

**Emma Hale Smith Bidamon:  
In Her Own Words**

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by

**April LaJune ©**

**SCRIPT**

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**INT. DAY - BACKDROP IS A DARK BLUE CURTAIN WITH AN OLD FASHIONED CHAIR WHERE EMMA SMITH WILL BE SITTING. THERE IS A WOODEN STAND/TABLE HOLDING A FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH OF JOSEPH SMITH JR ON A LACE DOILY, A VASE OF FLOWERS AND A BOOK.**

Emma Smith is addressing the questions she is most frequently asked about her life as the wife of Joseph Smith Jr., the Prophet of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

She is sitting in a chair in an interview room scene. She is dressed in a dark blue hat, dark blue dress with a shawl and purse. She is also wearing her gloves.

**EMMA SMITH**

(Removing her gloves)

Many people have asked me questions about my life as the wife of Joseph Smith Jr over the years and I'm here to answer them and hopefully, lay rumors to rest.

First, let me introduce myself. My name is Emma Hale Smith Bidamon.

I was married to Joseph Smith Jr at South Bainbridge, New York at the house of Squire Tarbell who performed the ceremony when I was in my 22nd or 23rd year as memory serves.

My son, Joseph reminded me I was married on January 18th, 1827 but as you might recall, my certificate of marriage was lost many years ago in some of the marches we were forced to make along the way.

Some try to say either a Presbyterian or Sidney Rigdon performed our ceremony, however, I can assure you, it was Squire Tarbell as I did not meet Mr. Rigdon until many years after that.

We were not married by a Presbyterian clergyman either. I was visiting at Mr. Stowell's who lived in Bainsbridge and saw Joseph there.

I had no intention of marrying when I left home, but during my visit at Mr. Stowell's, Joseph called on me at the Stowell home.

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My folks were bitterly opposed to him and being persistently pursued by Joseph who was aided by Mr. Stowell, I was urged to marry him. As I preferred Joseph to any other man I knew, I consented.

We went to Squire Tarbell's and were married.

Afterward, when father found out that I was married, he sent for us.

Joseph then bought my brother Jesse Hale's place, off father's farm and we lived there till the Book of Mormon was translated and I believe published also.

I was not in Palmyra very long.

As I have previously stated, I lost three children. One is buried in Pennsylvania while the others, twins, are buried in Ohio. I had not named them.

Later, John and Julia Murdock had twins. During the birth Sister Murdock died. Brother Murdock came to me and asked me to take them and I took the babes. Their names were Joseph and Julia.

Joseph died at 11 months. Both babies were sick when my husband was mobbed.

When they dragged my husband Joseph from the house, they left the door open. These are the people who tarred and feathered him.

I was nursing the children to health when they relapsed and the child died.

Julia, his sister, lived but was much weaker than the boy.

As far as Sidney Rigdon is concerned, I first met him while I was residing at father David Whitmer's. I think Mr. Rigdon came there.

The Book of Mormon had been translated and published some time before I met Mr. Rigdon. Parley P. Pratt had united with the Church before I knew Sidney Rigdon or had heard of him.

At the time the Book of Mormon was translated, there was no church organized and Rigdon did not become acquainted with Joseph or me till after the Church was established in 1830. How long after the organization, I can not say, but it was some time after that.

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When the Book of Mormon was being translated, there were several scribes including myself, Oliver Cowdery, Martin Harris, and my brother, Reuben Hale.

I've also been asked if Alva Hale was a scribe, but if he had written some, I do not remember it.

On the issue of polygamy and whether Joseph ever had a revelation or condoned spiritual wifery, I can attest that there was never any revelation on either.

There were some rumors of something of the sort, which I asked my husband. He assured me that all there was of it was, that, in a chat about plural wives, he had said, "Well, such a system might possibly be, if everybody was agreed to it, and would behave as they should; but they would not; and besides, it was contrary to the will of heaven."

No such thing as polygamy, or spiritual wifery, was taught, publicly or privately, before my husband's death, that I have now, or ever had any knowledge of.

Upon continued questions again, Joseph had no other wife but me, nor did he, to my knowledge, ever have. He did not have improper relations with any woman that ever came to my knowledge.

My recollection of spiritual wifery is at one time my husband came to me and asked me if I had heard certain rumors about spiritual marriages, or anything of the kind. He assured me that if I had, that they were without foundation; that there was no such doctrine, and never should be with his knowledge or consent. I know that he had no other wife or wives than myself, in any sense, either spiritual or otherwise.

Regarding Mormonism as the truth, I know it to be the truth. I believe the Church to have been established by divine direction. I have complete faith in it.

In writing for Joseph, I frequently wrote day after day, often sitting at the table close by him, he sitting with his face buried in his hat, with the stone in it, and dictating hour after hour with nothing between us.

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He had neither a manuscript nor book to read from as he translated the plates. He could not have concealed anything from me either as the plates often lay on the table without any attempt at concealment with the exception of a small linen cloth being wrapped around it. I had given this to him in order to protect the plates from view.

I once felt of the plates as they thus lay on the table, tracing their outline and shape. They seemed to be pliable like thick paper, and would rustle with a metallic sound when the edges were moved by the thumb, as one does sometimes thumb the edges of a book.

When Oliver Cowdrey would write for Joseph, he would be in the same room as I had worked.

As Joseph had a difficult time writing or dictating a coherent and well-worded letter, it was not possible for him to write the Book of Mormon in advance without anyone knowing. And, though I was an active participant in the scenes that transpired, and was present during the translation of the plates, and had cognizance of things as they transpired, it is marvelous to me, "a marvel and a wonder," as much so as to anyone else.

I did not attempt to handle the plates, other than I have told you, nor uncover them to look at them. I was satisfied that it was the work of God, and therefore did not feel it to be necessary to do so.

I don't recall Joseph ever forbidding me from examining the plates. I knew that he had them, and was not specially curious about them. I moved them from place to place on the table, as it was necessary in doing my work.

My belief about the authenticity of the Book of Mormon is that it is of divine authenticity. I have not the slightest doubt of it. I am satisfied that no man could have dictated the writing of the manuscripts unless he was inspired.

When I was acting as his scribe, Joseph would dictate to me hour after hour and when returning after meals, or after interruptions, he would at once begin where he had left off, without either seeing the manuscript or having any portion of it read to him.

This was a usual thing for him to do. It would have been improbable that a learned man could do this; and, for one so ignorant and unlearned as he was, it was simply impossible.

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Our relationship as husband and wife was good. We were not in the habit of quarreling as there was no necessity for such behavior. He knew that I wished for nothing but what was right, and, as he wished for nothing else, we did not disagree.

He usually gave some heed to what I had to say. It was quite a grievous thing to many that I had any influence with him.

After my husband, Joseph's death, it was rumored that I had joined the Methodist Church and apostatized myself rejecting the faith. As I was called an apostate, I have never apostatized, or forsaken the faith I at first accepted. I was called so because I would not accept the new fangled notion presented by those in the Utah movement.

I was baptized by Oliver Cowdrey at Bainbridge which is separate from South Bainbridge.

Many times I have been the subject of rumors which are simply not true. I attest to the facts I have stated and am thankful to God I have been an instrument in his hands to bring forth the restoration of his church on earth through divine revelation.

**END SCRIPT**