

Excerpt from Interview with William and Charlotte Smith

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Interviewer: Mark DePue

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Charlotte Smith: Yes, it was. It was. Because the other two wives in our area never talked about it. But I can remember one incident. We had a four-poster bed that had a bar across the bottom. We had moved back from Cincinnati and were waiting on our apartment to be ready to move into, and we were living with my parents for about three weeks. I was pregnant with Lisa, and Bill scooted down in his sleep, got his feet under that bar, and he was screaming so loud because he was dreaming of being tied down. And my father hit the floor, my younger brother hit the floor, and the people in the house next door were out on the porch, he was screaming so loud. And I couldn't touch him to wake him up, because I knew better than to touch him when he was asleep. I'm trying to say, "Honey, wake up; honey, wake up; honey, wake up" without touching, because I knew if I touched him, he would hit me, and I'm about five, six, eight months pregnant.

So everybody thought... Our bedroom door was shut. Everybody thought he was beating me because he was screaming so loud and I'm yelling, "Honey, wake up; honey, wake up." It was horrible. It was horrible. I couldn't get him awake. So you have to learn how to handle those situations. So he finally got awake, and then when he does get awake, he's so embarrassed about what has gone on with him, so you have to let them know that they come first. You have to learn to fight his battles for him when he can't fight.