature solemnized with the approval of the Church, since 1890. He stands at the head of this dispensation at this moment and has adopted that policy and as far as I am concerned I don't want to come in conflict with President Smith on this proposition. I don't know what others have taken from this revelation. If the revelation is true it would certainly impress me that the Church was relieved of responsibility in this matter and the responsibility placed upon the individual.

J. F. Smith Jr.: It is true I obtained a copy of this revelation from Brother Rodney Badger. He let me take the original and I made a copy and filed it in the Historian's Office, this was but a short time ago.

O. F. Whitney: Was it not the policy during your father's administration to leave everything to the mind of the individual?

I know this was the case with me when I went to inquire if I should take the test Oath. I was told to exercise my own judgment. Also there is no authority as far as I can see, in that revelation, no authority given to man to exercise such authority in marrying anyone, but the question of whether

they should go into the relationship was left with the indre commanded to go into it.

C. W. Penrose: I feel that we should not express our own views on this revelation, but should have Brother Taylor's views, if he will give them, if not we can get through with that question.

President Lyman: The date of this revelation is September 1886, four years before the manifesto of President Woodruff, and I remember at that time that President Taylor and all his brethren were very strongly entrenched in the principle of plural marriage. From 1880 to 1890 men were almost commanded to enter it, especially the officials of the Church. We were all pretty well engaged in this question. The change came in 1890 when President Woodruff felt the necessity that plural marriage should cease and after that he felt just as strong against it, as President Taylor had felt for it before. It was subsequent to this that President Smith made his declaration that the Church took no responsibility for the unlawful cohabitation of those in plural marriage and the performance of plural marriages. I would like to ask you if you have encouraged others to take plural wives, or taken them yourself, or if you think these brethren who have copies of this revelation have taken it as an encouragement, for instance Brother Robinson.

J. W. Taylor: I will answer that by asking if any one you have had here before you has ever said that I encouraged him.

President Lyman: No one except Brother Wolff, and you admit having encouraged him under the direction [of] a superior officer.

D. O. McKay: I would like to know who the man is that directed you to instruct Brother Wolff to marry a certain party?

J. W. Taylor: I would not wish to take issue with the President of the Church, or any one who is at the head of the Church. I went to President Smith's office the other day and had a three and one half hour talk with him and John Henry Smith and he said that he had never authorized anyone to perform a plural marriage. I am not saying that he is the one to whom reference wre on that point.

H. M. Smith: I would like Brother Taylor to feel that we are not pursuing him or any other man to do them harm, but simply to get at the bottom of these matters. I feel that you (Brother Taylor) are responsible for the circulation of that revelation.

J. W. Taylor: I am willing to put in a supplemental answer to the effect that I have never married any one without the endorsement and authority of the President of the Church, and if you desire will give the names of those I have married, but I think this would be unwise.

H. M. Smith: I think you have implied in your attitude that President Smith has not told the truth. I feel that Brother Taylor desires to imply that President Joseph F. Smith gave him the authority, but will not deny or affirm it.

J. W. Taylor: Brother Hyrum, if I should turn my tongue loose, there would be the damndest time in this State you have ever had.

H. M. Smith: I think you are creating the damndest time by keeping still.

J. W. Taylor: I have had a long talk with your father and will be pleased to go to him again if he desired, but I think the less I say the better it will be for the cause. I believe the Church will go on and progress although I might be dropped and fall by the wayside.

C. W. Penrose: Brother Taylor is willing to assume all the responsibility if the Council will permit him to withdraw his answer.

J. W. Taylor: I am willing to assume all the responsibility.

G. F. Richards: I don't think we should allow Brother Taylor to assume the responsibility, but should give us the full details and let us judge in regard to the matter. It has also been reported to us that a Miss Taylor in Mexico stated you tried to influence her to enter into a marriage relation with Brother Cowley.

J. W. Taylor: That isn't true, I have never done that.

Question: Can you give the details of that Canada case?

J. W. Taylor: I think the best thing to do is to let the matter rest as it is, unless you brethren wish me to insert something else.

H. J. Grant: I think the answer should be made by Brother Taylor himself and not upon any suggestion from us. His testimony has been in conflict with his answer and he should reconcile them to his own credit.

J. W. Taylor: As far as I am concerned I think it is better for me to insist that I say nothing more on this point.

A. W. Ivins: As I understand this Wolff matter was prior to 1904?

J. W. Taylor: I do not remember.

A. W. Ivins: In April 1904 Brother Taylor was in Mexico and myself and wife, Owen Woodruff and his wife and Brother Taylor and his wife were together at Brother Woodruff's, and I delivered a message to Brothers Woodruff and Taylor that plural marriages should stop; this message was from the President and Brother Taylor seemed to endorse it and mentioned it in our meetings. When we cut Brother Robinson, Bishop of Dublin, off the

Church he seemed to imply that Brother Taylor had given him the right and I have always felt that Brother Taylor was responsible for that marriage of Brother Robinson's, it having occurred after 1904.

J. W. Taylor: I dislike very much to discuss these things as I talked the matter over with President Smith and I am willing to take what President Lyman says on that point as he knows what was said.

H. M. Smith: said he objected to Brother Taylor fortifying himself behind that three and one half hours conversation with President Smith.

Taylor: I think the disfellowshipping of Brother Robinson was one of the greatest outrages perpetrated upon the Church.

A. W. Ivins: I was instructed by President Smith to depose from his Bishopric and I would like to know where this outrage exists?

J. W. Taylor: I remember consulting with Brother Ivins about Robinson's case, he having been promised long before President Smith's declaration that he should have another wife and I referred him to President Smith and he came to Salt Lake and saw the President and I returned to my home in Provo, where he called upon me one day in my field and while talut he said he was crying for joy. He said that President Smith told him to hunt out the way, and if he could find the way the President said "God bless you." He said he had found the way and asked if he could send his wife to me and I told him yes and I would care for her as long as I could.

A. W. Ivins: related the circumstances of the selecting of Brother Robinson as a Bishop by the Stake Presidency, but he was opposed by the High Council of Juarez Stake on account of his dishonesty, but he was later chosen in the absence of Brother Ivins by Elder Abraham O. Woodruff, His reputation in Dublin today is that he is a dishonest man and Brother Pratt said before he died that Bishop Robinson was dishonest, and he is also a defaulter of the tithing funds.

J. W. Taylor: I believed it was an outrage for Brother Robinson to be relieved of his Bishopric, if what he said was true, but in view of President Smith's statement and the remarks of Brother Ivins my views will have to be modified. I feel that I was mistaken. I have no idea who married Brother Robinson to the girl.

A. W. Ivins: You knew that Brother E. L. Taylor had been excommunicated from the Church and that his daughter married Brother Cowley? All of the statements which we have regarding this matter come from Nora Cowley in her letters to the Brethren in her request for a divorce from Cowley. She says she was married in Canada to Brother Cowley against her will. She wanted to marry, J. M. Tanner who was courting her, she thought for himself, but Brother Cowley came up and Brother Tanner dropped out. Her Bishop encouraged her to marry him and her brother did the same, J. M. Tanner encouraged her and she said you encouraged her and that you related a dream about a large field of grain belonging to Brother Cowley, and he was about to lose it, but she could save it and that they went to an old Patriarch and he mumbled something that she could not hear, which action made her feel that it was wrong.

J. W. Taylor: I never dreame barley. I never talked with her about this matter at all and I don't know anything about it.

A. W. Ivins: Have you ever heard this saying? "If you can get a wife by hook or crook get one and God bless you."

J. W. Taylor: Yes; Nathan Clark wanted to keep company with my daughter Alta and marry her and I told him to go and get President Smith's consent and you can have mine, that was about three years ago.

Upon motion recess was taken until 2:30 P.M. at 12:45 P.M.

President Lyman: Have you advised with Brother Tanner on your case?

J. W. Taylor: No sir. I have met him once or twice but never talked with him on my own case.

C. W. Penrose: Why should you be willing to deny the charge in regard to aiding others and fail to deny the implication in the other part of the complaint?

J. W. Taylor: I said just what I wanted to. I could have denied the other part, if I wanted to, but I did not want to.

President Lyman: Do you know whether the girl in your office has a baby?

J. W. Taylor: I do not want to be catacised (sic) on this matter or discuss it at all.

H. J. Grant: I heard, I don't know whether it is true or not, that you had in the name of the Lord cursed George Albert Smith?

J. W. Taylor: No sir. I think I told Brother Ivins that if George Albert Smith did not stop talking against me, I would make him suffer the next time I met him and the curse of the Lord would rest upon him. The covenant of my brethren of the Apostles when I left them was that they would not talk against me and my family. Brother Taylor related in brief the circumstances connected with his leaving the council of the Apostles.

C. W. Penrose: Have you ever heard any of the brethren of the Twelve say anything against you?

J. W. Taylor: No, I never meet them or with the people in their meetings. I have been ostracized and treated worse than an outsider, none of you have ever invited me to your homes and of course I have never invited you much with the excs talking against me and if he did not stop talking the curse of God would rest upon him and I told Brother Ivins if George Albert didn't stop he would have to answer to me the first time I met him. I regard my covenants as sacred and expect the brethren to do the same. If this is the kind of blessing you get for doing what you consider right, it is a pretty poor reward.

H. M. Smith: It is not for the good that you are humiliated or feel depressed, but for the rebellious spirit you have manifested.

J. W. Taylor: You mustn't consider my feelings in this matter, you have a duty to perform and it is up to you to perform it. If you feel my conduct has been such that you cannot fellowship me, if I were in your place I would act upon it, if you have no evidence I would get it, and if you can't get evidence, you should let it go.

C. W. Penrose: Do you recognize the rights of the Councils of the Church to question the members of the Church?

J. W. Taylor: I am not going to answer that if it pertains to my family affairs, I would say that they have not.

A. W. Ivins: I would like to ask for my own information what George Albert Smith has said against Brother Taylor as I may be guilty of this same breach. The feeling has been prevalent in Mexico particularly that Brothers Taylor and Cowley were deposed for political reasons only and I have taken the view, although not present, that it was because they were out of harmony.

H. J. Grant expressed his view of the matter.

D. O. McKay: You don't think there is any one authorized today outside the President of the Church to perform plural marriages, or that there has been within the last two years?

J. W. Taylor: No sir.

H. M. Smith: Brothers Taylor and Cowley have freely acknowledged that they were not in harmony with the Apostles and Presidency in declaring that plural marriages should discontinue, and related some facts connected with the fight made on the Church by the ministerial association, the fight being made on the Church through Reed Smoot.

J. W. Taylor: We were not out of harmony with the policy of the Church as outlined by the President of the Church.

The question was asked what do you think about the idea of your resigning, as to the effect it would have upon the people, and I told you brethren that while I didn't support you in the policy of deposing the Apostles to make a showing in congress and said I would not approve of the policy of the church in this regard, I would not oppose it.

C. W. Penrose: I would like to mention one or two points in connection with this matter. The charge was made that Brothers Taylor and Cowley were out of harmony with the Twelve with regard to marrying plural wives themselves and encouraging others to take plural wives. They said they would answer if they could have five minutes to talk with President Smith. President Smith refused to talk with them and therefore they refused to tell whether they had taken other wives. The question of the scope of the manifesto was also discussed. The other brethren of the quorum maintained that it covered every place and they claimed it only referred to the United States. Then the question of their resigning came up. They were out of harmony with regard to plural marriages and they resigned, the matter was kept quiet for a number of months with the hope that they might reconcile themselves with the Brethren later. They seemed to take the ground that they had the right to go ahead and in this were out of harmony.

Brother Lyman: said the facts of his going to Canada and the things that took place there were about, as far as he could remember, as Brother Taylor had related them. Brother Taylor was willing to make the sacrifice. It was on the ground that these brethren had entered into plural marriages and were out of harmony with the Church on this question and were against the declarations of Presidents Snow and Smith on the subject. I am of the impression that Brother Taylor told me that he was converted to this subject by Brother Cowley. It was because they were out of harmony with the authorities of the Church on this subject that they were deposed and not for pol appear from rumors that Brother Taylor has taken another wife within the last three or four years as also Brother Cowley and this makes it much worse. I have loved these brethren and rejoiced to hear them talk and have never talked against them and said they were living in adultery, but have always tried to create the impression that these brethren were not deposed for political reasons.

H. M. Smith: Brother Reed Smoot said he would resign his position as a Senator of the United States or as an Apostle, if it was thought necessary to protect the Church.

President Lyman: Do you feel that the course that you and brother Cowley took was right? Do you feel in your heart that you were right?

J. W. Taylor: Yes, I feel that I was right in what I did.

President Lyman: Do you feel now that you or Brother Cowley have the right to perform plural marriages, or encourage people in this thing?

J. W. Taylor: I do not feel that I have the right and if Brother Cowley claims such authority now, that he has no such authority and has no right to start up a propaganda of this kind.

C. W. Penrose: Under this purported revelation from your father, do you think this authority is given to any one to perform a plural marriage on their own free agency?

J. W. Taylor: If a man had been authorized in any way by authority to perform a marriage under that revelation he would be.

C. W. Penrose: If a man had received the authority at some time in the past, would he have the authority now, notwithstanding the declarations of Presidents Snow and Smith?

J. W. Taylor: It would depend upon the circumstances as to what was said to him at the time he received the authority and the condition under which he received it. I think there may be cases where a man might be justified in exercising the authority if he had the authority given him at one time. I think the President of the Church should give the authority to every man who performs a plural marriage. I would not take advantage of d your ideas as expressed here.

G. F. Richards: If brother Cowley should come to you now and ask you to perform a marriage ceremony for him do you think you would be justified?

J. W. Taylor: No sir, I would not be and if I were to go to Brother Cowley, I don't think he would be.

G. F. Richards: Have you brethren ever talked over the question of a division in the Church and there being two factions in the church?

J. W. Taylor: No sir, I have talked more regarding this subject today than I have for a long while. I know nothing about a division in the Church and don't sympathize with any movement of this kind to bring any schism in the Church. I want you to understand me clearly and candidly upon these things, but I don't want to say anything about my own affairs which would legally implicate me in these matters. You can assume these things if you want to and deal with me accordingly if you wish. I speak of these things in strict confidence and not to be talked about in your families even. I hope this will be the last talk we will have on these matters, I do not know that I can say any more. Things do get out of this quorum, I was not across the street last week before Brother Kelsch came up to me and said "I understand you have been on the carpet?" Things do get out and I think if this could be remedied it would be better. I have no objection to having you understand my family affairs, but I do not want to tell you. I have no aspirations in an ecclesiastical way. I have a large family of children, my wives to take care of and my business needs my attention. I don't say these things out of disrespect, but I would like you to do as you think best, not because of lack of testimony, but feel free in regard to my case. Every thing has gone that was sacred to me excepting my testimony, I still have that. There is nothing I am afraid to face in this world or in the next. I have nothing in the nature of fear, it doesn't exist. I have done. (sic) You are guiding the Church and I want am a different man to what I have been. I am not a man of spiritual temperament as I was at one time. I don't go to meetings because I would be asked to talk and I would refuse and it would be embarrassing to those presiding as well as to myself and bring up discussions which I do not like to provoke. In my parting with you, I desire to go with a spirit of kindness and with the best feelings, but I don't want my affairs to be used for political purposes. I feel freer today than I have felt for the past four or five weeks. I have over thirty children and I have always endeavored to impress upon them the testimony of the Gospel and keep them in the right way. I have paid my tithing in the past by giving the Church an interest in a company in Canada, in which I had placed nearly all my money. I want you to understand everything regarding my family, but I want to keep myself straight legally. I feel that you have treated me very respectfully and I thank you all for that and I will never run away from my brethren, I may have to hedge a little with the enemies but I will never run away from my brethren.

Brother Taylor was excused. The Brethren spent some time considering the case of Brother Taylor, his attitude and expressions both before this Council and to others and to members of the Council individually, and President Lyman presented the following:

Brother Taylor admitted of wrongs in Canada and Davis county. He tactically admits his late marriage with his typewriter.

He has cursed and threatened his brethren. He has put out a purported revelation of his father's which his father never presented to the Church nor his brethren. His construction upon it is very mischievous and against the position and discipline of the Church by the living oracles. It was in his power to have restrained Brothers Cowley and Woodruff, but instead his course lent encouragement to them. He has had no change of heart since he resigned his position in the Council. He has not met us in a friendly and penitent spiritf himself for his troubles. He said he never wants to be associated with the Twelve in time or eternity. When his brethren reported his cursing of George Albert Smith, he said they were liars. The action of the stake Presidency and High Council in the case of Bishop Robinson he denounced as the damndest outrage ever perpetrated. In a threatening manner he tells us of the awful things that would happen to the Church if he should open his mouth and tell what he knows. He greatly admires Henry S. Tanner and Nathan Clark who we have found unsafe men. His examples and words give comfort and encouragement to those inclined to override the discipline of the Church.

On the 28th day of March the Council convened and further considered the case of Brother Taylor and unanimously rendered the following:

Today, by unanimous vote of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, it was decided that John W. Taylor be, and he is hereby excommunicated from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, for insubordination to the Government and discipline of the Church.

Francis M. Lyman

In behalf of the Council.

The Trial of Apostle Matthias F. Cowley

Minutes of a meeting of the Council of the Twelve held May 10, 1911, at 10:30 A.M. in the Salt Lake Temple, at which there were present: President Francis M. Lyman, Heber J. Grant, Hyrum M. Smith, George Albert Smith, Charles W. Penrose, George F. Richards, Orson F. Whitney, David O. McKay, Anthony W. Ivins and Joseph F. Smith Jr., of the Council and Matthias F. Cowley in response to the following summons.C

Salt Lake City, Utah, April 27, 1911.

Elder Matthias F. Cowley,

123 North, West Temple St., City.

My Dear Brother:

By this writing you are summoned to appear before the Council of the Twelve Apostles in the Salt Lake Temple at 10 A.M. on Wednesday, May 10th, to answer complaints against you of marrying plural wives yourself and of giving plural wives to others. Also of advising and encouraging other men to enter into plural marriages illegally and of the Church, and to show cause why you should not be adjudged guilty.

You will be required to answer all questions that will be asked you by the Council along the above lines, telling the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Do not fail to appear as we shall be there to receive you.

Affectionately,

Your Brother,

Francis M. Lyman,

In behalf of the Council.

The meeting commenced by singing, "This Earth was Once a Garden Place, " p. 277. Prayer by Elder Heber J. Grant. Singing: "Come O Thou King of Kings, " p. 209.

President Lyman: The brethren will remember that we have been for quite a long time trying to discover Brother Cowley. We have taken pains to put letters into his wife's hands, we have registered them to him at Baker City, Oregon, and to Boise, Idaho, and around the country and have been unsuccessful until a short time ago when we learned he was in this neighborhood and would come and see me. I talked a little with Brother Cowley when I served the summons on him about ten days ago and he disclaimed any intention of trying to keep away from us although circumstances have led us to believe that he has. I believe his case is the most remarkable that has come before us in as much as he has been with us once or twice before and he has expressed his respect for us, but we have felt that we have not been properly treated by him. We have met some things in our travels that have disposed us to believe that he was working against us and giving encouragement to those who are in this position. I am simply making these statements Brother Cowley, to give you an understanding so that you can clear yourself. We have been under the impression that Brother Cowley has been at the forefront and has been under the cause of more people entering into this condition of plural marriage than any one else and no man did more toward getting Presidents of Stakes and Presidents of Missions to enter polygamous marriages, which he should not have done and we want him to come here and tell his story, as we tell him in the letter and tell all he knows and clear himself. He has been very well informed as to the position of the Church on this question from the time of President Woodruff. We have always had advice and could always get it from those who would have advised him aright. From the time of his ordination into the Apostleship his confidence and that he should have approached me in preference to any other man because I took him a little under my wing and we were quite confidential with each other, but since he has taken his stand contrary to the Church he has not advised with me as he should have done because he knew of my views on the question. The report is that he said you should not talk with Brother Lyman or with Brother Joseph F. Smith, as I was opposed to and President Smith did not want to know anything about it. I am convinced that in Canada and Mexico, in Idaho and Wyoming and all over he has been effecting plural marriages among the people and has done a great deal of harm in this respect. We would like Brother Cowley to stand up here and begin at the beginning and tell us of every case that he has been connected with and if he had authority where he got the authority and tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and after he has got through we will be prepared to ask him a few questions. We would not like him to involve any one or place the responsibility upon some one else when he should shoulder it. We do not want him to put the responsibility upon the Church, as we stand here to defend the Church in President Snow's and subsequently President Smith's administration. We feel that Brother Cowley is more responsible for the condition in the Church than any other man in the Church and we do not want him to place the responsibility upon any dead man unless he can prove it and we want him to open his heart and be candid with us and tell everything. Brother Lyman read the summons appearing at the beginning of these minutes and also a copy of a letter which he sent Brother John W. Taylor and he was under the impression to Brother Cowley also. He had sent one to Brother Grant who acknowledged receiving it and he thought also to Brother Teasdale. Brother Cowley said he did not remember receiving the letter although he received the word from Brother Teasdale. The letter follows:

Salt Lake City, Utah

Elder John W. Taylor,

Colonial Juarez.

Dear Brother:

Acting under the advise and counsel of the First Presidency I take this means of calling your attention to the official declaration on the subject of plural marriages adopted by the late General Conference of the Church; and I bespeak your hearty cooperation in emphasizing the same in your private conversations and counsels as well as your public utterances, to the end that no misunderstanding may exist among our people concerning its scope and meaning; but on the contrary, that all may be given to distinctly understand that infractions of the law in regard to plural marriage are transgressions against the Church, punishable by excommunication.

That God may bless you in all your ministry is the prayer of

Your affectionate brother,

Francis M. Lyman.

From that time I feel the brethren have been thoroughly advised. Brothers Taylor, Cowley and Woodruff were with the Council when President Snow was selected as President of the Church and the question of plural marriages came up. Brother Lyman related the circumstances surrounding the (sic) of the First Presidency at that time. President Snow stating that they (Plural marriages) would stop and later in January issued his declaration on this subject which appeared in the Deseret News of January 8th following his selection as President. President Lyman read this statement as also that of President Smith. Now we would like to hear from Brother Cowley concerning where he has done wrong from the first offense, where he got his authority, whether by word of mouth or written authority what his thoughts have been, who have been in his confidence and who his advisers have been. I think he has more to tell on this subject than any other man living in the Church today.

Matthias F. Cowley: I will say, Brethren, in the outset in regard to appearing before you that it was purely an accident that I did not get the word. I moved from Boise on my way to Spokane and left word to have my mail forwar Oregon, I got word not to go to Spokane, I did not have an address, but went to the Post Office for my mail. You have had a wrong understanding of this, as I have had no intention of trying to avoid you, but I would rather not discuss these things. I have been accused of many things which I have not done, but I do not know how I can prove my innocence. The first case of plural marriage I was connected with, as I remember, was Brother Kelsch. He returned from his mission in 1898, and was sent to me by President Cannon and all the authority I exercised on that occasion came from President George Q. Cannon. President Cannon told me he had the authority from President Woodruff and Brother Joseph F. Smith told me on two occasions that Brother Cannon had the authority and Brother Woodruff didn't want to be known in it. Brother Ben E. Rich came to me. Brother William W. Burton, a relative of President Joseph F. Smith, came to me from him. As to Mission Presidents, Brothers Rich, Robinson and Duffin are the only ones I have married. I have had nothing to do with these marriages since the resignation of Brother Taylor and myself, I have had nothing to do with any of these. Brother Alpha Higgs came to me and I told him I could not do it and as I understood things now would have nothing more to do with it. I have had two conversations with President Smith, one a few evenings ago and he said if you are free of these later offenses that is all we want to know, but we feel hard toward the man who has induced the people to go in since the declaration of the Presidency. The reason I didn't consult President Lyman was because it was given me to understand that I should consult no one. I was told to keep my own counsel and was severely censured one time by Brother Cannon for consulting someone else regarding a certain marriage. Brother Penrose told me once in the city of Mexico, that he had written the manifesto, and it was gotten up so that it did not mean anything and President Smith had told me the same. I mentionly to show the training I have had from those over me. I have been conscientious in these things; when I got the dispensation from President Cannon, Ben E. Rich came to me and had two women and I told him I only had the dispensation for him and Laura and he eventually accepted my word. I didn't try to get people to go into it. I married Apostle Brigham Young and Brother Merrill. I couldn't induce these men to take plural wives if they were not already converted. The people came to me understanding I had the authority. I married Brother Young about 1902, I cannot remember the exact dates. I was never instructed to go to a foreign land to perform these marriages, although in some cases I did so. If you can give me some specific case I can better tell and you can decide whether I have been guilty. I have been lied about as others have.

Question: It is claimed that you told Sister Dusenberry that it is probable that plural marriages could be performed.

M. F. Cowley: I saw her and Brother Jex in Provo one day talking very nicely together, I said you look like two lovers about ready to get married. It was said simply in a jocular sense, possibly unwisely. President Snow told me at one time when I went to consult him about marrying Joseph Morrell of Cache county, that he would not interfere with the unfinished business of President Woodruff. I do not feel that it is right to put all these responsibilities on me, but if it were before the world I would be willing to bear them. I married Frank Y. Taylor, John M. Cannon and others who are held in high esteem here. They were all before 1904, I think about 1901 or 1902. The first I performed was Ben E. Rich and the last David Udall, the last taking place in Idaho. I married most of them in the United States. Brother Merrill was married, I think in 1903, to Hulda Erickson. I am not dishonest and not a liar and have always been true to the work and to the brethren. I have always been true and faithful myself. We have always been taught ttight place that it would not be amiss to lie to help them out. One of the Presidency of the Church made the statement some years ago when I was in the presidency of one of the stakes of Zion in Idaho that he would lie like hell to help his brethren. What I have done has been done conscientiously and under the direction of those higher up not defiantly or with the idea of taking the bits in my own mouth. I doubt if you can bring one man who can honestly claim that I have got him to enter a plural marriage. If I have erred through these influences. I ask to be forgiven. I feel that I have been punished once for these offenses and that I should not be punished again. I have done nothing since 1906 nor taken a plural wife myself. I married my last wife in Canada in the summer of 1905, Sister Harker in 1899.

President Lyman: Who married you?

M. F. Cowley: Brother Merrill put me under a solemn covenant binding me not to tell, I was married in the Logan Temple so leave you to guess the rest.

President Lyman: Whose advise did you seek?

M. F. Cowley: President Cannon told me to do these things or I would never have done it. President Snow, did not, he simply told me that he would not interfere with Brother Woodruff's and Cannon's work. I married Sister Harker and Mary L. Taylor, Brother J. A. Wolff married me to Sister Taylor. I heard two of the brethren in Mexico and two in Canada had authority to perform plural marriages and that it came from President George Q. Cannon. I believe no authority has been exercised, except in the Tolman case, which I know nothing about, but what came from President Cannon. I understand that President Isaac Smith had his marriage performed in Canada and Brother _____ of Rexburg went to Mexico. I never directed any one to go to Brother Wolff.

Question: Did Brother Taylor give Brother Wolff any authority?

M. F. Cowley: I don't know. All I know, I think a Brother Levitt went to President Smith and asked him if it would be alright and he referred him to Brother Taylor who had charge of all things in Canada.

G. F. Richards: Was it known at the time you were dropped from the Council of the Twelve by the Council that you had taken these two wives?

M. F. Cowley: These facts were understood although the dates were not given. President Smith assured me that I should not be molested if I have not been guilty. I performed the ceremony for Brother Woodruff at Preston, Idaho, and Sister Clark about 1903, I think. I married John M. Cannon and Frank Y. Taylor to two each, long before 1904, both on the same day. Byron Sessions in the Big Horn in 1902. I did not marry Brother Bassed of Rexburg. He came to me and asked if I could help him out and I told him no.

H. M. Smith: When did you feel your authority ceased that Brother Cannon conferred upon you?

M. F. Cowley: I felt that the authority I received continued only that I didn't exercise it without getting all the support I could. The most of them went to Brother Cannon and then came to me.

Question: After Brother Snow and Brother Cannon were dead did you still exercise the authority?

M. F. Cowley: I don't think I have.

H. J. Grant related a conversation he had with Brother Cowley after he came home from Japan, when Brother Cowley came to him and said if he could get a wife he, Cowley, would go with him to Canada or Mexico and help him out.

This conversation was denied by Brother Cowley.

Brother Grant stated further that he went to President Smith and asked him if it was possible for him to get another wife and President Smith told him it was not. Brother Grant being desirous of marrying Fanny Woolley, and Brother Cowley told him: "if you want her I will help you."

D. O. McKay: Did any one else know you married Brother Sessions?

M. F. Cowley: I think Brother Woodruff was the only one. I have had the idea that President Smith was not opposed to these marriages if it could be done without trouble with the government.

H. J. Grant: Several Elders came to the British Mission while I was presiding there and told me that after they had been instructed in the Temple that these things had stopped, Brother Cowley had come out and told them that if they wanted another wife when they came back they could get one.

This Brother Cowley denied.

M. F. Cowley: I married Brother Taylor twice, but not the last time, that is new to me. I don't know anything about the Sandberg girl. I married Brother Chamberlain. here in Salt Lake. He was in touch with Brother Cannon. Also Brother Robinson, who was in touch with Brother Cannon.

A. W. Ivins: Was it talked among the people that they could not talk to Brother Lyman and John Henry Smith about these things, and also thought permissible to date these things back before the manifesto?

M. F. Cowley: I believed it was. Brother Merrill led me to believe that President Smith's declaration was not meant for foreign countries and with that understanding I took my last plural wife.

President Lyman: How did you come to marry Brother Thomas Chamberlain?

M. F. Cowley: As I remember it, he came to me and said he had seen President Cannon. I did not marry Israel Barlow. Brother Cowley related the Circumstances connected with the marrying of his last wife, being engaged in Mexico and later marrying her in Canada, after she had become infatuated with another man and fallen out with him. I married Henry S. Tanner to one of the Richards girls and one of the Thatcher girls but don't know anything about any other marriages.

A. W. Ivins: Did you have the Idea in your mind that it would be alright to date your marriage back prior to the date and to misrepresent the facts?

M. F. Cowley: The influence of Brother Merrill and his position and his having received the authority from President Cannon had a good effect upon me.

Question: Had it ever been discussed or thought that John W. Taylor would ever become President of the Church and it was the proper thing to get into line and stand in defense of the principle of plural marriage?

M. F. Cowley: I have heard the idea that some time John W. Taylor would preside over the Church, but not in connection with plural marriage. I never entertained any idea of superiority upon the theory of plural marriage on account of those in the position. I believed President Woodruff married a wife the year before he died, of course I don't know, I can't prove it. I married John W. Taylor in Farmington at his home. I have refused to marry Charles H. Hyde, George Porter, Lula Johnson and a girl who wanted to marry George Goddard. I didn't encourage Charles Woolfenden and Dr. McGregor. They both spoke to me and I told them that there was no possible way. Woolfenden knew Tolman and he talked to me about it and I told him I did not think Tolman had any authority. I married J. M. Tanner to Mrs. Evans, George C. Parkinson to Fanny Woolley in Colorado. I married Brother Arthur Hart, but not Dr. Cutler or William C. Parkinson. I don't know any one who has been performing these marriages except Tolman and I don't know where he got the authority. I did not marry Clayson.

Question: Have you ever authorized any one at any time to marry anyone else?

M. F. Cowley: No sir, I don't think I had the right to.

C. W. Penrose: What do you think of the revelation to President Taylor in 1886?

M. F. Cowley: This would not justify me. He referred to a revelation to President Woodruff, which he took to President Smith and read it to him and he said if it had not been for President Woodruff's strength in that principle we would have had worse than the manifesto, and explained what certain diplomatic brethren thought was best to do. In view of this revelation thought the brethren really felt that they were not justified in stopping it and that is all the effect it had on my mind and the Taylor revelation had very little effect. I thought I should receive my instructions from the living oracles. I claimed to have been in harmony with you brethren since I was dropped from the quorum. I had nothing to do with the Roberts case, of Wasatch, and Joseph W. Musser, except ten or twelve years ago, I married a Hill girl to him. Married John W. Wolff ten or twelve years ago.

President Lyman: Did you marry my brother?

M. F. Cowley: He talked with me, but I had nothing to do with it. I possibly told him he could go to Mexico or Canada. I am willing to do anything I can to be in harmony with you, if I have done wrong. I ask your forgiveness. I am, willing to do anything to set matters right. I want you to treat me as considerately as possible. I feel that I have erred in view of the sentiments and feelings of the brethren. I feel that the Lord has greatly blessed me in spirit and in regard to my personal standing before Him, and when you brethren have ruled I propose to stand by it in the future. I have never made a practice of performing marriages and encouraging them.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 and reconvened at 3:30 P.M.

H. M. Smith: Did you place any of these brethren under covenant not to divulge anything regarding their marriages or place them under oath?

M. F. Cowley: No, not under covenant or under oath, but I told them to be cautious and not get the Church into trouble. I was put under oath myself. The conditions were different then than now. I never performed a ceremony except in all solemnity. We always had prayer first and everybody knew who I was and I knew who I was marrying. No one was in disguise. I was asked to hold up my hands and solemnly swear, but I never did anything of that kind with the people I married.

President Lyman: You didn't consult me regarding these marriages.

M. F. Cowley: I understood that I was not to consult you or John Henry Smith, that you didn't want to know anything about these things.

President Lyman: Do you think you are justified in lying to help your brethren?

M. F. Cowley: I don't feel that a brother would be justified in screening another brother in doing that which is wrong, but in protecting him in doing that which is right.

President Lyman: I do not know how far I would be justified in lying or in [not] telling the truth to protect a brother in doing what is right to protect him. (sic) As far as I feel, I don't think it has been required since President Woodruff's time that a man enter into plural marriage and those who have entered into it have done so upon their own responsibility.

G. F. Richards: Has Brother Tanner ever asked you to marry him more than twice?

M. F. Cowley: No sir.

President Lyman: Where you married people have you had recommends from their Bishops or presidents of stakes?

M. F. Cowley: No sir, they usually came with word from President Cannon.

Question: Did you marry Peter Anderson? Or Patriarch Tolman?

M. F. Cowley: No sir. I married Alonzo Merrill, but not, Fred, who I understand committed adultery. I married Hugh J. Cannon about 1903, I think. After President Cannon died I performed marriages for people who had been promised before that time. I married Heber Bennion and Brother Smart in Salt Lake City, also Jesse N. Smith.

The Sears matter was referred to and Brother Cowley sresident Smith was vexed when he heard that he had not been married and he was married as late as 1906. There were instances where Brother Merrill sent men to me with the understanding on my part that they came from President Cannon.

C. W. Penrose: I understand that Brother Cowley advised Brother Bastian?

M. F. Cowley: I don't remember talking with him. I had the understanding when I married any one that they had been promised by some one in authority higher up. I also married Reuben G. Miller, Josiah Hickman, Abraham O. Woodruff, M. M. Steele, Jr. and George M. Cannon.

It was moved that Brother Cowley be excused, in parting he said: I want you brethren in considering my case to prove John W. Taylor a false prophet when he said that I would be excommunicated from the Church. If there is anything I can do to make good our honor to the nation and to the saints I am willing to do it. I want you to know that I am not rebellious and never have been and if I have erred it has been because of these circumstances and the example of my brethren. I am in harmony with you and I would like you to put me upon my honor to make that good in the future. I would rather die than be cut off from the Church.

After the departure of Brother Cowley the Brethren of the Council each in turn expressed his views in relation to the case of Brother Cowley, the brethren remaining in session for some time. The matter was continued until Thursday, May 11th.

At a meeting of the Council of the Twelve Apostles held in the Temple, Thursday afternoon, May 11th, 1911, the following action was taken: C

This day by unanimous vote of the Council of the Twelve Apostles it was decided that Matthias F. Cowley, for insubordination to the government and discipline of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, be and he is hereby deprived of the right and authority to exercise any of the functions of the Priesthood.

Francis M. Lyman,