

+ **Eliminating the Office of Church Patriarch**

The office of Church Patriarch was expected to be filled by direct heirs of Joseph Smith, Sr., Joseph's father. At the death of the first patriarch, his oldest son, Hyrum, was named the new Patriarch. However, following the martyrdom of Hyrum, issues arose to create tension and confusion in the selection process. Several times in Church history, the apparent next-in-line patriarch was not qualified to be appointed. Here are some of the incidents:

1. William Smith's Adultery. On May 20, 1842, Catherine Fuller Warren responded to charges of "unchaste and unvirtuous conduct with President John C. Bennett and others" by admitting to having intercourse not only with him but with Chauncy Higbee and the prophet's younger brother, Apostle William Smith. Instead of being excommunicated, William Smith was sent on a mission to Tennessee. Retained in his apostleship, he became presiding Church Patriarch on May 24, 1845.

2. William Smith Rejected by Church Membership. Following the death of Hyrum, Joseph's younger brother, William, was ordained Patriarch to the Church (on May 24, 1845), and ordained by the Quorum of the Twelve. He "then gave patriarchal blessings, but was rejected by the Church membership at the General Conference held Oct. 6, 1845. There was no patriarch until the ordination of John Smith, uncle of Joseph Smith, on Jan. 1, 1849. (*Deseret News 2013 Church News Almanac*, 129.)

3. Church Patriarch John Smith Publicly Scolded for Tobacco and Alcohol Use. At the October 1894 general conference, President Wilford Woodruff publicly scolded the Church Patriarch, John Smith: "... and here I see the Presiding Patriarch of the Church close to me, if he can not keep the Word of Wisdom and the commandments of God, we will have to get another Patriarch of the church. If he can not put away his tobacco and smoking he better resign. If he thinks those things are of greater value than the Holy Spirit, Brother John Smith you better resign, and we will get some one who will keep the commandments of the Lord. You better throw away your pipe and liquor habits and keep the commandments of the Lord [or] give way to someone who will honor that calling." (Irene M. Bates and E. Gary Smith, *Lost Legacy: The Mormon Office of Presiding Patriarch*, 1996, p. 139.)

a. Ordained Church Patriarch When Only 22. John Smith was ordained Church Patriarch on Feb. 18, 1855, by President Brigham Young when John was only twenty-two years old. (Francis M. Gibbons, *Joseph Fielding Smith: Gospel Scholar, Prophet of God*, 1992, 49.)

b. Patriarch Almost Released by Brigham Young. Oct. 4, 1894. At a meeting of the general authorities, "Francis M. Lyman said that some of the apostles and leading men in breaking the Word of Wisdom do more harm than all the other brethren by their teachings can do good. I do not believe there is any proper excuse for any person in the Church to break the Word of Wisdom. . . . Brigham Young [Jr.] said Patriarch John Smith would have been asked to resign or keep the Word of Wisdom during the time of his father, had it not been for the pleadings of Jos. F. Smith. Pres. [Brigham] Young and others desired to make Jos. F. Smith the patriarch of the Church. If this had been done we would have had a prophet and patriarch equal to those who were slain in Carthage Jail." (*Candid Insights*, 554.) A footnote adds: "John Smith, a son of Hyrum Smith and half-brother to Joseph F. Smith, entered the Salt Lake Valley driving a wagon at age fifteen. He was Church Patriarch for fifty-six years, during which time he gave almost 20,000 patriarchal blessings but was also criticized by some for openly drinking and smoking." (*Ibid.*, 554 f54.)

c. Church Patriarch Should Resign. Apostle Heber J. Grant recorded on Sept. 13, 1894: "At two attended meeting of the Presidency and Apostles in the Temple. . . . I stated that I felt that the Presiding Patriarch [John Smith] of the Church should be told to keep the Word of Wisdom in regard to using tobacco or resign his office. There was not action taken on my suggestion. Nearly all the brethren who spoke felt that there should be a reformation in the life of our Presiding Patriarch. Some agreed with me that he should resign if he did not reform." (*The Diaries of Heber J. Grant, 1889-1945 Abridged*, Privately published, Salt Lake City, Utah, 2010,

d. Smoking at Church Office. According to his nephew, Presiding Patriarch John Smith smoked openly in his office at Church headquarters, even while interviewing some who were about to receive a patriarchal blessing from him. (Irene M. Bates and E. Gary Smith, *Lost Legacy: The Mormon Office of Presiding Patriarch*, 1996, p. 140.)

e. Ordained a Four-Week-Old Baby a High Priest. There are some early diary entries that indicate babies or children, possibly about to die, were given the priesthood. In 1850, Artemus Millet wrote in his journal, "Bro John Smith [Patriarch to the Church] blessed my son Liberty when he was four weeks old and ordained [him] a high priest." (Davis Bitton, *Guide to Mormon Diaries and Autobiographies*, 1977, p. 242.)

4. Chain of Authority Altered: Patriarch Ranked Before President. Nov. 1901. At the start of his administration, President Joseph F. Smith elected to be ordained President, not by the senior apostle, but by the Church Patriarch, John Smith, who was his brother. In his first conference address, in November 1901, he announced that the Patriarch should be sustained in conference *before* the President. This alarmed several of the apostles, who noted that such an arrangement would alter the line of succession so that it would not be the president of the Twelve. It would, however, mean that the Church President would always come from the Smith family. (Irene M. Bates and E. Gary Smith, *Lost Legacy: The Mormon Office of Presiding Patriarch*, 1996, pp. 140-143, 160-65.)

5. Position of Patriarch Enhanced. "In order to enhance the prestige and importance of that position [Presiding Patriarch], beginning in 1902, Patriarch John Smith was invited [by President Joseph F. Smith] to address the general conference. In addition, his name was added to the fifteen General Authorities customarily sustained as 'prophets, seers, and revelators.' President Smith encouraged the Patriarch to travel among the Saints and believed such action was necessary to give the office the primal position outlined in the Doctrine and Covenants." (James B. Allen and Glen Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*, 1976, p. 457.)

6. Succession in a Direct Lineal Descent was a Dilemma for Smith. "Succession [to the office of Presiding Patriarch] in the line of direct lineal descent would not be automatic, however. President Joseph F. Smith certainly had a strong interest in keeping the office important and within the Smith family. He faced a dilemma, though: his nephew, Hyrum Fisher Smith, was not a man easy to champion. President Smith apparently chose to abdicate the responsibility for choosing a successor, leaving it to the Quorum of the Twelve, as long as they restricted their choice to the lineal descendants of John Smith. He must have known that the Smiths in the Quorum would adequately protect Smith family rights in this case, while handling the delicate matter of a less-than-acceptable heir apparent." (Bates and Smith, *Lost Legacy*, p. 152.)

a. Why Hyrum G. Smith's Father (Hyrum F.) Not Chosen: Smoker and Separated from Wife. "While it is true that LDS Church leaders offered no official reason for failing to appoint Hyrum G. Smith's father [Hyrum F. Smith] to the office of patriarch, the historical reason is clear. He was passed over because he was a user of tobacco and was separated from his wife. Thus, the church found him unworthy of the office." (Thomas N. Thompson, *Salt Lake Tribune*, Jan. 5, 2007.)

7. Ranking of Patriarch Changed Back Upon Death of Joseph F. Smith. Almost from the start there has been controversy over where the Patriarch ranked among the general authorities. President Joseph F. Smith, whose father was Hyrum Smith, moved the patriarch to a place between the First Presidency and the Twelve Apostles. That was strongly resisted by the Twelve. At the death of President Joseph F. Smith, in November 1918, the apostles moved quickly to revert to the previous practice. Pres. Anthon H. Lund recorded in his diary: "Jan. 2, 1919. I attended the Council meeting in the temple and was mouth at the altar. Bro. Hyrum G. Smith [Church Patriarch] felt that he was honored in the place which the Lord indicated in the 124th Section in which the Lord said first I have given unto you Hyrum Smith to be a patriarch and next Joseph Smith is mentioned. So Hyrum G. felt his place should be first in being sustained. As the Apostles are called to look for patriarchs and to set them apart it is plain that they occupy the higher place. I moved that we follow the example set us by the Church

hitherto [the status quo] this was agreed to.” (*Danish Apostle: The Diaries of Anthon H. Lund, 1890-1921*, edited by John P. Hatch, 2006, p. 723.)

a. Seating Arrangement Changed Back by Grant. During the administration of Joseph F. Smith, the Patriarch sat next to the First Presidency, and ahead of the Quorum of the Twelve. After Smith's death, President Heber J. Grant changed the seating, and had the Patriarch sit below the Twelve. (Irene M. Bates and E. Gary Smith, *Lost Legacy: The Mormon Office of Presiding Patriarch*, 1996, p. 164.)

b. President Would Always Have Been a Smith. Had Joseph F. Smith's change remained in place, the Church president would always have been a direct descendant of Hyrum Smith, Joseph F. Smith's father.

8. Hyrum G. Smith Anticipated Being Next Church President. In early July 1918, during Joseph F. Smith's final illness, Church Patriarch Hyrum G. Smith discussed his belief that on the basis of his patriarchal office he ought to become the presiding authority of the Church upon the death of the President. Three apostles, Joseph Fielding Smith, Jr., David O. McKay and Heber J. Grant [all three of whom would later become President themselves], met with the First Presidency to plan how to convince him otherwise. (Thomas Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition*, 1986, p. 116.)

9. Eldred G. Smith Not Ready at 25. “When Hyrum [G.] Smith died, Eldred Smith was only 25, not married and without a college degree. Then-LDS President Heber J. Grant felt he was not ready for the position, so the office went vacant. It was 1932, the depths of the Depression, and Eldred Smith had his mother and seven siblings to care for. Within a year, he married Jeanne Ness and they soon began a family. Thus he was forced to take any job he could find. He carried 200-pound blocks of ice on his back for Hygeia Ice Co. to houses. He scraped, cleaned and painted the entire ceiling of the Salt Lake Tabernacle, a job for which his smaller frame and weight were more suited. He painted and hung wallpaper for Bennett Glass & Paint; he worked at, and owned, gas stations and repaired cars. During World War II, Smith worked as an engineer in Oak Ridge, Tenn., at a company that was enriching uranium for use in the atomic bomb. Finally, in 1947, he was called back to Utah to become the church's presiding patriarch. ‘There is no way to prepare for it, no instructions, no counsel,’ Smith said this week. ‘When I was first ordained, I went into my office, closed the door and didn't come out for two weeks. Then a young man came to the door asking for a blessing and so I gave it to him.’ How did he know what to do? ‘You just say what comes to you,’ he says. Smith was soon traveling the world giving patriarchal blessings.” (Peggy Fletcher Stack, *Salt Lake Tribune*, Jan. 4, 2007.)

a. Apostles Report Concerns. March 29, 1932. ‘George F. Richards, David O. McKay and James E. Talmage called and made a report that they thought it would be a serious matter to have Eldred G. Smith made the Presiding Patriarch. They gave a detailed account of what they had discovered regarding the Young Men's activities, and while they thought he was a good young man they were a unit that it would be a mistake to have him made the Presided [sic] Patriarch at least until after he has had years of training and development. We discussed the propriety of changing and having one of Joseph F. Smith's sons made the patriarch. The names of Calvin and Willard R. Smith were suggested. My own impression is that it is almost providential to have a faithful, diligent outstanding Latter-day Saint grandson of Hyrum Smith made the patriarch instead of having a great-great-grandson of Hyrum Smith through the line of John Smith. We discussed the matter until nearly seven o'clock.” (*The Diaries of Heber J. Grant, 1889-1945 Abridged*, Privately published, 2010, 365.)

b. Several Possibilities Considered. March 31, 1932. “At ten o'clock attended the regular weekly Council meeting of the Presidency and Apostles in the Temple. The meeting lasted until nearly four o'clock. We had a long discussion about filling the vacancy caused by the death of Hyrum G. Smith as Presiding Patriarch. There was quite a difference of opinion. Some of the brethren felt that Hyrum G.'s oldest son [Eldred] should be appointed, others that Calvin Smith, President Joseph F.'s oldest son by his wife Mary, and others that Willard R. Smith, my son-in-law. No decision was reached.” (*Ibid.*, 365.)

10. No Replacement Named for a Whole Decade. “Not all of the heirs-apparent were considered worthy for the position, however. More importantly, the office appeared to threaten the supremacy of the Quorum

of the Twelve, and even the First Presidency. At one point, the office remained unfilled for a whole decade as the Church president and the apostles deadlocked on the position.” (Thomas N. Thompson, *Salt Lake Tribune*, Jan. 5, 2007.)

11. Nicholas G. Smith Not to Be Church Patriarch. July 5, 1932. “This afternoon I called on Brother Nicholas G. Smith and told him I wanted him to distinctly understand that he is not in line to be made the Presiding Patriarch of the Church later on, that he is only temporarily in the Presiding Patriarchs office giving blessings.” (*The Diaries of Heber J. Grant, 1889-1945 Abridged*, Privately published, 2010, 372.)

12. President Grant Unsure About Eldred G. Smith. March 23, 1933. “. . . and then we discussed the question of filling the vacancy caused by the death of the Presiding Patriarch, Hyrum G. Smith. A report by the Council of the Twelve was read unanimously favoring Hyrum G. Smith’s son, Eldred, being made the Patriarch, and all of the brethren expressed their willingness and desire to appoint him, and unless I get that impression, although we may have to wait another six months before coming to a decision, I certainly shall not vote for this young man to be made the patriarch. It may be that I am prejudiced in favor of my son-in-law, Willard R. Smith, believing that he is absolutely ideal and believing in my heart of hearts that he is the man the Lord would like to have for the Patriarch, but I shall not install him for another six months unless I get the impression from the Spirit of the Lord to nominate him. The brethren all said that if I nominated him they would support him, but I certainly feel that it is a great task placed upon my shoulders to nominate my son-in-law . . . There was a long discussion in the Council today about the filling of the office of Patriarch. To my mind it would be a great humiliation to Hyrum G.’s son [Eldred] and with all my heart I don’t want to be guilty of humiliating this young man if the Lord desires him to be the Patriarch.” (*The Diaries of Heber J. Grant, 1889-1945, Abridged*. Privately published, 2010, 381.)

a. First Presidency and Twelve Agree That New Patriarch Need Not Be Eldred G. Smith. “Sept. 11, 1933. Bro. [Anthony W.] Ivins suggested that we give our attention to question of filling vacancies in Quorum and Church Patriarch. We all agreed it was not necessary to take son of Hyrum G. if it appeared wise to take some one else in the line.” (*The Diaries of J. Reuben Clark, 1933-1961, Abridged*. Privately published, 2010, 7.)

b. Private Discussions. Sept. 14, 1933. “Discussion with Joseph Fielding and Bro Grant in re the patriarchal succession. Bro Joseph Fielding brought copies of his report to the Quorum.” (*Ibid.*, 7.)

c. Apostles Favor Eldred; Presidency Not Favorably Inclined. Sept. 29, 1933. “The Presidency reread the report of the Council of the Twelve regarding the appointment of a patriarch for the Church and also Joseph Fielding Smith’s argument that was made before the Council of the Twelve, which resulted in a report of the Council in favor of Hyrum G. Smith’s son Eldred being made the patriarch. None of us seemed favorably inclined to appoint Hyrum G.’s son Eldred being made the patriarch. No decision was reached.” (*Ibid.*, 387.)

d. No Choice for Another Six Months. Oct. 4, 1933. “The Presidency discussed the choosing of a patriarch and decided to make no choice for another six months.” (*Ibid.*, 388.)

e. Decided to Wait Again: Nicholas G. Smith to Be Acting Patriarch. April 5, 1934. “The Presidency discussed the question of filling the vacancy in the office of Presiding Patriarch, and we did not feel impressed to nominate Hyrum G. Smith’s son [Edred] so we concluded to allow matters to continue as they are now with Nicholas G. Smith [son of John Henry Smith, Second Counselor to President Joseph F. Smith] as acting patriarch.” (*Ibid.*, 394.)

13. Conflict Over Lineal Descent vs. Apostolic Authority. There was a “conflict between Heber J. Grant, the Twelve, and Eldred G. Smith, about how much the Twelve had the power to supervise and control the office and person of the patriarch and how much the patriarch was an autonomous function based on lineal descent and charismatic and traditional authority.” (Susanna Morrill, in review of 4 books on patriarchal blessings, *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, 47:1, Spring 2014, 173.)

14. A Second Temporary Patriarch Wanted a Release. Oct. 6, 1942. “George F. Richards—Functioning as patriarch. Wishes to be relieved. Said yesterday that he an Apostle ‘did not intend to play second fiddle to a patriarch.’ I told him he was still an Acting Patriarch until Joseph was ordained and set apart. He came in today and apologized for the statement.” (*The Diaries of J. Reuben Clark, 1933-1961, Abridged*. Privately published, 2010, 61.)

15. Sequence of Those Named Presiding Patriarch. “Historically, the hereditary Churchwide office of Presiding Patriarch had passed from father to son among the male descendants of Joseph Smith, Sr. (father of the Church’s founder and first president). At Joseph Sr.’s death (1840), the office passed to his eldest surviving son, Hyrum. At Hyrum’s death [with Joseph Smith in 1844], it passed to his younger brother William. At William’s expulsion from the Church in 1845, the office remained vacant for several years, then descended to Joseph Smith, Sr.’s brother, John. At John’s death in 1854, the office reverted to Hyrum’s descendants, first to John Smith (Hyrum’s oldest son), then in 1911 to John’s grandson Hyrum Gibbs Smith. At Hyrum Gibb’s death in 1932, however, President Grant declined to name Hyrum’s 25-year-old son, Eldred Gee Smith (b. 1907), as successor, worried that he lacked the necessary age, experience, and wisdom. (Grant favored a different Hyrum Smith descendancy, that of former Church President Joseph F. Smith, rather than that of John Smith, Hyrum Gibbs, and Eldred Gee.) Grant’s colleagues among the Twelve Apostles disagreed with this decision; but Grant held out, and the Twelve eventually acceded to their file leader’s views.” (Gary James Bergera, *Transgressions in the LDS Community: The Cases of Albert Carrington, Richard R. Lyman, and Joseph F. Smith, Part 3: Joseph F. Smith*,” *Journal of Mormon History*, 38:1 [Winter 2012], 101-02.)

16. Joseph F. Smith II Ordained as Church Patriarch. In October 1942, 43-year-old Joseph Fielding Smith, [Joseph F. Smith II], grandson of President Joseph F. Smith, was ordained Patriarch to the Church.

a. Grant’s Reasons for Not Wanting Eldred G. Smith. “As his first official act as Patriarch to the Church, Joseph F. Smith asked to bless Heber J. Grant. ‘I think it was an inspiration not to choose John Smith’s great grandson to be the patriarch [i.e., Eldred G. Smith],’ Grant confided four months later.

“For ten years there has been a vacancy in the office of Presiding Patriarch, and yet at one time time a majority of the Quorum of the Twelve felt that I ought to choose one of John Smith’s great grandsons. It has been a very humiliating thing to me to have the majority of the brethren wanting me to chose a man who felt he was entitled to it, but I have seen all of them lately and they all say there are p[er]fectly willing to sustain Joseph F. Smith for the position. I was very glad that I stood out for ten years seeing that President Smith himself felt that he was entitled to have one of his line as the Presiding Patriarch.” (Heber J. Grant, *Diary*, October 25, 1942, cited in Gary James Bergera, *Ibid.*, 102.)

17. New Patriarch Was an Active Homosexual. Unbeknownst to all the leadership, Joseph F. Smith was an active homosexual. At the time of his call, he was head of the speech and theater department at the University of Utah. Patriarch Smith served in his new calling for only four years. When appointed, “he already had a hidden history of homosexual relationships. He was released from his high position in 1946 when church president George Albert Smith learned of his ongoing extramarital affair with a 21-year-old man.” (*Seventh East Press*, Provo, Utah; Vol. 2 No. 3; 17 November 1982, p. 15.)

a. Relationship with Norval Service. “Grandson of LDS president Joseph F. Smith and oldest son of Apostle Hyrum M. Smith, Joseph F. Smith (b. 1899) entered into relationship with another young man during the mid-1920s. It is possible that while an instructor at the University of Utah Joseph F. Smith began his relationship with Norval Service while the teenager was a high school athlete at Latter-day Saints University in Salt Lake City. . . . Service was on the football team. . . . However, the relationship between Smith and Norval probably began in the fall of 1926, when Service was a 21-year-old student at the University of Utah, where Smith had just been reappointed as an instructor. Then a 27-year-old bachelor, Smith had just returned to Utah after a two-year absence in England and Illinois for a master’s degree in speech and drama. The two young men lived in separate residences in Salt Lake City, but apparently maintained their private relationship until Smith married in 1929. His six-years-younger friend Service married a year later, but fathered no children.” (D. Michael Quinn, *Same-Sex*

b. Appointed by Direct Inspiration to Church President. At the time the new Patriarch to the Church was announced, First Presidency Counselor David O. McKay pointedly remarked: "Elder Smith's right to his office therefore is not only by lineage but by direct inspiration to the President who holds the keys of the high Priesthood." (*Conference Report*, October 1942, p. 17.)

c. Apparently Had a Police Record. "In October 1942, LDS president Heber J. Grant appointed Joseph F. Smith as Patriarch to the Church. Decades later, one member of the extended Smith family claimed that the new patriarch's homoerotic activities with college students were even known to Salt Lake City's police at that time." (Quinn, 1996, 369-70.)

(1). Many Calls to Police. "His full statement was that Joseph F. Smith 'was known to be a homosexual [in 1942]. My brother, John [Gibbs Smith], was very, very upset because he was Captain of the anti-vice squad at the Salt Lake Police Department. Why, he says, the man's got a record. He says, we've had many women call in and complain about him molesting their little boys [college students, actually] at the school at the University of Utah." (*Ibid.*, 387, f23.)

(2). A Friend of Service was Stunned. "A female friend of Norval Service was aware of his relationship with Smith, and she said that the professor's appointment as a church patriarch stunned her and others who knew of his homosexuality." (*Ibid.*, 370.)

d. Disquieting Rumors. As early as 1944 a Salt Lake police captain met with the First Presidency with accusations that Joseph F. was involved with homosexuality. The rumors seemed incredible, and were soon dismissed by the Brethren. (Irene M. Bates and E. Gary Smith, *Lost Legacy: The Mormon Office of Presiding Patriarch*, 1996, p. 195.)

e. Another Young Man Confessed When Asked to Serve Mission. "At the time [of Joseph F. Smith's release], the forty-seven-year-old patriarch was involved with another young man [Byram Browning], a 21-year-old Mormon who had been serving in the U. S. Navy. . . . [T]he young man's local LDS leaders caused a crisis in July 1946 by asking him to go on a proselyting mission. When his father asked why he declined to serve a mission, the young man admitted he was in an intimate relationship with the patriarch. The father immediately complained to the First Presidency." (Quinn, 1996, 370.)

f. Browning's Uncle Meets with Church President. On April 15, 1946, President George Albert Smith noted in his diary: "LeGrand Chandler [Byram Browning's uncle] came [-] called to see me about Joseph F. Patriarch." (*George Albert Smith Diary*.)

(1). “LeGrand Chandler was the uncle of Byram Browning. Since Browning was still in Shelton, Virginia in the Navy at this time, presumably he had contacted his family by letter or other means and confessed his relationship with the Patriarch, which led to this meeting between his uncle and the LDS church president.” (www.connellodonovan.com/snmith.html; accessed 27 June 2015.)

g. Relationship with Colleague in Drama Dept. “. . . one of Joseph’s sexual partners was a man named Wallace. (A man named Wallace A. G-----, born in 1907 and married in 1931, was a close colleague of Smith’s in the Drama Dept. at the University of Utah for several years. Wallace was the manager of the Drama Club while Joseph was the president.) (*Ibid.*)

h. Church Patriarch Simply Disappeared. “One day in April or May 1946, Joseph did not come into the office as was usual. Later that day, one of the General Authorities came in and told his secretary that Joseph F. Smith II was not to give any more blessings. She was flabbergasted. His secretary never saw Joseph F. Smith II again.” (Irene M. Bates and E. Gary Smith, *Lost Legacy: The Mormon Office of Presiding Patriarch*, 1996, p. 195.)

i. Case Studied Over Summer. On July 10, 1946, George Albert Smith, who had become president, recorded in his diary, ‘Met in office with Council of Presidency & Twelve. . . . Jos Patriarch case considered. Bad situation. Am heartsick.’ The next day President Smith records, ‘Met in Church Council room with Presidency and Twelve. . . . Discussed condition of Patriarch Jos F.’ The First Presidency then met with Patriarch Smith the next day, July 12. President Smith went to see the Patriarch on September 6 and noted in his diary, ‘a pitiable case.’ On Sept 16 George Albert wrote, ‘Restless night. At office 8:15. Met with Presidency and Joseph F. Patriarch [and] Ruth [:] Browning and son present. A. E. Bowen also listened. Regret that the evidence is not satisfactory.’” (*Ibid.*, p. 195.)

(1). Pres. Clark’s Diary Entry. Sept. 18, 1946. Pres. J. Reuben Clark’s diary for this date includes one single underlined sentence: “Jos. Patriarch, First Presidency, Mr. Browning & a boy.” (*The Diaries of J. Reuben Clark, 1933-1961, Abridged*. Privately published, 2010, 99.)

j. Release Was a Church Cover-Up. At the October, 1946 general conference, Pres. David O. McKay read a letter from Joseph F. Smith II that was certainly less than forthright: “As you know I have been very ill for many months. While I am slowly gaining strength and hope soon again to be able to do some work, I do not know when, if at all, I shall be able to stand the full drain upon my energy incident to the office of Patriarch to the Church.” Following the letter, Joseph F. Smith was formally released from office. (*Deseret News*, 7 October 1946, p. 1, and *Ibid.*, pp. 195-6.)

k. Refused Temple Recommend in 1947. “Oct. 15, 1947. “Called Ralph Woolley and told him there had been received a wire from Jay asking about issuing a temple recommend to Joseph F. Smith. Pres. Clark said he did not think the First Presidency ought to go on it; Bro. Woolley said he would cable the man and tell him to hold off.” (*The Diaries of J. Reuben Clark, 1933-1961, Abridged*. Privately published, 2010, 117.)

l. Aftermath. “Soon after, the family left for the University of Hawaii, where Joseph F. resumed his career as a teacher of English and drama. No church trial was ever held, and no formal action was taken against him; however, the church authorities in Hawaii were instructed that Joseph F. was not to assume any responsibilities or callings [unless cleared by the First Presidency]. Ten years later . . . it was determined that Joseph F. had confessed to his wife and had written a full confession to the First Presidency [therefore] all restrictions were lifted. At the time of his death on August 29, 1964, he was serving as a stake high councillor.” (*Ibid.*, p. 196.)

(1) “He died in Salt Lake City, where he was attending his daughter's wedding, on 29 August 1964.” (*Seventh East Press*, Provo, Utah; Vol. 2 No. 3; 17 November 1982, p. 15.)

m. Church Still Unable to Confront Issue. At late as Jan. 13, 2007, the *Church News* reported on the one-hundredth birthday of the Church Patriarch who replaced Joseph F. Smith: “The man who had been serving as Patriarch to the Church, Joseph Fielding Smith (not to be confused with the Church president of the early 1970s) had been released due to ill health; Eldred Smith was being called to fill the position.” (*Church News*, Jan. 13, 2007, p. 4.)

n. Francis Gibbons’ Version of the Story. Francis M. Gibbons served as secretary to the First Presidency for sixteen years. He also served in both the First and Second Quorums of the Seventy and as area president for Brazil. He authored a number of biographies of different Presidents of the Church, generally considered well-written, ultra-non-controversial accounts. In *Joseph Fielding Smith: Gospel Scholar, Prophet of God*, he wrote this account of the selection of Joseph F. Smith, nephew to the Church President: “A critical issue facing the Brethren as the October General Conference approached was the desire of President Heber J. Grant to fill the office of Patriarch to the Church, which had stood vacant since the death of Hyrum Gibbs Smith in February 1932. In the meantime, both Nicholas G. Smith and George F. Richards had served successively as the acting Patriarch. Traditionally, the office of Patriarch to the Church had passed lineally to the eldest son descending from Joseph Smith Sr. But it was the intention of President Grant to call Joseph F. Smith, the nephew of Joseph Fielding Smith, to that office, even though he descended through the line of President Joseph F. Smith, who was not the oldest son of the martyr Hyrum Smith. Following the death of Hyrum Gibbs Smith in 1932, members of the Twelve had recommended that his eldest son, Eldred G. Smith, be called to the patriarchal office, but President Grant had declined to make the call. As the 1942 October General Conference approached, President Grant went to Joseph Fielding’s office to discuss the matter privately with him. ‘He said he could not feel right about accepting the recommendation of the apostles,’ Joseph wrote of the interview, ‘that the office be given to Eldred Smith and for ten years he had only had a “stupor of thought” in the consideration of this appointment. Now he felt clear regarding his duty and his mind was at rest that Joseph F., son of my brother Hyrum M., should receive this office. I said, so far as I am concerned, when the President of the Church says the Lord has manifested to him or inspired him to do anything, I would support him fully in that action. . . . if the president is inspired to change the order of descent the Lord has indicated, I will be with him with my support.’

“Few other instances in his life demonstrate more clearly than this one Joseph Fielding Smith’s unqualified support of the one who occupies the prophetic office. Although when asked about it earlier, Joseph had expressed a contrary view, he yielded that view immediately upon learning that the Prophet was inspired to do otherwise. And in giving that support, Elder Smith powerfully endorsed the idea that the Church is directed by revelation and that the Lord inspires and directs the living oracles according to the needs of the moment.” (Francis M. Gibbons, *Joseph Fielding Smith: Gospel Scholar, Prophet of God*, 1992, pp. 342-3.)

o. Gibbons on Why Patriarch was Released. In the same book, Gibbons related this story of the release of the new Church Patriarch: “Waiting for them at Honolulu was Elder Smith’s nephew Joseph F. Smith, the son of Hyrum M. Smith, who had served briefly during the 1940s as Patriarch to the Church. Illness had necessitated his release. Afterward, he had moved to Hawaii, where he had regained his health. At the time of his uncle’s visit in November 1958, he was on the faculty at the University of Hawaii. Following the unexpected death of his brother Hyrum in 1918, Joseph Fielding Smith had assumed a role of surrogate father to Hyrum’s children, including this son, Joseph F. For this reason, the apostle enjoyed spending the night at his nephew’s home and accompanying him to the temple at Laie on Monday.” (*Ibid.*, pp. 415-16.) It seems beyond credibility that Gibbons didn’t know the real reason for the abrupt dismissal.

p. “Ill Health” Still Listed as Reason for Release in Latest Church Almanac in 2013. All of the Patriarchs to the Church, from Joseph Smith, Sr. to Eldred Gee Smith are listed with short biographies in the *2013 Church Almanac*. Here is part of the entry for Joseph Fielding Smith: “Ordained a high priest and Patriarch to the Church Oct. 8, 1942, by Heber J. Grant, at age 43; released Oct. 6, 1946, due to ill health; died Aug. 29, 1964 . . . at age 65.” (*Deseret News 2013 Church News Almanac*, 129.

18. Eldred G. Smith's Testy Response When He Replaced JFS in 1947. "On 6 April 1947, newly sustained Church patriarch Eldred G. Smith began his first conference address by saying: 'Brethren and sisters, I think you are all aware of the fact of the hereditary nature of the office to which I have been called. For that reason I was prepared to give a speech for this occasion fifteen years ago, but not today. Maybe it's because I don't like to get burned in the same fire twice.' Smith acknowledged rumors that Joseph Fielding Smith (not the same person as the Church president of that name) had been called to the office instead of him because 'I was not worthy.' But he countered these rumors by describing how he had met with President Grant in 1932 the evening before Joseph Fielding Smith had been called to be Church patriarch to ask if unworthiness were the reason he was being passed over for the calling. Eldred Smith reported Grant as replying, 'Oh, no, no, on the contrary. In fact you have made quite a reputation for yourself in Church activities.' Smith went on to detail his activity, beliefs, and Church leadership positions in an obvious effort to lay his credentials before the congregation. Whatever the success of this move as far as establishing his personal worthiness was concerned, it inevitably raised the question of why, then, had he not been called to his hereditary position in 1932." (Joseph Geisner, *Sunstone*, Issue 165, December 2011, 19-20.)

a. Talk Changed Twice After Delivery. "Smith was asked to edit the talk before publication. He did so, but the revision that was finally published in the April 1947 Conference Report was a third version, titled 'A Testimony of Truth.' In it, Smith's defense has been entirely rewritten to read, 'I think that there are probably thousands of men in the Church who, if called by the proper authority, could come and fulfill any position in the Church, and the position to which I have been called is no exception.'" (*Ibid.*, 20.)

19. Eldred Strongly Warned by President of the Twelve in 1947. One can gain an understanding of the intense feelings involved by an incident in 1947. Eldred G. Smith had been chosen as the new Patriarch. George F. Richards, president of the Twelve, wanted to make it clear that he was serving at the pleasure of the Twelve:

"I would like to say a few words to Brother Eldred, and if I should exceed my authority or my views are not in harmony with the views of you brethren, I would like to be corrected. . . . The remark that you made, Brother Eldred, in Conference at the time that Joseph F. Smith was sustained as Patriarch—I think that you made the statement that you had been deprived of your birthright. I want you to know how I feel about that, that you had no birthright nor does anybody else have a birthright to the office of Patriarch to this Church except that he is a descendant of the Patriarch Hyrum Smith. One of Joseph F. Smith's sons might have said with just as much propriety that he was deprived of the birthright as you. The Lord did say that this order of Priesthood should descend from father to son, but he did not say from the father to the oldest son. . . . and if you entertain those views now, Brother Eldred, it is contrary to our understanding and you ought to know it. You ought not to repeat such things as you said in Conference. There have been very adverse reports made on what you had to say in Conference. . . . Now you are to be the Patriarch to the Church because you have been chosen by the President of the Church . . . and sustained by this Council . . . not because of any rights that you have, or any other man who is a descendant of Hyrum Smith." (Council of the Twelve Minutes; cited in Irene Bates and E. Gary Smith, *Lost Legacy: The Mormon Office of Presiding Patriarch*, 1996, pp. 203-4.)

a. Words Between Eldred G. Smith and Twelve in 1971. In 1971, apostles Spencer W. Kimball, Howard W. Hunter, and LeGrand Richards—the son of George F. Richards quoted above—"told him that he was not to teach his son that he had any right to the office. . . . Eldred replied that he did not need to teach his son, that his son would know by simply reading the scriptures. When they asked for the scripture to which he was referring, Eldred read from D&C 124:91: 'And again, verily I say unto you . . . that my servant Hyrum may take the office of Priesthood and Patriarch, which was appointed unto him by his father, by blessing and also by right.' Richards responded by maintaining that no one had any right to any office in the church. Eldred replied that all he wanted 'was what the Lord wants, and if the Lord wants my son to succeed me, He'll take care of it.' He pointed out that those present would probably not be the ones who would make the decision when the succession question next came up [because of their advanced age], so a discussion at that time was really moot. . . . This comment displeased the committee . . ." (*Ibid.*, p. 212.)

20. Did Eldred's Mother Lead Him to Fight Apostolic Authority? "Describing the conflict between

Eldred G. Smith, the Twelve, and Heber J. Grant, Marquardt highlights the often-informal authority held by women and how this kind of authority influenced the processes of rationalization. During this final conflict, two women had pivotal roles. Some in the Twelve felt that Eldred G. Smith was dissatisfied with the diminished authority of the patriarchal office because his mother had sowed seeds of discontent during the time he waited, was passed over, and then finally assumed the office (*Later Blessings* xlv). Eldred G. Smith's secretary was also prominent in the final conflict between Eldred G. Smith, the Twelve, and the Presidency. Smith blamed her for continuing old practices that were points of contention with the Twelve, suggesting, for instance, that she too quickly called in stake patriarchs to give blessings in his stead and in his office space when he was unavailable." (Susanna Morrill, in review of 4 books on patriarchal blessings, *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, 47:1, Spring 2014, 174.)

21. Need to Downplay Role of Hyrum Smith. "[M]embers of the Twelve and the Presidency were eager to rationalize the office of church patriarch as a position under the Twelve and without administrative duties. They were wrestling with a powerful collective memory and historical narrative that paired the president and patriarch. A critical mass of members envisioned this pairing at the inner circle of Church leadership and history. . . . This suggests that the eventual eradication of the office of Church patriarch was a part of a larger campaign by Church leadership to secure their traditional and bureaucratic authority by downplaying in historical narratives and public discourse Hyrum Smith who most early Mormons believed would have been JS Jr's successor to the presidency had he not died with his younger brother in a Carthage jail. Marquardt's collection helps demonstrate that scholars need to explore in more depth the role of Hyrum Smith in the early Church, as well as his recession in Church history and, related, theology." (*Ibid.*, 176.)

22. Eclipse of Patriarchal Office Inevitable. "For instance, they highlight the importance of personality in speeding up and inhibiting the inevitable eclipse of the office. The fourth church patriarch, 'Uncle John,' the brother of JS Sr., was steadfastly loyal to BY and avoided using family claims to the office. His tenure stabilized the office within the rationalizing church. Eldred G. Smith had the opposite effect because he attempted to revive the precedence and privileges that Hyrum Smith enjoyed. Hyrum Smith had administrative roles such as ordaining and overseeing stake patriarchs. The Twelve did not allow Eldred G. Smith to take up these roles, despite his desire to fulfill them. The Twelve argued that Hyrum Smith had more authority because JS gave him additional responsibilities relating to Hyrum Smith's role within the presidency." (Susanna Morrill, in review of 4 books on patriarchal blessings, *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, 47:1, Spring 2014, 170.)

23. Office of Church Patriarch Discontinued in 1979. In 1979, the office of Church Patriarch was abruptly discontinued. While the change came as a surprise to most members, there had been a long history of conflict centering on this office. Almost from the start, the position had been controversial. By revelation, the church patriarch was to be chosen from lineal descendants of Hyrum Smith. Not all of the heirs-apparent were considered worthy for the position, however. More importantly, the office appeared to threaten the supremacy of the Quorum of the Twelve, and even the First Presidency."

a. "Finally, it is true that the LDS Church determined by 1979 that it no longer desired to maintain the office of patriarch. [Peggy Fletcher Stack, the *Tribune's* religion editor] says this is because every stake had its own patriarch and the church leaders had 'grown uncomfortable with the notion of lineal descent.' This is true enough, but the larger reason is that it was never very clear just what the parameters of his authority could be. . . ." (*Ibid.*)

24. Total Surprise to Eldred G. Smith. "It was a complete surprise to Eldred when President Kimball called him into his office in 1979 and said Eldred would be designated an emeritus general authority. . . . It is not known what dynamics might have combined to cause Spencer Kimball to retire the office of Church Patriarch. Perhaps it was the desire to end more than a century of tension over the proper parameters of authority for the office and to finally put to rest the question of lineal rights of succession. . . . The announcement was made at the October General Conference by President Nathan E. Tanner, counselor in the First Presidency, that 'because of the large increase in the number of stake patriarchs and the availability of patriarchal service throughout the world,

we now designate Elder Eldred G. Smith as a Patriarch Emeritus, which means that he is honorably relieved—not released [laughter]—of all duties and responsibilities pertaining to the office of Patriarch to the Church.” (*Ibid.*, p. 216.)

25. Became an Emeritus General Authority. “Smith was considered an emeritus general authority of the church after his release. He remained an ordained patriarch and was still permitted to give patriarchal blessings. However, he was no longer sustained by the church as a ‘prophet, seer, and revelator’ as he was from 1947 to 1979.” (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eldred_G._Smith; accessed Feb. 16, 2015.)

27. Still Reported for Work. Eldred G. Smith, surrendered his office in the Church Administration Building, but was given an office in the Joseph Smith Memorial Building. He reportedly showed up for work every day, and even gave blessings to those requesting them. He also reportedly remained at full salary as an emeritus general authority.

28. Died at Age 106. Smith died at his home in Salt Lake City, Utah, at 106, having given almost 20,000 patriarchal blessings. He was the oldest and longest-serving general authority, although not active in that role for many years, and the oldest living man in Utah, prior to his death. The LDS Church has not stated directly whether it will appoint a new Presiding Patriarch, but after Smith's death, an official magazine of the church described him as "the last person to hold the position." (*Ibid.*)

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