

Thousands of immigrants from Europe arrived in eastern seaports to start a new life in America.

A Great Gathering

While the settlers were building new homes and growing crops, men were serving as missionaries, visiting people in their homes and on street corners in North America and in many foreign lands. They encouraged converts to make the long and difficult journey to the Great Basin. Brigham Young wanted the people to come and strengthen Utah settlements against the kind of persecution the Mormons had experienced in the East.

Young also needed the working skills of many people. He needed trained architects, builders, weavers, printers, and stonemasons. Later, he wanted people who knew how to manufacture iron, glass, and even sugar. He wanted people who knew how to raise sheep and produce wool cloth.

Foreign Immigrants

During the 1840s and 1850s, millions of *immigrants* entered the eastern United States to find jobs, land, and freedom from oppression. A large number of these were newly-converted Latter-day Saints from Canada, the British Isles, and

Scandinavia. At first, the Europeans came across the oceans on sailing ships powered by wind. The ships were slow, the food poor, and many people got sick. Deaths due to disease were common, and bodies were wrapped and set gently down into the ocean.

After arriving in the United States the converts had to get to the Salt Lake Valley by riverboat as far as they could go, then by wagons pulled by oxen. Long wagon trains came to Utah on a steady basis. After the advance company arrived in July, 1847, a company of 1,540 exiles from Nauvoo came in September. In 1848 another 3,000 came, including men released from the Mormon battalion, and an average of three-to-four thousand per year for the next five years. By 1857 there were about 35,000 immigrants in the Great Basin, and they kept coming. Salt Lake Valley grew, and many people were sent to start other communities.

Perpetual Emigration Fund

Brigham Young wanted a way to bring more LDS members from their camps in Iowa. To help bring them in, the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company (PEF) was formed in 1849. The fund was built up by donations of money, oxen, wagons, and food from Utah. Immigrants later repaid their loans by donating labor or paying back the loan in cash, farm products, or goods. Thus the fund *perpetuated* itself and kept helping immigrants.

Foreign *emigrants* were also aided by the fund. By the early 1850s, there were over 30,700 Mormons in the British Isles, compared to about 11,400 in Utah. PEF agents were sent to help the travelers make their way to Salt Lake City.

An agent in Liverpool, England, arranged for ships that took people to seaports either in New Orleans, Boston, Philadelphia, or New York. At these ports PEF agents met the travelers and booked them by boat or wagon to St. Louis, then about 500 miles up the Missouri River to another post. There other agents helped immigrants get ready for the overland journey to Utah.

An “*emigrant*” is a person *leaving* a place. An “*immigrant*” is a person *coming into* a place. (Think “*e*”=exit and “*i*”=in.)

In pioneer times, the most common word was “*emigrant*.” Today we usually use “*immigrant*.” Both terms are correct because a person leaving one place has to move to another place. Are you an immigrant?

Called to Settle a New Place

When Brigham Young wanted to establish a new community, he often “called” the people to go. He often gave the “calls” by reading names out loud from the pulpit at church meetings. He expected them to leave their new homes and farms and start over in another place. Waiting with dread or anticipation to see who would be called and where they would go was part of many church services. The people didn’t have to go, of course, but they usually did.

The people were often chosen by their skills. A community might need a blacksmith, tailor, cooper (barrel maker), weaver, and many farmers. Leaders of the new community were appointed in Salt Lake City before the group set out.

While many people were called to a new settlement site, many others went on their own to settlements where friends, family, or others from the same country were already living. For example, German and Swiss families moved to Providence, Italian converts moved to Logan and Ogden, Welsh converts gathered in Lehi, Mormons from Iceland moved to Spanish Fork, and some Swiss families settled Midway, where they raised cows and made cheese.

Reasons for Settlements

Utah towns were built for very different reasons than towns in other western regions. Many were built for a specific purpose. Some towns, such as Mormon Station (in present-day Carson Valley, Nevada), were begun as trading posts and to serve as temporary gathering places for new converts coming from California.

Other towns were started to produce goods. People were sent to Cedar City to produce iron, to St. George to grow cotton and flax, and to Sugar House to produce molasses and sugar. Other places were established to raise large herds of cattle and sheep.

Some towns were begun as missions to Indian groups. Las Vegas, Nevada, was one of these early Mormon towns. So was Harmony in southern Utah and Lemhi in today’s Idaho.

In all communities, agriculture was the main occupation and provided food for the thousands of new immigrants who arrived each year.

Brigham Young tried to visit as many of the new communities as he could, often taking a large group of family members and other church leaders with him. In 1857 he traveled 800 miles and reported to his son, Brigham, Jr.:

We have been traveling steadily all this summer which is just past, remaining but a very short time in the city [Salt Lake City] between our trips, yet there are a great number of settlements that we have been unable to visit for the want of time.

“ This news was very unexpected to me. . . . I had a good home, and plenty to do. But when I was selected to go, I saw the importance of the mission. . . . We go with joy, leaving our happy home, which had cost about four years of hard work. ”

—John Pulsipher

“ When the First Presidency ordered a thing, the people need not ask questions, but just do as they were told. ”

—Brigham Young



Manti was laid out in the typical way, with large square blocks separated by wide streets. What do you see in the photo that shows it is from an earlier time?

Patterns of Mormon Settlements

Settlers who went to Oregon and California usually settled one family at a time, far apart from each other on large farms. The Latter-day Saints, however, wanted to live in towns so they could meet together often for religious instruction, recreation, safety, and so they could work together on building and farming projects. Working together helped build communities faster.

They built their towns as a group in the wide valleys where mountain streams flowed from the canyons. The streams provided irrigation water for the wheat and vegetable crops. Since Utah's main mountains run north and south, Utah's towns also followed this pattern.

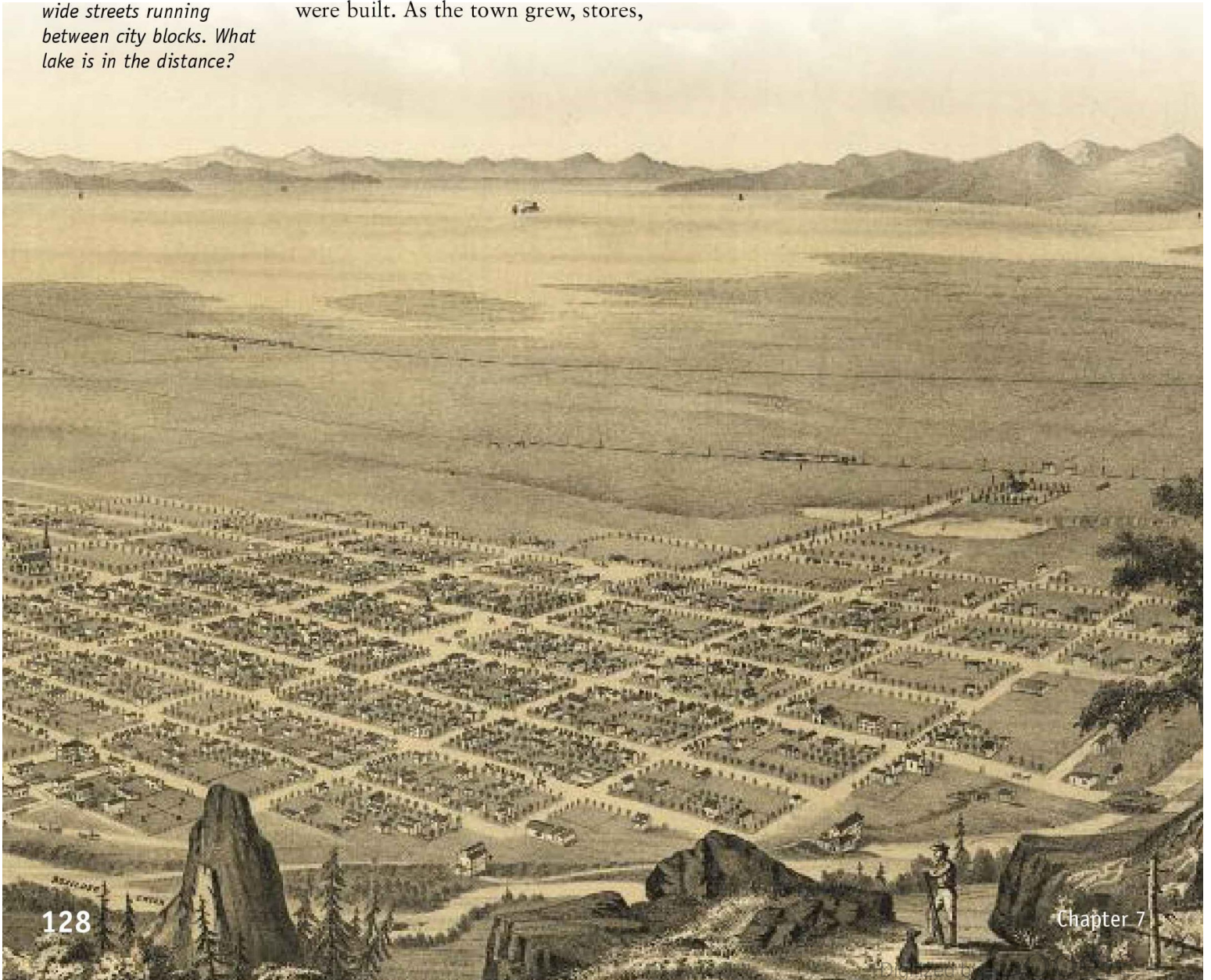
The first people on a site usually slept in or under their wagons until simple log cabins or a dugouts in the side of a hill were built. As the town grew, stores,

churches, schools, and better homes were made of sun-dried adobe bricks, wood, or stone. The old buildings were then used for storage or as barns for animals.

The Utah settlements had these features:

- Streets were laid out in a grid pattern.
- Streets were very wide.
- Irrigation ditches ran beside most streets.
- City blocks for homes and gardens were large (four acres or larger).
- "Squares" in the center of towns contained parks and public buildings, such as a church house, business offices, and stores. Celebrations were often held in the public squares.
- Farmlands were planted around the city center. The farms were surrounded by tall poplar trees to shelter crops from the wind.

Brigham City, north of Salt Lake City and Ogden, was laid out according to the grid pattern, with wide streets running between city blocks. What lake is in the distance?



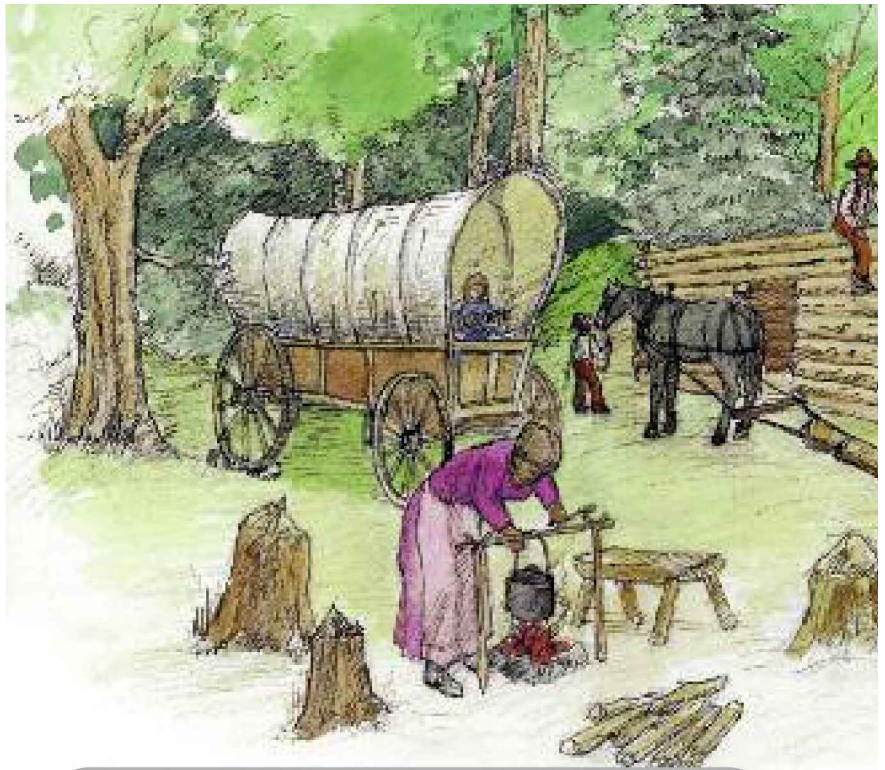
A Unique Lifestyle

The lives of the people in the early settlements were unique. The leaders of the church were also the leaders of the government. The people were divided into “wards” according to where they lived. “Stakes” were groups of wards.

Each ward and each stake had leaders who were in charge of both everyday survival and religious matters. The leader of each ward was called a “bishop,” and the leader of a stake was called a “stake president.” All church leaders and members, however, were under the direction of the president of the whole church.

Land was given according to the needs of each family, and any extra food was to be given to the bishop. Bishops gave food to the poor and to new immigrants who hadn’t had time to grow their own food.

Not wanting anyone to be idle, church leaders often provided jobs for new immigrants. They worked on public projects such as cutting stone, building temples and other church buildings, cutting timber in the mountains, digging irrigation ditches, farming, weaving, caring for animals, and other jobs. Of course, many began their own farms right away.



“Some have wished me to explain why we built an adobe wall around this city. . . . I build walls, dig ditches, make bridges, and do a great amount of labor that is of but little consequence only to provide ways and means for sustaining . . . the destitute. I have potatoes, flour, beef, and other articles of food, which I wish my brethren to have; and it is better for them to labor for those articles, so far as they are able, than to have it given to them.”

—Brigham Young

Settlement Problems

The first pioneers in Utah faced several challenges:

- They were in an unfamiliar environment. The land was fertile but very dry. Any trees or crops had to be planted and watered. In other places rain had watered the crops.
- They were **isolated** from the rest of the world, with no fast communication to the East.
- They were living on land inhabited by American Indians. Indians saw them as intruders. This caused problems for both groups.
- Every year thousands of new immigrants of different cultures and languages arrived with no money, homes, or jobs. Everyone had to work together to build a community.

What do you think?

- How hard would it be to provide everything you needed in an isolated community?
- What problems might occur?
- Could positive aspects balance out the negative?