

Celebrations

By the end of the first ten years in the valley, dozens of towns had been built and people's lives settled down. Traditions such as birthdays, wedding celebrations, and holidays helped break up the daily activities and hard work. Utahns celebrated national holidays such as the Fourth of July and Christmas. Pioneer Day was a celebration of the arrival of the first pioneers into the Great Basin on July 24, 1847.

Everyone turned out to cheer when important people came to visit. Often parades were held, with speeches and band concerts.

When Brigham Young and his apostles and party arrived, the streets of our little village [Mt. Pleasant] were lined with children to welcome them. Everyone loved Brigham Young and as they came along in their wagons we all waved our handkerchiefs. . . . We were all dressed up in our best to greet our leader.

—Alma Elizabeth Mineer

Let's Dance!

Singing, dancing, acting in a play, going on hikes, or watching the sunset helped young people relax from hard work. Every town had a choir and a band. Almost every town had an acting company, and dancing parties were held often. There was usually a fiddle player, and maybe someone playing an accordion. Round and round in different patterns men and women, boys and girls marched. Babies and young children played or slept in one part of the room while the others danced.

When a county courthouse was built in Brigham City in 1856, Sarah Squires remembered: "Among the first things done was the construction of a large platform, where the workmen might dance a quadrille [square dance] or two before returning to their afternoon work; or where, after the day's work they might go for a few hours of amusement."



A violin and a few band instruments provided one of the few forms of entertainment the people enjoyed. Dances were held outdoors and indoors, in cities and out in the country.



New Settlements

North and South

During the first decade in the Great Basin, about 100 settlements were established, from the Bear River Valley in Idaho into Arizona and Nevada. Here are some of them.

Bountiful, 1848

The first September in the valley, Peregrine Sessions moved his family around the mountain from Salt Lake City and built a home and farm at a site they called Sessions Settlement. About twenty-five families joined them and spent the winter there. The settlement was renamed Bountiful for a beautiful green garden spot in the Book of Mormon. Bountiful lived up to its name and was a thriving farming community.

Ogden, 1848

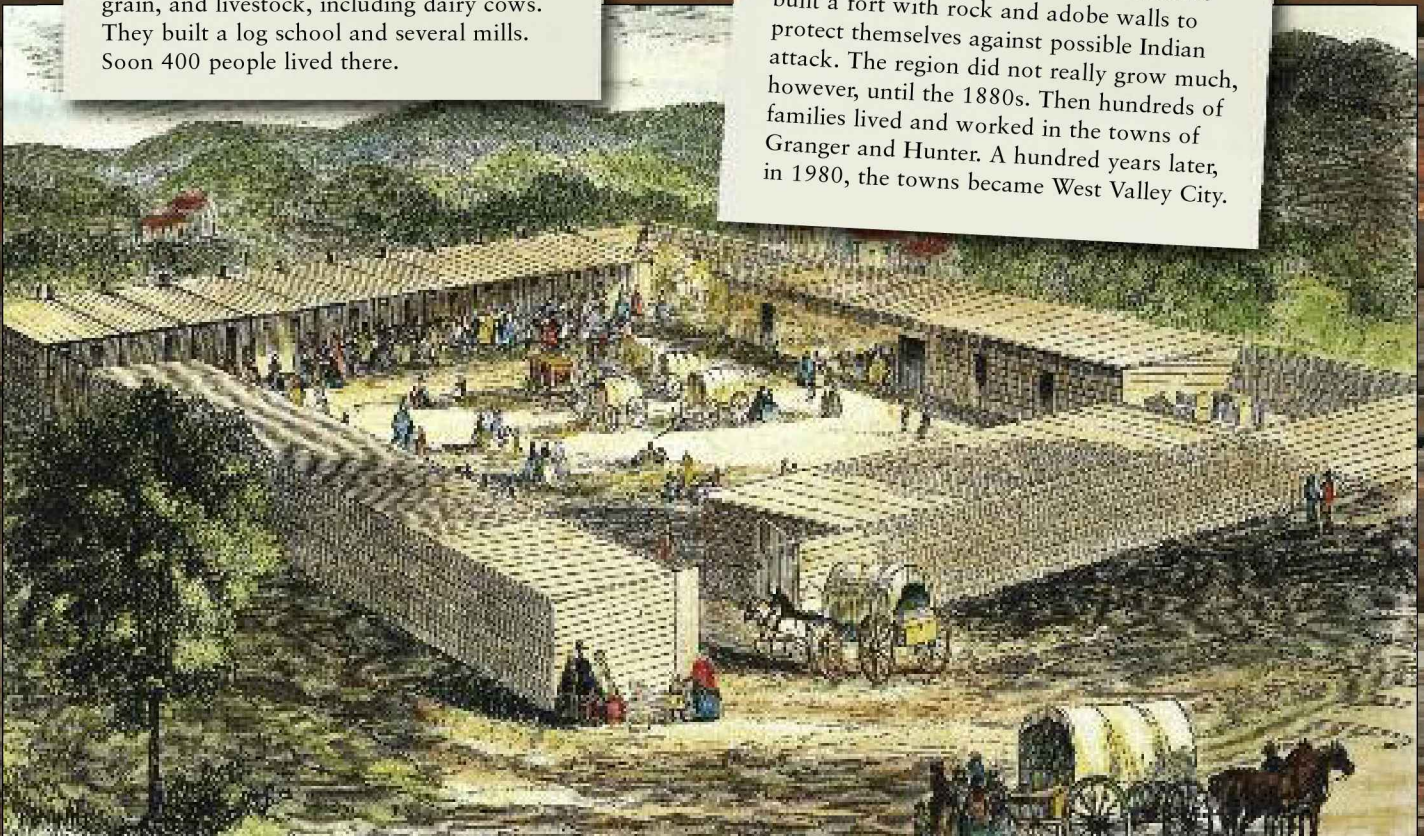
James Brown bought Miles Goodyear's Fort Buenaventura on the Weber River. Soon families were living there, grazing cattle, and planting crops. Brigham Young visited and talked to the people about laying out a city. The settlement was called Brownsville, but was later named Ogden for a trapper, Peter Skene Ogden, who had trapped in the Weber Valley.

Farmington, 1848

At the same time as Bountiful was being settled, Hector Haight took cattle a few miles farther. Five families joined him and started a farming community. More families came the next year. They raised alfalfa, grain, and livestock, including dairy cows. They built a log school and several mills. Soon 400 people lived there.

Granger, 1848 **(today's West Valley City)**

Settlement began in the western side of the Salt Lake Valley in the fall of 1848, when Joseph Harker settled near today's 600 West and 3300 South. Soon seven other families moved to the region. In 1853, the families built a fort with rock and adobe walls to protect themselves against possible Indian attack. The region did not really grow much, however, until the 1880s. Then hundreds of families lived and worked in the towns of Granger and Hunter. A hundred years later, in 1980, the towns became West Valley City.



Fort Utah became the town of Provo. Settlers farmed outside the fort.

Provo, 1849

In March, John S. Higbee and thirty settlers went south to Utah Valley and made a settlement on the Provo River. They plowed, planted, and built Fort Utah.

This was the territory of the Utah Lake Utes. The Indians, who had been friendly to settlers in Salt Lake City, did not like the white people coming so close to their settlements and hunting grounds around Utah Lake. Once in a while, an arrow would hit near a settler who was gathering wood outside the fort.

Then three white men killed a Ute man. Apparently, local residents did not make a full report of the event to Salt Lake leaders. Under the impression that the Indians were prepared to attack without a cause, a militia was sent from Salt Lake City with orders to kill all hostile Indians. The fight left one white man and at least twenty-six Utes dead. Eleven Indians surrendered, but the militia slit their throats anyway.

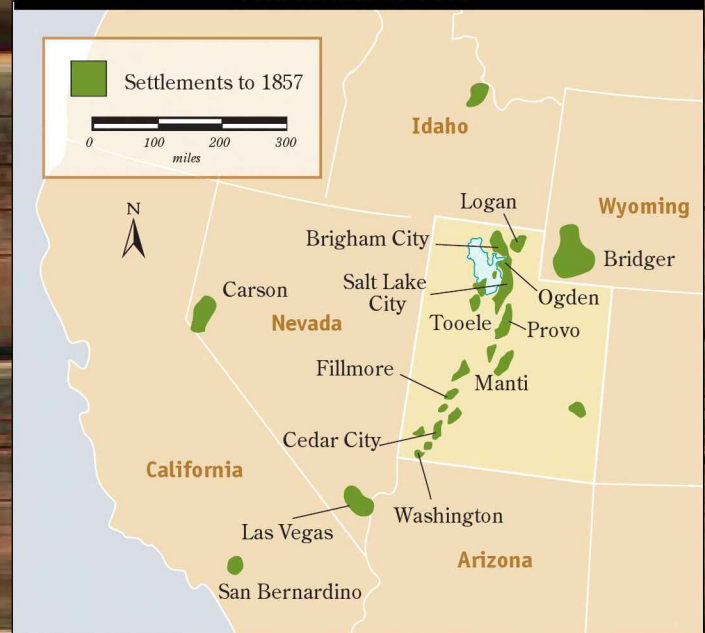
White settlers, feeling safer, laid out city lots and started farms. Other communities spread out around Provo. **Alpine, American Fork, Lehi, Payson, Battle Creek (Pleasant Grove), and Springville** started small. Scattered farms were also established in **Lindon and Pleasant View**.

Manti, 1849

In November, Chief Walkara, living in Sanpete Valley, issued an invitation to pioneers to settle there. Isaac Morley led a company of 224 settlers to the distant valley. No sooner had they arrived than snow fell, and a cold winter closed in before they had time to build cabins or a fort. Some of the men made it to Salt Lake City and back on snowshoes and brought back supplies.

In the spring, ten teams arrived with grain to help the settlers and the Indians, who badly needed food. The people went to work building homes, plowing, and fencing their farms. By the end of 1850, the settlement of Manti had 365 people. Turn to the last page of this chapter to see famous paintings of Manti's early years.

Settlements to 1857



Present-day state lines and names are to give an idea of location. Other maps will show boundaries of the territory. Only some of the towns are labeled.

Parowan, 1851

An exploring group went south during the winter of 1849-50. Iron ore in the mountains attracted the explorers, and plans were made to start a colony the next year. A group finally arrived in the freezing days of January, 1851. A site for the town of Parowan was chosen, and a road was built into the canyon so timber could be brought down. A 90-foot-tall pole was erected and soon held up the waving Stars and Stripes. Men built a log fort surrounding cabins, a meetinghouse, a schoolhouse, and a watchtower. George A. Smith led the community. His energy and great enthusiasm helped colonize southern Utah.

Cache Valley, 1851

Peter Maughan was the leader of the earliest pioneer group to settle in Cache Valley. He established Maughan's Fort, which became the present town of Wellsville. At first the people thought Cache Valley's growing season was too short to raise wheat and other crops, but in 1859 several hundred families were sent there. **Wellsville, Providence, Mendon, Logan, Richmond, and Smithfield** were settled, and the valley soon became "Utah's granary" because of the successful farms there.

Sugar House, A Sweet Failure

The people started many industries in the new towns. Some were successful, and some were not. The sugar industry was a good example. Imported sugar was expensive, so people used molasses for sweetening. However, LDS missionaries in France had seen sugar being made from sugar beets and wanted to try it in Utah. They brought in seeds and people to run the operation. They arranged for heavy machinery to be shipped across the ocean to New Orleans, then up the Mississippi River to St. Louis, and then by ox teams across the plains and mountains to Utah.

A factory was erected in what is now Sugar House, near Salt Lake City, but the factory was a failure. In 1855 more than 22,000 bushels of sugar beets were harvested and ground into molasses, but the workers did not succeed in getting more than sweet syrup. Some people blamed a lack of skilled management and workers. Others blamed the equipment. No sugar was ever produced in Sugar House.

It wasn't until about thirty-five years later, in 1891, that the Utah Sugar Company in Lehi succeeded in producing sugar from sugar beets. The Ogden Sugar Company went into production several years later. After that, Utahns had all the sugar they wanted.



Cedar City, 1851

After iron was discovered near Parowan, a group of thirty-five skilled miners from England, Scotland, and Wales were called by Brigham Young to found the Pioneer Iron Mission at nearby Cedar City. It was September, 1851. Committees were appointed to lay out a town, erect a fort, dig a canal, plant a farm, built a road to the coal deposits, and locate materials with which to build a small blast furnace. Within a year a small amount of iron was produced and was used to make nails for horseshoes and some tools. Despite their hard work, however, iron was never very successfully produced in large quantities.

Brigham City, 1851

As new immigrants continued to come by wagon, fifteen new settlements were established. One of them was Brigham City. William Davis brought his family and others to farm. In 1853 Lorenzo Snow led the community and named it Box Elder for the box elder trees in the mountains. Years later, shortly before his death in 1877, Brigham Young gave his last public sermon there, and the name of the town was changed to Brigham City.

Harmony, 1852

The small community of Harmony was formed as the county seat of Washington County, named after President George Washington. For a while, it was the only town in the far corner of the Utah Territory. The region was much warmer than other places, which meant there were no freezing winters that would kill crops such as cotton. Later, the county seat was moved to St. George.

Utah Settlements to 1860*

Salt Lake Valley

Salt Lake City	1847
Big Cottonwood	1848
East Mill Creek	1848
Sugar House	1848
South Cottonwood	1848
North Jordan	1848
West Jordan	1848
Little Cottonwood	1849
Draper	1849
Herriman	1851
Midvale	1851
Crescent	1854

Davis County

Bountiful	1848
Farmington	1848
Centerville	1848
Kaysville	1848
Layton	1850

West from Salt Lake Valley

Tooele	1849
Grantsville	1849
Batesville	1852
Clover	1854

Ogden Valley

Ogden	1848
Harrisville	1850
Marriott	1850
Slaterville	1850
Uintah	1850
West Weber	1850
North Ogden	1851
Far West	1851
South Weber	1851
South Hooper	1852

Weber Valley Northward

Willard	1851
Pleasant View	1851
Brigham City	1851
Call's Fort (Harper)	1853
Perry	1854

Utah Valley and Eastward

Provo	1849
Pleasant Grove	1850
Springville	1850
Payson	1850
Alpine	1850
Spanish Fork	1850
American Fork	1850
Lindon	1850
Santaquin	1851
Salem	1851
Mapleton	1856
Garland	1857
Heber City	1859
Midway	1859
Charleston	1859

Sanpete Valley

Manti	1849
Ephraim	1852
Spring City	1852
Mount Pleasant	1852
Fountain Green	1859
Moroni	1859
Mount Pleasant	1859
Gunnison	1859

Juab Valley

Nephi Valley	1851
Mona	1851

Pavant Valley

Fillmore	1851
Holden	1855
Meadow	1857

Sevier Valley

Parowan	1851
Cedar City	1851
Paragonah	1852
Beaver	1856

Cedar Valley

Cedar Valley	1852
Fairfield	1855

Southern Utah

Harmony	1852
Pine Valley	1855
Pinto	1856
Washington	1856
Gunlock	1857

Morgan Valley Eastward

Wanship	1854
Morgan	1855
Peterson	1855
Milton	1856
Peoa	1857
Eden	1859
Coalville	1859
Hoytsville	1859
Wanship	1859

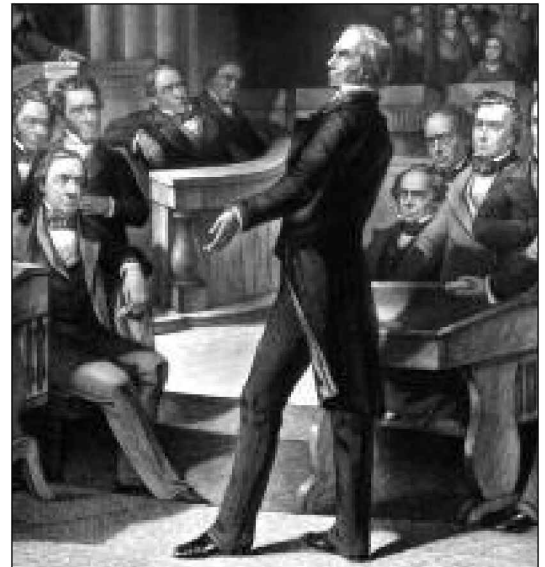
Cache Valley

Logan	1856
Wellsville	1856
Mendon	1857
Providence	1859
Richmond	1859
Millville	1859
Franklin	1859
Smithfield	1859

* Other towns were settled later. You will see them in later chapters of this book.

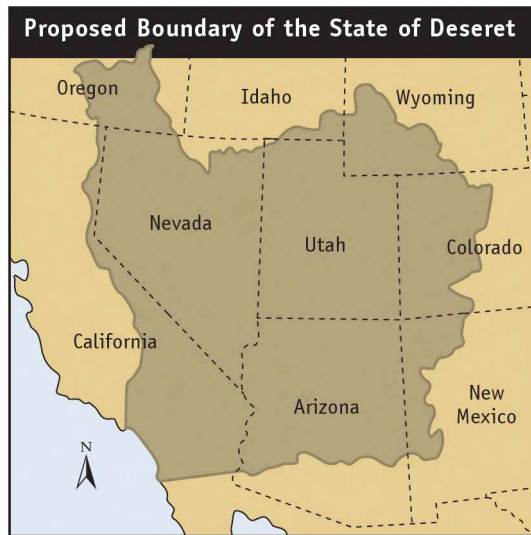
The Proposed State of Deseret

Within a few years of coming to Utah, LDS Church leaders held a convention and wrote a constitution to set up the State of Deseret. They chose the word “deseret” because in an ancient language it meant honeybee, which stood for industry. The boundaries of the **proposed** state were large, and even included San Diego, California, on the Pacific Coast. Church leaders appointed themselves to top government offices, with Brigham Young as governor. Men took their constitution and **petition** to Washington, D.C., to apply for statehood. The petition was turned down.



Henry Clay was known as the “Great Compromiser.” How did he help Utahns?

Why do you think Congress did not accept the boundaries of the proposed State of Deseret? What advantages would there have been to include a seaport city in Utah’s boundaries? Can you see the place where the state would have touched the Pacific Ocean? Which present-day states would have been part of Utah if the proposed boundaries had been accepted?

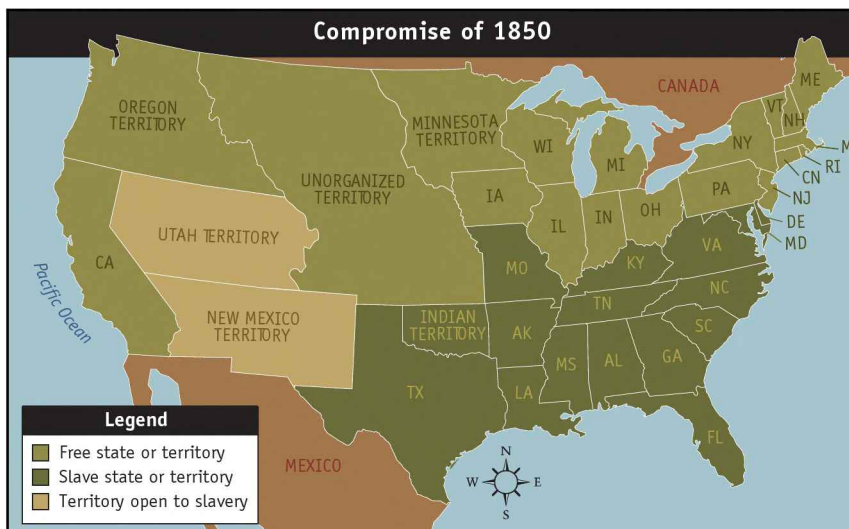


Utah Becomes a Territory

After the United States gained the western lands from Mexico at the end of the Mexican-American War, the question of slavery came up again. In the East, the question of slavery divided the Northern states and the Southern states. Neither side wanted the new land in the West to be all free or all slave because that would threaten the balance of votes in the U.S. Congress in Washington, D.C. After gold was discovered in California, the people there asked to be admitted into the Union as a free state.

In the midst of the crisis, Congress turned to Senator Henry Clay from Kentucky. Clay was known as the “Great Compromiser.” The senator was very ill. Still, he pleaded on the Senate floor for the North and South to **compromise**. Each side had to give up part of what they wanted in order to reach an agreement. Clay proposed admitting California as a free state and making other lands in the West into two large territories—Utah and New Mexico. He proposed that the people living in the two new territories vote on allowing slavery or not.

After much heated debate, Congress eventually passed the plan. Utah became a territory.



What do you think?

The Utah legislature voted to make slavery legal. Why do you think slavery was never widely practiced in Utah if it was legal?

A New Name

Congress named the new territory Utah after the Ute Indian tribe—the largest group of Indians in the region. Members of Congress did not like the name “Deseret,” which Brigham Young had wanted, because it sounded too much like a dry “desert” and might discourage people from going west.

Leaders of the Territory

U.S. President Fillmore appointed Brigham Young as the first governor and appointed a secretary and three judges. The judges were mostly inexperienced outsiders who moved to Utah from the East. This made many Utahns angry. They wanted to elect their own judges. The Utah people did get to vote for their own territorial legislature, which could make some local Utah laws. They could also send a delegate to Congress in Washington, but the delegate could not vote there. In other words, under the territorial government, Utah’s affairs were mostly run by the federal government. Other territories in the country were run the same way.

“ I was sent to Utah as one of the justices of the courts. I carried with me all the prejudices and hate that have been against Mormonism. . . . When I arrived in Ogden I was somewhat astonished to find that the people looked like other people; they lived in houses, and wore clothes, and went about their business, and appeared not differently from the people I had seen in the United States. ”

—Judge John W. Judd

A State or a Territory?

Even though people in the territory had some new privileges, they still longed for the benefits of statehood.

PRIVILEGES	TERRITORY	STATE
VOTE FOR PRESIDENT OF COUNTRY	NO	YES
CHOOSE LOCAL OFFICIALS	PART	YES
MAKE LOCAL LAWS	PART	YES
REPRESENTATIVES CAN VOTE IN CONGRESS	NO	YES

Fillmore, Our First Capital City

Anson Call took thirty families from Salt Lake City to start a farming community near the center of today’s Utah. They built houses, a log schoolhouse, and a post office. Because of its central location, in 1851 Fillmore was chosen by the territorial legislature to be Utah’s first territorial capital. It was named for U.S. President Millard Fillmore, the president at the time. Millard county was also named after the president.



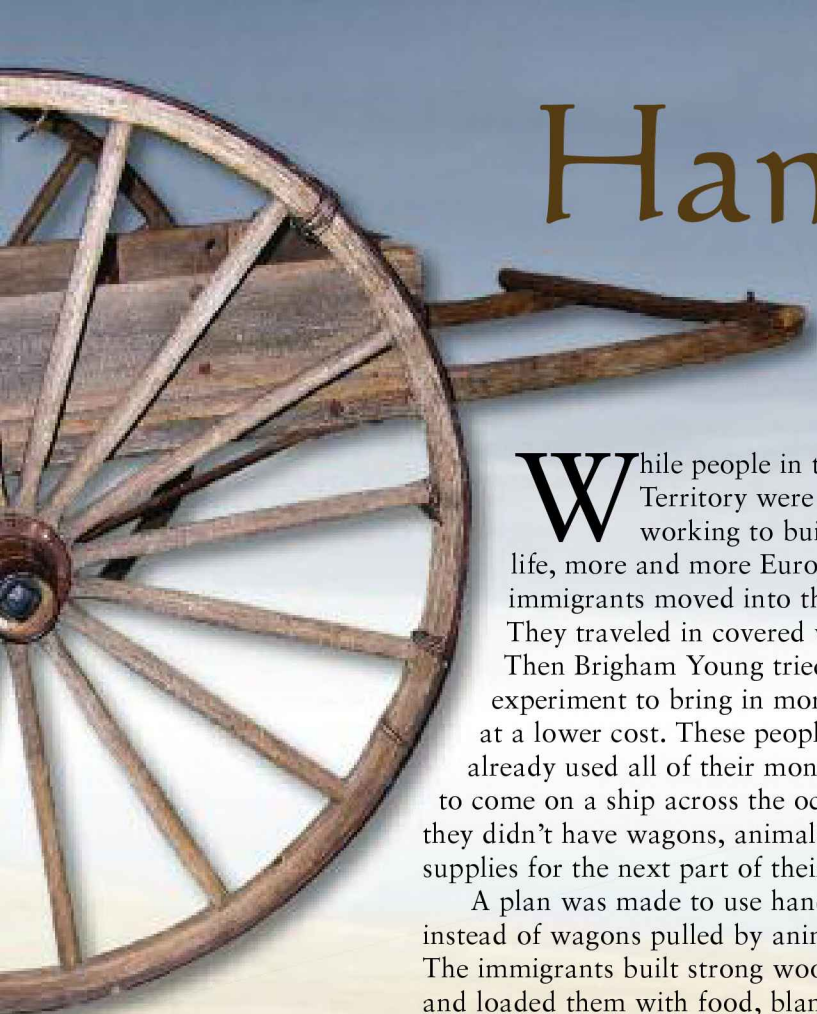
The legislature of the Utah Territory met in the Capitol Building for only one session. The next year they met in Salt Lake City, where it was more convenient for most of the men.

Governor Brigham Young

While he was governor of the Utah Territory, Brigham Young, often called “the Great Colonizer,” organized the territorial government, worked with the leaders of Indian groups, and established a working relationship with the federal government. He started over 300 new towns all over the territory, organized the immigration of thousands, and developed vast manufacturing and agriculture industries.

Young was governor of the Utah territory for almost two terms, from 1850 to 1857. However, he remained president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints until his death in 1877.

Handcarts to the West



While people in the Utah Territory were busy working to build a new life, more and more European immigrants moved into the valley. They traveled in covered wagons. Then Brigham Young tried an experiment to bring in more converts at a lower cost. These people had already used all of their money paying to come on a ship across the ocean, and they didn't have wagons, animals, or supplies for the next part of their journey.

A plan was made to use handcarts instead of wagons pulled by animal teams. The immigrants built strong wooden carts and loaded them with food, blankets, and clothing. Small children and babies rode in the carts, but everyone else used muscle power to push and pull the heavy carts across grassy plains and through rugged mountain canyons.

“... at noon we went to the Square to view the handcart company, it being the first that crossed the plains. ”

—John Bennion,
Salt Lake City, 1856

Some painted their handcarts with such mottos as “Zion's Express,” “Merry Mormons,” and “Truth will Prevail.” About 3,000 Latter-day Saints came to Utah this way in ten groups or “companies” over a period of about four years.

The first group to leave Iowa with handcarts was proud of what it called the Birmingham Band. As they moved westward, the band's music lifted the spirits of the people. This folksong became very popular:

Handcart Song

by J.D.T. McAllister

Ye saints who dwell on Europe's shore,
Prepare yourselves for many more
To leave behind your native land,
For sure God's judgments are at hand.

For some must push and some must pull
As we go marching up the hill;
So merrily on the way we go,
Until we reach the Valley O!

“On the 24th of September, 1860, we took up our handcarts for the last time; we pulled them 14 miles on to the camp-grounds in Salt Lake City. Here we set them down, never more to realize how heavy they had been, how hard to pull. ”

—Carl Fjeld, Norwegian immigrant, 1860



Peter Howard McBride was six years old when he traveled with the Martin Handcart Company. Peter's father died on the trip, but the rest of the family survived and settled in Ogden. This is part of his story:

Artist C.C.A. Christensen, born in Denmark, came into the valley with "the Danish flag flying from his cart, his trousers flapping in tatters about his legs." He painted many pioneer events, including this handcart river crossing.

In Wyoming we camped at the Sweetwater River. We could go no farther: the snow was so deep and there was no food. They gave me a bone of an ox that had died. I cut off the skin and boiled it, drank the soup and ate the skin, and it was a good supper.

The wind drifted so much I knew I would die. The wind blew the tent down. They all crawled out but me. I went to sleep and slept warm all night. In the morning I heard someone say, 'How many are dead in this tent?' My sister said, 'Well, my little brother must be frozen to death in that tent. So they jerked the tent loose from the snow that covered it. My hair was frozen to the tent. I picked myself up and came out quite alive, to their surprise.

That day we got word that some teams were coming to meet us from the Valley. Three teams came that night bringing food and warm clothes. We all thanked God for our delivery from certain death.

—from the book *I Walked to Zion* by Susan Arrington Madsen



Memory Master

1. Summarize the first tasks of the pioneers after entering the Valley of the Great Salt Lake.
2. Why were the first cabins built close together in the Old Fort?
3. Evaluate the problems of the first year in the valley. What happened?
4. Why is the seagull Utah's state bird?
5. Explain how the California Gold Rush helped the economy of the Great Basin.
6. List three reasons for starting new settlements.
7. Analyze the problems of the early settlers as similar or different from problems facing today's immigrants in Utah.
8. How did the Great Compromise help Utah become a territory?
9. Utah's territorial government was mostly run by the _____ government.
10. Why did Congress name the new territory "Utah"?
11. Where was Utah Territory's first capital city?
12. Defend Brigham Young's title as "the Great Colonizer."



Activity | Learn More about Utah's Early Settlements

Immigrants from other states and foreign countries started an amazing number of settlements in Utah. They started towns and farms all up and down the mountain corridor, at first avoiding the plateau lands of eastern Utah.

Choose your town or city or another one on the list on page 135 and learn more about it. Who were the first settlers? Where did they come from? Why was the town started? What work did the people do? Evaluate the problems they faced, and how they solved these problems.

Report what you find with a poster, diorama, story, skit, poem, song, or PowerPoint presentation.

Ogden, 1889



Go to the Source

Paintings of Manti Tell a Story

Paintings are one source that historians use to understand the past. The two paintings below offer insight into the time period of Utah's settlement by Mormon pioneers. C.C.A. Christensen, a Danish artist, created the paintings. Christensen studied at the Royal Academy of Art in Copenhagen. In 1857, when he was twenty-six, Christensen immigrated to Utah. He traveled on a ship from Liverpool, England, and then pushed a handcart across the plains to get to Utah. Later in his life, Christensen painted many scenes detailing the stories of Mormon pioneers and their settlements in Utah.

After studying these two paintings of Manti by C.C.A. Christensen, answer the questions below.



1. What details in both paintings tell you about daily life?
2. If you were a historian who had these paintings to study, what observations would you make about how life changed for the people in this area?
3. Would you consider these paintings primary or secondary sources? Offer details to support your answer.



Go to the Source