> his command. . . . I pray God to give me light on this matter as I feel almost sick about it. I want to and intend to be loyal to my belief.[55]

No documentation exists to substantiate whether Owen was given official permission to enter into polygamy. However, Quinn suggests that "[i]f Joseph F. Smith did not authorize Apostle Owen Woodruff's plural marriage . . . he gave it after-the-fact sanction as Church president."[56]

After Owen and Avery's marriage in January 1901, she moved with her sister, Mary, back to school in Logan. Owen wrote Avery often and sent money on a regular basis. Following Owen's instructions for protecting their secrecy, Avery wrote to Owen in November of 1900 during their courtship:

> I must not forget to tell you that I have burned all letters and will continue to do so, although it seems like destroying valuable literature. . . . I will keep all secrets in my heart and ask God to guard my words and actions. (Letter 10)[57]

Secrecy presented a difficult situation for Avery; only her immediate family and a few close friends knew of her plural marriage to Owen. Publicly, people still referred to her as Miss Clark, and Avery's correspondence from Owen was either communicated in code, using different names for people and places, or written mostly about trivial matters from a detached viewpoint. Avery remembered crying over her difficult marital situation, longing to see her husband for more than a few minutes, and being scolded by her sister for not being thankful.[58]

In addition to living with the complex logistics of a secret polygamous marriage, Avery had to face the world as a single woman. She recorded an incident that sheds some light on the emotional complications the secret marriage arrangement had for both her and Owen in terms of jealousy, particularly related to Avery's would-be suitors:

> Russell [a companion in Owen's group] and I took little lard buckets and strolled down to the meadow to pick wild strawberries. Owen sat on the front porch watching just how close our heads came together while we were fairly rooting for the tiny wild berries. He said to me later on: "Make sure he behaves himself I can tell he likes you, just give him the cold shoulder or do you want to?" It was an aggrivation to me to not be able to announce to the world that I was happily married to a grand