

Polygamy and Mormon Church Leaders

Abraham Owen Smoot

February 17, 1815 – March 6, 1895

Living in Kentucky at the age of four Abraham Smoot lost his father. Without means to support her family the newly widowed Ann Smoot soon remarried and moved the young family from Kentucky to Tennessee to receive help from family members in raising her family.

This is where Smoot was baptized into the Mormon Church in 1835 (his mother joining Mormonism two years prior). Eleven short months later none other than Wilford Woodruff ordained him an elder and sent him out to spread the Mormon gospel. Smoot spent the next few years traveling from Tennessee to Missouri seeing a mixed bag of results and finally went to Missouri to help the Church in their constant struggles with the locals.

While doing a stint in jail in 1838 with the Smith brothers he married his first wife Margaret when Joseph strongly encouraged him that being married was a good thing. He had been arrested and jailed after turning himself in during the expulsion of the Saints in Missouri.

He eventually moved to Nauvoo with his wife and helped finish building the temple there. When it was finally complete he married two other women in the new facilities. After the Smith brothers were killed he began missionary work again and was in England when he was chosen to lead the Saints into the Salt Lake Valley. Leaving there, he went back stateside and began his new job with Overland Pioneer Travel. It was the largest group of pioneers that year (1847) with 317 people following his lead into the Utah Territory.

After settling in Utah he married four other women, helped establish BYU, was mayor of Provo, and presided over Provo Woolen Mills and First National Bank of Provo. In addition to all that he was also elected mayor of Salt Lake in 1857 at the advent of Jedidiah Grant's death; he served as bishop, and president of the Utah Stake and the father of 26-29 children.

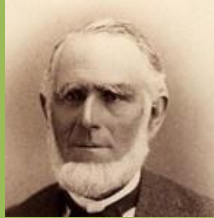

Smoot like many of the other early Mormon leaders was no stranger to hard work and staying busy; his life is a reflection of the tenacity most Mormons were known for. It's just too bad their theology was so off the mark and the reasoning they employed for their lustful lifestyle wasn't tamed. One of his most famous descendants was his son Reed who became a Utah State Senator in the early 20th century.

With the death of Brigham Young in 1877 Smoot found the fledging Mormon university to be in financial shambles being over a hundred grand in arrears. Smoot mortgaged everything he owned to bring the bills up to date and virtually saved the school from certain ruin. As a result of his devotion he died penniless.



Like many other polygamous families Smoot had separate homes for each of his wives.

According to the [Provo Library website](#) one of his four homes in Provo included a trap door so his wife could hide during polygamy raids. This website also states he had six wives, not the seven we've listed here. Having trap doors and secret basements were very common amongst the polygamists at that time.

Wilford Woodruff married one of Smoot's nieces and named their son Abraham Owen Woodruff. This is just one example of how naming kids after others in their clan, rearranging the order of first names with middle and last names keeps outsiders confused about who's who.

	Wife/Age @ marriage (Smoot's age)		Marriage date	Kids	Other info	Wife's marital status
1	Margaret Thompson McMeans Atkinson (Adkinson) - 29 (23)		11/11/ 1838	2	Born 4/1809 Died 9/1884 in Provo Oldest son died @1 yr. Had these boys thru 1 st husband	Widow

					Wm Cochrane Atkinson. Smoot adopted Wm (jr), name changed to Smoot.	
2	Sarah Gibbens – 45 (30)		12/22/ 1845	0	Born 10/1800 Geni.comreports she didn't go to Utah & filed for divorce in 1852. She was 15 yrs older than Smoot, childless.	???
3	(Almira) Emily Hill Harris – 30 (30)		1/18/ 1846	4	Born 11/1815 Died 3/1892 in Provo Find-a-Grave lists 11 kids	Widow

					<p>w/ Smoot.</p> <p>Another site lists 5 kids.</p> <p>Had 4 kids</p> <p>w/ Zachariah Harris. He died in 1840.</p>	
4	<p>Diana Tanner Eldredge –</p> <p>18</p> <p>(40)</p>		<p>5/6/1855</p>	13	<p>Born 5/1837</p> <p>Died 1/1914 in SLC</p>	Single
5	<p>Anne (Annie, Anna) K. Mauritzen (Morrison)</p> <p>–</p> <p>22</p> <p>(41)</p>		<p>2/17/1856</p>	7	<p>Born 12/1833 in Brekke, Norway.</p> <p>Died 1/1894 in Provo</p> <p>Mother of Reed Smoot.</p>	Single
6	<p>Hannah Caroline Rogers –</p> <p>59</p> <p>(71)</p>		<p>3/11/1886</p>	0	<p>Born 3/1827</p> <p>Died 3/1915 in SLC</p> <p>Also married to Aaron</p>	Widow

					<p>Daniels in 12/1845 Married Smoot in Logan Temple in 1886.</p>
7	<p>Elizabeth Rogers – 74/75 (79)</p>		<p>1/10/ 1894</p>	0	<p>Born in 1819 There isn't a lot of info on this woman. Whenever she is mentioned it's brief, meaning her name only.</p>