

Polygamy and Mormon Church Leaders
Edward Stevenson
May 1, 1820 – January 27, 1897

1 Corinthians 1:18; “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.”

Mr. Edward Stevenson was the fourth and last son born to Joseph & Elizabeth Stevenson in 1820 in British Garrison, Gibraltar, Spain. The Stevenson’s had six children in all and at the age of seven his parents immigrated to the US, but tragedy struck just four years after they began their new lives in America when his father passed away.

In 1833 he was sent to live with a Dr. Richardson in Michigan and it was there while listening to Jared Carter & Joseph Woods preach the Mormon gospel he bought their story and converted. Soon thereafter his mother and other members of the family joined as well. (LDS Biographical Encyclopedia Vol. 1:214-215 – Andrew Jenson)

He was ordained a president of the 30th Quorum of the Seventies in May 1845 by Joseph Young and had served as a staunch defender of the faith up to that point. He traveled to Utah in 1847 with the Charles Rich Company, crossed the American continent no less than 19 times and the Atlantic Ocean 9 times during his life in missionary service to the Church.

In 1870 he was put in charge of overseeing the move of Martin Harris (original witness to BoM) to Utah when Stevenson saw him in Kirtland, OH and Martin expressed his desire to be with the rest of the Saints.

From 1865-1877 it’s said he visited nearly every single Mormon settlement in the Utah territory as an emissary to check in on their well being and did that while traveling throughout the US on other missions.

He was ordained a [President of the Seventies](#) in 1894 and filled that position until his death in 1897. While serving in Walla Walla, WA in 1896 he became sick and had to go home. Late that same year his health took a turn for the worse and he died about a month later.

This man’s marital track record reads like a combination of a bad episode from the now defunct television daytime soap operas and the trash novels found at a dime store. I’m puzzled at the reasoning of why they emulate him so when his private life isn’t a reflection of a biblical standard.

My confusion stems from this man’s ambiguous private life.

The MTC (Missionary Training Center) in Provo has a large portrait of [Stevenson](#) hanging inside one of the buildings they’ve named after him serving as a reminder of what missionaries are there for. He’s elevated to rock star status in the world of Mormon missionaries based on the number of missions he served, the number of people he converted and it’s said he did all this on his own financially speaking.

And yet there’s little to no information on this man’s marriages aside from a shout out that he “obeyed” the plan of plural marriage. It’s a chore to discover his 1st wife divorced him because of his favoritism of other wives, or the fact that he too married young teen girls when he was old enough to be their father.

When we investigated the seven wives he supposedly had we found available resources wanting in providing definitive information. One of his wives is virtually non-existent except in providing

very limited repeated information shared on multiple genealogy websites. His first wife divorced him and became the third wife of his sister's husband, Ezra Thompson Clark. What we found odd is that he & his 2nd wife named their 4th child after Mr. Clark. His ex-wife Nancy had a stepson by the name of Amasa Lyman Clark. While that isn't the issue, we found it odd Ezra would name one of his kids after the ex-communicated apostle considering he had married one of [Lyman](#)'s ex-wives (Laura Reed). It's all very strange...

As it is we've listed all seven wives with the disclaimer we can't prove the existence of wife #6 and while tying up loose ends for this article we discovered [one family website](#) who provided temple work ID numbers for an 8th wife, Sarah Yates, who was possibly a sister to wife #7, Louisa Yates.

No children came from this marriage. Their site shows he married Sarah in Sanpete, UT in 1889.

From all those marriages Edward fathered 27 or 28 children; twenty of those were boys. The takeaway in all this of course is our prayer that Mormons will stop to think about this man and the life he lived. Would the Lord condone this lifestyle and if so then how does one rationalize what the Apostle Paul says? 1Timothy 3:2, 5;

“A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach 5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)”

The other issue in this man's life is the practice of necromancy if he was taking out vows and endowments to be sealed to deceased women. This is in exact opposition to what Jesus taught about marriages in heaven. Mark 12:24-25;

“And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God? 25 For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven.”

The bottom line is that a true missionary for Jesus doesn't preach any other gospel than what the apostles preached in the New Testament. Anything outside those parameters is heresy.

	Wife / Age @ marriage (Stevenson's age)		Marriage date	Kids	Other info	Wife's marital status
1	Nancy Areta Porter – 19 (25)		4/7/1845	5	Born 8/8/1825 OH Died 11/13/1888 ID	Single

Divorced Edward in
7/1869 after birth of
5th kid. Edward left
for missions & took
2 other wives he
married in '57.

This obviously
produced problems.

She married Ezra
Thompson Clark
7/1870 – he had
2 other wives.

Rootsweb.ancestry.
com reports that
Edward's sister also
married Ezra Clark.

Had 5 kids
w/ Stevenson, 1
died in infancy.

Younger sister of
wife #4 Sarah.

Heritage Gateways
documents she left
for UT in 1847.

					<p>Stevensons.org</p> <p>provides essay on</p> <p>Edward's life &</p> <p>many of the kids</p> <p>who died.</p> <p>Findagrave reports</p> <p>her stepson (Amasa</p> <p>Lyman Clark) married</p> <p>Amasa Lyman's</p> <p>ex-wife's daughter.</p> <p>She's credited w/</p> <p>making first silk in</p> <p>UT which was</p> <p>eventually purchased</p> <p>by Eliza Snow &</p> <p>made into 1st</p> <p>silk dress</p> <p>in UT.</p>	
2	<p>Elizabeth</p> <p>Jane</p> <p>Remon</p> <p>DuFresne - 17</p> <p>(35)</p>		<p>10/28/</p> <p>1855</p>	8	<p>Born</p> <p>2/8/1838</p> <p>England</p> <p>Died</p> <p>4/25/1906</p> <p>UT</p> <p>Emigrated from</p>	<p>Single</p>

Liverpool w/ mother

& 4 siblings 1854.

Wife #6 might be

a repeat of this

Elizabeth.

Younger sister of

wife #5 Mary Ann.

Had 8 kids

(6 boys, 2 girls) –

5 died in infancy.

Rootsweb.ancestry.

com confirms the 8

kids & shows child

#4 is named Ezra

Thompson DuFresne –

this is the name of

the 2nd husband of

Edward's ex-wife

who is also his

brother-in-law

(Ezra Thompson

Clark).

3	<p>Emily Electa Williams – 16 (37)</p>		<p>4/20/ 1857</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>Born 9/23/1841 IA Died 9/21/1918 UT</p> <p>Had 11 kids (8 sons, 3 daughters), 2 died in infancy.</p> <p>Ancestry.com shows marriage in SLC in 4/1857.</p> <p>Records.ancestry. com confirms marriage but w/ 6 kids, not 11.</p> <p>Stevasons.org provides essay on Edward's life & kids who died in infancy.</p> <p>Familytreemaker. com also gives general vital stats on her & other</p>	<p>Single</p>
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					wives.	
4	Sarah Jane Porter Willard – 41 (37)		9/11/ 1857	0	Born 9/11/1816 NY Died 6/26/1841 IA Findagrave gives info on marriage to David Willard 8/5/1839 w/ no kids & death date of 1841. Older sister of wife #1 Nancy. Rootsweb.ancestry. com shows marriage to Edward in SLC in 9/1857. Geni.com shows marriages to both Edward & David in	???

					<p>addition to her sealing to David in 1979.</p>	
5	<p>Mary Ann Remon DuFresne – 41 (51)</p>		<p>1/11/1871</p>	0	<p>Born 8/6/1830 England</p> <p>Died ???</p> <p>Emigrated to US w/ mother & 4 siblings 1854.</p> <p>Older sister of wife #2 Elizabeth.</p> <p>Rootsweb.ancestry.com shows they were married in Endowment House.</p> <p>Familytreemaker.com gives general info on marriage.</p> <p>Williamsfamilytrees.com shows death</p>	???

					<p>date as 8/1854 –</p> <p>one month after</p> <p>family arrived in</p> <p>the states.</p> <p>This info agrees w/</p> <p>other sites. This</p> <p>would mean the</p> <p>ceremony was</p> <p>performed</p> <p>posthumously.</p>	
6	<p>Elizabeth</p> <p>Remon – ???</p> <p>(51)</p>		<p>1/11/</p> <p>1871</p>	0	<p>Born</p> <p>2/25/1826</p> <p>England</p> <p>Died</p> <p>???</p> <p>Rootsweb.ancestry.</p> <p>com shows</p> <p>sealing date &</p> <p>marriage in SLC.</p> <p>Outside of finding</p> <p>another Elizabeth</p> <p>J Remon DuFresne</p> <p>(who is wife #2)</p>	???

there's no info
on this woman
other than
repeat info from
Ancestry.com,
Rootsweb.ancestry.
com &
Familytreemaker.com &
WilliamsFamilyTrees.
com gives info on
her being born in
1807 which is
when the mother
of the Remon
DuFresne daughters
was born. Her
death date on
this site is the
same year of
Elizabeth Jane's
birth which means
this can't be the
mother because
other kids were

					born later & she can't be wife #2.	
7	Louisa Yates – 36 (52)		12/16/ 1872	3	Born 6/11/1836 England Died 6/23/1926 UT Had 3 kids (2 sons, 1 daughter) – 2 died in infancy. Ancestry.com lists no kids.	???