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I have made reference to the sometimes meager livelihood in Margaret Randall's home, but I have no reason to believe that she had less than the other families. To maintain five families must have been quite something. I have always had the impression the Alfred Randall family was one of the families which lived polygamy as it was meant to be lived.

Because the principle and practice of polygamy had such an influence on mother's life (her entire life and more particularly her married), it having been built around the problems and circumstances brought on by polygamy, one cannot think nor write about her without being involved with the subject. For these reasons I am going to write briefly about polygamy and it's influence on mother and return later to my grandmother.

That a principle and it's practice by such a small percent of church membership should create so much comment and commotion is provocative. Few people are concerned with or even mention the principle of plural marriage today, but that was not the case during my mother's life. I have heard many theories advanced as to the reason for the establishment of polygamy in the Mormon church, some of them in approbation, some logical, and some not too complimentary. One point of view which was far from uncommon even as late as my day, was expressed by one of Alfred Randall's wives as quoted by her daughter in which she said: "Polygamy was not hard to live if one worked at it, and if they wanted to get into the Celestial Kingdom."

Perhaps the best treatise I have read on this subject can be found in Annie Clark Tanner's book, A Mormon Mother. Aunt Annie's mother was married to my grandfather Clark as a second wife so Aunt Annie grew up in a polygamous home. Her reaction to this mode of life was so favorable and her indoctrination had been so effective that she felt that plural marriage was paramount course. I quote her as found on page 62 of her book: "Prominent men were counseled by the Church leaders to enter this practice as a qualification for leadership." And a few lines later: "It was taught at that time that the seconds wife opened the door of salvation in the Celestial Kingdom not only for herself but for her husband and first wife." Notice the word "in" not "to" nor "into". On page 1 of this same book she says: "The principle of Celestial Marriage" (the term commonly used in those days to mean Plural Marriage) was considered the capstone of Mormon religion. Only by practicing it could the highest exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom of God be obtained."

This latter statement seems in keeping with the idea expressed by Elder Brigham H. Roberts in a funeral sermon he delivered at the funeral of Aunt Ellen Baird, who had been one of the wives of Hyrum Baird. Referring to this principle he spoke of it as an advancement in Priesthood by which one moved from Priesthood to Priesthood. (See the published Autobiography of Edwin Baird.)