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Title: **SPatriarch_pg-80.pdf**
Provenance: **Given to April Clark Clive by her father John R. Clark (author)**

Category: **Volume**
Person:
Date: **01/01/1966**

A biography of Wilford Woodruff Clark told through other people called "Springdale's Patriarch", written by John R. Clark.

[...]80

A Comparison of DNA Matches Among Descendants of Wilford W. Clark to Determine Whether his Youngest Three Children Came from his First or Second Wife: A Secret Plural Marriage?

Situation(Some) Early pioneers of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints practiced plural marriage and even considered (the pattern) to be "celestial" before the 1890 Manifesto revealed that it must end. Wilford Woodruff Clark was raised by Ezra T. Clark, who managed two busy, faith-filled households of 21 children, guided by Ezra's two wives. Among Wilford's many siblings, three of his older brothers took on second wives—including one after this Manifesto.

Recently an Ezra T. Clark descendant speculated that the youngest three of Wilford Woodruff Clark's eleven children were born from his second wife, Pernecy May Bagley, three decades before she married him civilly and moved into the Clark home in January 1935 (15 months after Pamelia's death), thus implying a secret plural marriage. This relative asks, did Wilford continue the tradition that was started by his father Ezra and was later shared by three of his Clark brothers-- but in secret?

He claims that the following arguments substantiate his hypothesis:

The oldest eight children had facial features that strongly resembled Pamelia Dunn Clark, but the youngest three (Russell, LeGrand, and LeOra) favored 2nd wife Pernecy Bagley in appearance.

At 44 years of age, Pamelia would have been too old to give birth to LeOra in 1907, whereas Pernecy May Bagley was in her 31st year.

U.S. Census records reveal that between 1900 and 1910, when the three contested children were born, Pernecy Bagley lived three blocks from the Clark family in Montpelier. Therefore, he suggests an ongoing marital relationship persisted.

Given W. W. Clark's celebrated status as a state Congressman, and then Senator, keeping a concurrent second wife under wraps would be imperative. Shortly after LeOra's birth in 1907, Pernecy's move to Utah to complete her nurse training at the W.H. Groves Hospital (later to become the LDS Hospital) bolsters the claim that Pernecy absconded, leaving Pamelia as stepmother to raise these children.

Was there truly a secret plural marriage?

No DNA match testing had been done before this theory was proposed.

Method for Research In 2024, Ancestry.com showed that Wilford W. Clark had four living grandchildren and at least eight great-grandchildren who had undergone testing for DNA ethnicity and hereditary matching.

One of the grandchildren, Betty J. Clark McEwan, is

an uncontested descendant of Pamelia Dunn, but three living grandchildren would be the descendants of Pernecy, according to the hypothesis. By matching the DNA of these four individuals, we can determine whether these three grandchildren are first cousins or half-first cousins of the uncontested descendant (Betty J. Clark McEwan).

And, according to the hypothesis, five of the great-grandchildren are uncontested descendants of Pamelia, and three would be descendants of Pernecy. Again, we compare DNA results to determine whether the two groups are second cousins or half-second cousins.

The following table lists the birth order of Wilford W. Clark's eleven deceased children. In blue are the uncontested descendants of Pamelia Dunn. In red are those whose ancestry has been contested.

| Parents | Children | Grandchildren | Great-Grandchildren |
|---|---|---|---|
| Wilford Woodruff Clark + Pamelia Dunn | Woodruff, 1886 | ~ | x |
| | | | William, 1887 |
| | | | ~ |
| | | | Patricia Mack |
| | | | Vera, 1888 |
| | | | ~ |
| | | | x |
| | | | Royal, 1892 |
| | | | ~ |
| | | | DeeAnn Brown |
| | | | Ernest, 1894 |
| | | | ~ |
| | | | x |
| | | | Elmer, 1896 |
| | | | Betty Clark McEwan |
| | | | Lynn McEwan |
| | | | Homer, 1898 |
| | | | ~ |
| | | | Linda Durham |
| | | | Howard, 1898 |
| | | | ~ |
| | | | Carolyn Long |
| | | | Wilford Woodruff Clark + Pamelia Dunn OR |
| | | | Pernecy Bagley |
| | | | Russell, 1900 |

Robert B. Clark

Beverly Clark Johnson

April Clark Clive

LeGrand, 1903

~

Mary Ellen Clark Wells

LeOra, 1907

Leland Stanford Larsen

Christine Harmon Sheffield

Centimorgans (cM) CountA centimorgan (cM) is a unit of genetic measurement used to describe how much DNA two people share. Humans have about 6,800 cM in total, roughly 3,400 cM inherited from each parent. Full siblings usually share 2,200–3,400 cM (about 37–61%), with variation caused by random recombination. First cousins share 396–1,396 cM (around 850 cM on average), though a single shared value can represent multiple relationships — for instance, 1,200 cM could indicate a first cousin, grandparent, great-grandparent, or great-niece. Second cousins share about 175–240 cM (2–5%), while half-second cousins share 85–120 cM (≈1.5%). Two people with the same great-grandfather but different great-grandmothers are half-second cousins.

First Cousins

We match-tested Betty Clark McEwan, an uncontested grandchild of Pamelia Dunn, with three of her contested first cousins. It is typical for first cousins to share about 575 to 1330 centimorgans (cM) of DNA, while half-first cousins share about half of that, ranging from 215 to 650 cM of DNA.

Betty McEwan reveals a 778 cM match with first-cousin Leland Stanford Larsen. Robert B. Clark, a son of Russell, matches 951 cM with cousin Betty, and Beverly Clark Johnson, a daughter of Russell, shows an even stronger relationship of 1155 cM with her first-cousin Betty – thus making a more robust case for Pamelia delivering Wilford's youngest three children.

Second Cousins

According to the hypothesis, Patricia Cranmer Mack, DeeAnn Clark Brown, Lynn McEwan, Linda Farr Durham, and Carolyn L. Long would be half-second cousins of April Clark Clive, Mary Ellen Clark Wells, and Christine Harmon Sheffield. Full second cousins share between 75 and 360 cm (or about 3.1% of their DNA), while half-second cousins typically share between 30 and 215 cm (or about 1.6% of their DNA).

Comparison

cM

Conclusion

Average centimorgan match among the five un-

contested descendants

135

The average genetic similarity among uncontested descendants is 135 centimorgans. This is normal for second cousins.

Average centimorgan match among the three contested descendants

197

The average DNA match among the three contested descendants is 197 centimorgans, which is normal for second cousins.

Average centimorgan match comparing the uncontested and contested descendants

195

The average genetic similarity between uncontested and contested descendants is 195 centimorgans, which is what we would expect from full second cousins. If they had different great-grandmothers, we would expect this number to be about half.

The DNA data on second cousins do not support the hypothesis that Wilford Woodruff Clark's youngest three children came from his 2nd wife, Pernecey Bagley.

Conclusion: The DNA-matching tests of the first cousins support the documented history that Pamelia Dunn was the birth mother of all eleven children of Wilford W. Clark. The DNA match tests of the second cousins also show no evidence that Wilfred Woodruff Clark's youngest three children came from a different mother. Thus, the DNA evidence does not support the hypothesis that Wilford Woodruff Clark had a secret plural marriage.