

## Henry Rampton and the Sugar House Pen

Polygamy was practiced by the early members of the Church. It is defined as the practice or condition of having more than one spouse at the same time, referring to a situation where all spouses know about each other.

In 1882, Polygamy was outlawed federally by the [Edmunds Act](#). The crime was and still is punishable by a fine, imprisonment, or both, according to the law of the individual state and the circumstances of the offense. Utah was a territory, not a state at the time.

The old adage of "politics and polygamy do not mix" was a hot subject during the 1880's and into the 1890's. The leaders of the Territory of Deseret wanted to become part of the United States for many reasons, protection of its people being one of them; but polygamy was perhaps the biggest obstacle standing in the way of that union. On 25 September 1890, President Wilford Woodruff announced the LDS Church's official abandonment of the practice of Polygamy. Utah was granted statehood on 4 January 1896.

When the Edmunds Act was passed, Henry Rampton had been married to Ada Alice MacDuff for 14 years and together they were the parents 6 children. Henry did not abandon Ada and their children, and continued his marital relationship. Three more children were born to this union after the Edmunds Act had passed.

According to the book, "Prisoner for Polygamy," edited by Stan Larson, Henry Rampton was imprisoned for unlawful cohabitation from 16 February 1889 until 3 June 1889 and fined \$100 (See page 226, Appendix 3). Henry Rampton served time in the notorious Sugar House Pen, the Utah Territorial Penitentiary.



1903 Utah State Penitentiary  
(The Sugar House Prison)

In 1888 the old penitentiary had been torn down and the above new steam-heated penitentiary was built with stone walls surrounding the prison. It was located in the Sugar House neighborhood of Salt Lake City and was in operation until 1951. (Photo from Wikipedia)