

## LUCINDA PENDLETON

(Sealing Date Unknown)



Lucinda was born September 27, 1801, and married renowned anti-Mason William Morgan in 1819. Morgan was apparently murdered seven years later, and Lucinda married George Washington Harris in 1830. The Harris family was baptized in 1834 and by March 1838 was living in Far West, Missouri, where George served on the high council of the stake.

Joseph Smith visited Far West, from “the latter part of October or first of November” until shortly after November 10, 1837, and probably met the Harris’s at that time.<sup>1</sup> He returned five months later with Emma and his children.

Joseph Smith’s diary records: “On the 14th of March [1838], as we were about entering Far West, many of the brethren came out to meet us, who also with open arms welcomed us to their bosoms. We were immediately received under the hospitable roof of Brother George W. Harris, who treated us with all possible kindness, and we refreshed ourselves with much satisfaction, after our long and tedious journey.”<sup>2</sup> The Smiths stayed with the Harris’s for two months. Both families relocated to Nauvoo by the early 1840s.

Lucinda Pendleton left no records. Consequently, questions arise concerning the reliability of the data corroborating her sealing to Joseph Smith and its timing. Not all historians agree that a connubial relationship was formed. Richard Lloyd Anderson and Scott H. Faulring wrote: “The claim that Lucinda was sealed to Joseph Smith is not based on impressive evidence.”<sup>3</sup>

Supportive documentation includes Lucinda’s proxy sealing to Joseph Smith performed in the Nauvoo Temple on January 22, 1846, and a ceremony that was repeated (completely vicariously) in the Salt Lake Temple in 1899.<sup>4</sup>

But several of the women who participated in proxy sealing to the Prophet in the Nauvoo Temple were not married to him while he was living. For example, Cordelia Calista Morley turned down a sealing proposal from the Prophet during his lifetime but was sealed to him vicariously in the Nauvoo Temple on January 27, 1846.<sup>5</sup>

Evidence for a sealing in Nauvoo during Joseph’s lifetime is non-existent. No affidavits from witnesses or other participants have been found. “In mid-July 1840 George [Lucinda’s legal husband] was sent on a mission to travel eastward collecting funds and materials for church publications. He

left soon after July 25, labored for a year in the eastern states, especially New York, then returned home in September 1841.”<sup>6</sup>

A few authors have written that Lucinda Pendleton Morgan Harris apostatized and joined a Catholic convent in the 1860s, but the evidence supporting this is problematic.<sup>7</sup>

In contrast, Masonic historian William Leon Cummings, wrote in 1934:

At some time prior to 1853, Mrs. Harris separated from her husband, for in 1856 [Mr.] Harris petitioned for a divorce, on the grounds that his wife had willfully deserted him and without reasonable cause absented herself for more than the space of three years.<sup>8</sup>

Recently discovered evidence prove that she died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Lucinda Wesley Smith, in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1856.<sup>9</sup>

While Lucinda physically removed herself from the main body of the Saints to live with her daughter in the early 1850s, her feelings toward the faith and Joseph Smith prior to her death are unknown.

[Evidences of Plural Marriage: See Appendix](#)

## Endnotes:

1. See *History of The Church*, 2: 521, 525.
2. Dean C. Jessee, ed., *The Papers of Joseph Smith: Volume 2, Journal, 1832–1842* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 213; *History of the Church*, 3:8–9. See also Scott H. Faulring, ed., *An American Prophet’s Record: The Diaries and Journals of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1989), 160.
3. Richard Lloyd Anderson and Scott H. Faulring, “Review of *In Sacred Loneliness: The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith*, by Todd M. Compton,” *FARMS Review of Books* 10, no. 2 (1998): 75.
4. Salt Lake Temple Sealing Records, Book D, 243, April 4, 1899; Thomas Milton Tinney, *The Royal Family of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Jr.* (Salt Lake City: Tinney-Greene Family Organization, 1973), 41; Lisle Brown, *Nauvoo Sealings, Adoptions, and Anointings: A Comprehensive Register of Persons Receiving LDS Temple Ordinances, 1841–1846* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2006), 282.
5. Cordelia Morley Cox, Autobiography, holograph, BYU, 4; Lisle Brown, *Nauvoo Sealings, Adoptions, and Anointings: A Comprehensive Register of Persons Receiving LDS Temple Ordinances, 1841–1846* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2006), 284.
6. Todd Compton, *In Sacred Loneliness: The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1997), 50–51.
7. See Todd Compton, *In Sacred Loneliness: The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1997), 54; George D. Smith, *Nauvoo Polygamy: “... but we called it celestial marriage”* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2008), 93.
8. George W. Harris also left the Church. Andrew Jenson penned: “In 1854 Geo. W. Harris was living at Kanessville (Council Bluffs), Iowa. He claimed that ‘he had done enough for the Church

and was going to work for George W. Harris now' In 1857, Thomas B. Marsh having decided to be re-baptized, called on George W. Harris to make his peace. The wife was dead but Harris received Bro. Marsh with kindness, but expressed himself as unwilling to follow Bro. Marsh's example. ... In 1857, on account of the suspension of mail service to Utah because of the advance of Johnston's army a pony express between Kaneshville and Salt Lake City was provided by public subscription. George W. Harris, when approached, gave his old excuse of working for George W. Harris, but two or three weeks later died, leaving his money behind him." (Andrew Jenson, Andrew Jenson Collection, MS 17956, Box 73, Fd. 28, CHL.

9. William Leon Cummings, *Bibliography of Anti-Masonry*, reprinted from Part I, Volume IV (Nocalore, North Carolina Lodge of Research, 1834), 28.

## **Appendix — Evidences of Joseph Smith's Sealing to Lucinda Pendelton**

- Harriet Cook Young, "Lucinda Harris biographical information sheet," Document #2, Andrew Jenson Papers, MS 17956, Box 49, fd. 16.
- Jenson, "Plural Marriage," 233.
- Sarah Pratt, in Wyl, *Mormon Portraits*, 60.
- Nauvoo Temple proxy marriage to Joseph Smith, January 22, 1846. Brown, *Nauvoo Sealings, Adoptions, and Anointings*, 282.
- Proxy sealing to Joseph Smith, April 4, 1899, under the direction of President Lorenzo Snow, Salt Lake Temple Sealing Records, Book D, 243, GS film, 184,590, LDS Family History Library. Tinney, "The Royal Family of the Prophet Joseph Smith" 41, 63.
- Willard Richards recorded January 17, 1842: "dined at Sister Agness. with Joseph & Sister Harris." Willard Richards, Journal, 1847.