

## Presendia Huntington

(Sealed December 11, 1841)



Presendia Huntington was born on September 7, 1810, in Watertown, New York, the fourth of ten children of William Huntington and Zina Baker. In 1827 at age sixteen, she married Norman Buell. Her sister Zina introduced her to the church in 1835, and she and Norman joined the following year.

In 1838 the couple migrated to Missouri where Norman became disaffected from the church. Nevertheless, through Presendia's coaxing, the Buell family moved to Lima, Illinois, thirty miles south of Nauvoo, at the end of 1840.

Sometime in 1841, Joseph Smith taught Presendia regarding eternal marriage. Since her husband was inactive, she could not be sealed to him. Joseph's revelation states that individuals who are not sealed to an eternal spouse, "remain separately and singly, without exaltation, in their saved condition, to all eternity" (D&C 132:17). Presendia needed a husband for the next life.



On May 1, 1869, she signed the following affidavit:

Be it remembered that on this first day of May A.D. 1869 personally appeared before me Elias Smith Probate Judge for Said County Presenda Lathrop Huntington Kimball who was by me Sworn in due form of law and upon her oath saith, that on the eleventh day of December A.D. 1841, at the City of Nauvoo, County of Hancock State of Illinois, She was married or Sealed to Joseph Smith, President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints by Dimick B. Huntington, a High-Priest in Said Church, according to the laws of the Same regulating Marriage; in the presence of Fanny Maria Huntington.<sup>1</sup>

Oliver Huntington remembered in 1883: "Dimick [gave] our sisters Zina and Presendia to Joseph as wives for eternity."<sup>2</sup> The only other record from Presendia regarding this sealing is her 1881 biographical sketch that states:

I was married to Norman Buell January 6th 1827. Both joined the Church in Kirtland Geauga Co Ohio. He left the church in Missouri in 1839. The Lord gave me strength to stand alone & keep the faith. Amid heavy persecution in 1841 I entered into the new & everlasting Covenant. I was sealed to Joseph Smith the Prophet & Seer & to the best of my ability I have honored Plural Marriage never speaking one word against the principal.<sup>3</sup>

Emmeline Wells wrote in the *Woman's Exponent*:

Sister Presendia ... became more familiarly associated with the Prophet and his teachings. ... Joseph himself taught the principle of plural marriage to Sister Presendia, and her heart was

humble, and her mind open to receive the revelations of heaven. She knew Joseph to be a man of God, and she had received many manifestations in proof of this, and consequently when he explained to her clearly the knowledge which he had obtained from the Lord, she accepted the sealing ordinances with Joseph as a sacred and holy confirmation.<sup>4</sup>

Presendia's faith in the church and Joseph Smith never wavered. She wrote to Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner on March 9, 1880, saying: "Won't it be a happy time for us if we can gain the place where Joseph & our loved ones mingle?"<sup>5</sup>

Presendia died in 1892 having penned in her autobiographical sketch: "Never in my life, in this kingdom, which is 44 years, have I doubted the truth of this great work, revealed in these, the last days."<sup>6</sup>

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

## Endnotes:

1. Joseph F. Smith affidavit books, CHL 1:7.
2. Oliver Huntington Journals, no.15, entry for February 18, 1883, HBLL, BYU.
3. Presenda Huntington Kimball, "Biographical Sketch," 1881, MS 742, CHL, first copy page 2 and variant copy page 2.
4. "A Venerable Woman, Presendia Lathrop Kimball," *Woman's Exponent* 11, no. 21 (April 1, 1883): 163.
5. "Presendia Huntington Kimball to Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner, March 9, 1880," Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner Collection, MSS 363, BYU HBLL Special Collections, Item 15.
6. Presenda Huntington Kimball, "Biographical Sketch," 1881, MS 742, CHL.

## Appendix — Evidences of Joseph Smith's Sealing to Presendia Huntington:

- Presendia L. Huntington, Affidavit, May 1, 1869, Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books, 1:7, 4:7.
- Presendia L. Huntington, Letter to her eldest granddaughter living in 1880, April 1, 1881.
- Malissa Lott dictation to Jenson, "First list of wives," Document #1, Andrew Andrew Jenson Papers, MS 17956, Box 49, fd. 16.
- Jenson, "Plural Marriage," 233.
- Zina Huntington Young, Journal, December 11, 1848.
- Bennett, *The History of the Saints*, 256, lists as one of Joseph's wives "Mrs. B\*\*\*\*," Presendia married Norman Buell.
- Oliver Huntington, Journal, February 18, 1883.
- Wilford Woodruff, "Historian's Private Journal," (one volume, 1858-1878), undated statement written between a July 1, 1866 entry and a November 18, 1874 entry. Date is for 1840. See chart below.
- Wells, "A Venerable Woman: Presendia Lathrop Kimball," 163.
- Nauvoo Temple proxy marriage to Joseph Smith, February 4, 1846. Brown, *Nauvoo Sealings, Adoptions, and Anointings*, 285.
- Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, 418–19.