

THE TIME

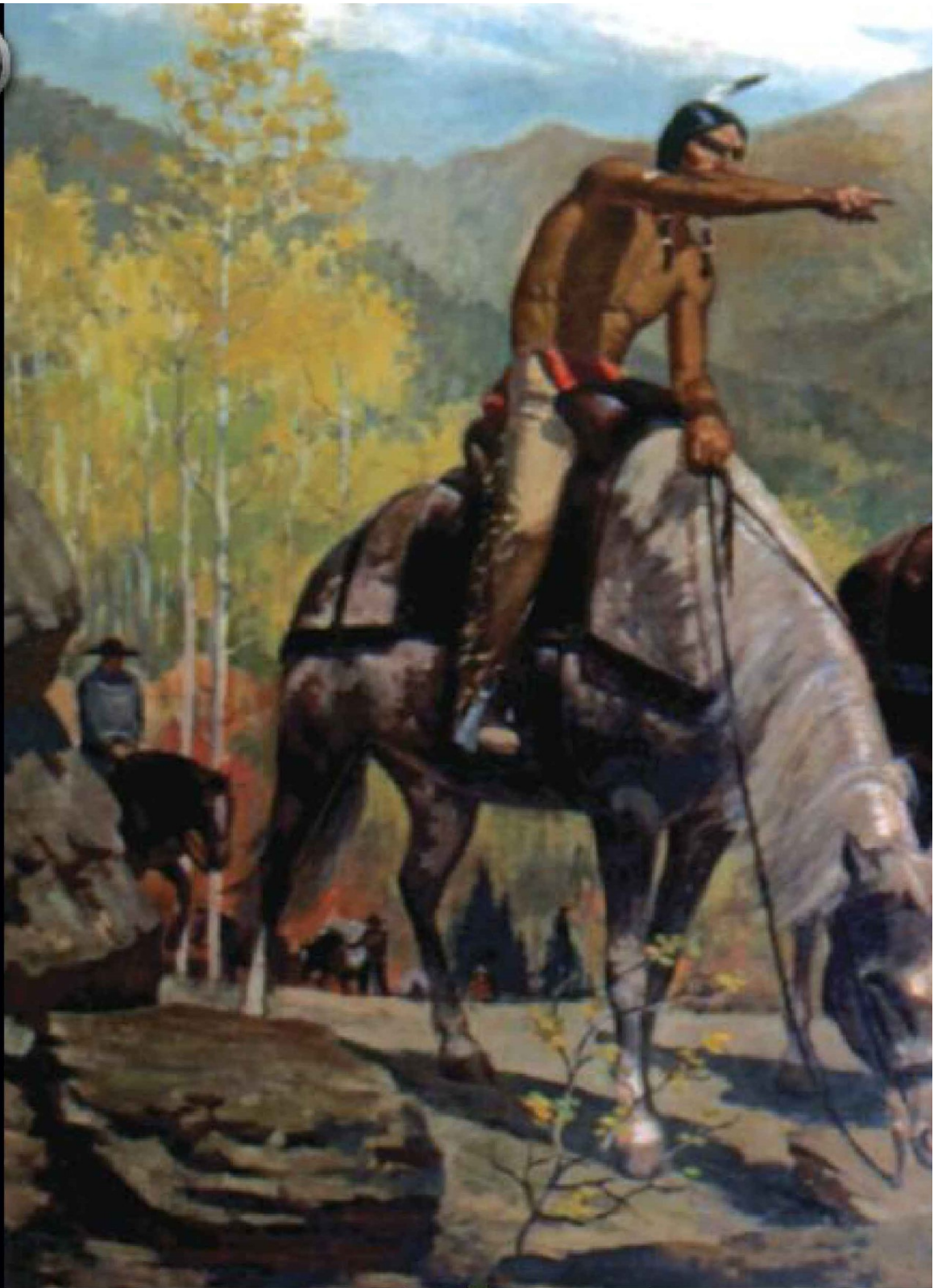
1770-1840s

PEOPLE TO KNOW

- James Beckwourth
- Jim Bridger
- Christopher Columbus
- Francisco Dominguez
- Silvestre Escalante
- Joaquin
- Juan Rivera
- Peter Skene Ogden
- Miera y Pacheco
- Etienne Provost
- Antoine Robidoux
- Silvestre
- Jedediah Smith
- Walkara
- Joseph Walker

WORDS TO UNDERSTAND

- barter
- cache
- ethnocentricity
- pelt
- presidio
- rendezvous
- retrieve



Silvestre, a Ute guide, shows Father Escalante the lush Utah Valley and Utah Lake off in the distance. At the time, many American Indians lived in the valley around the lake.

(Painting by Keith Eddington)

Timeline of Events

1760



1765

Juan Rivera crosses into present-day Monticello, Utah.



1780

1776

Fathers Dominguez and Escalante enter Utah.

1800

Early 1800s

Europeans wore tall felt hats made of beaver fur.



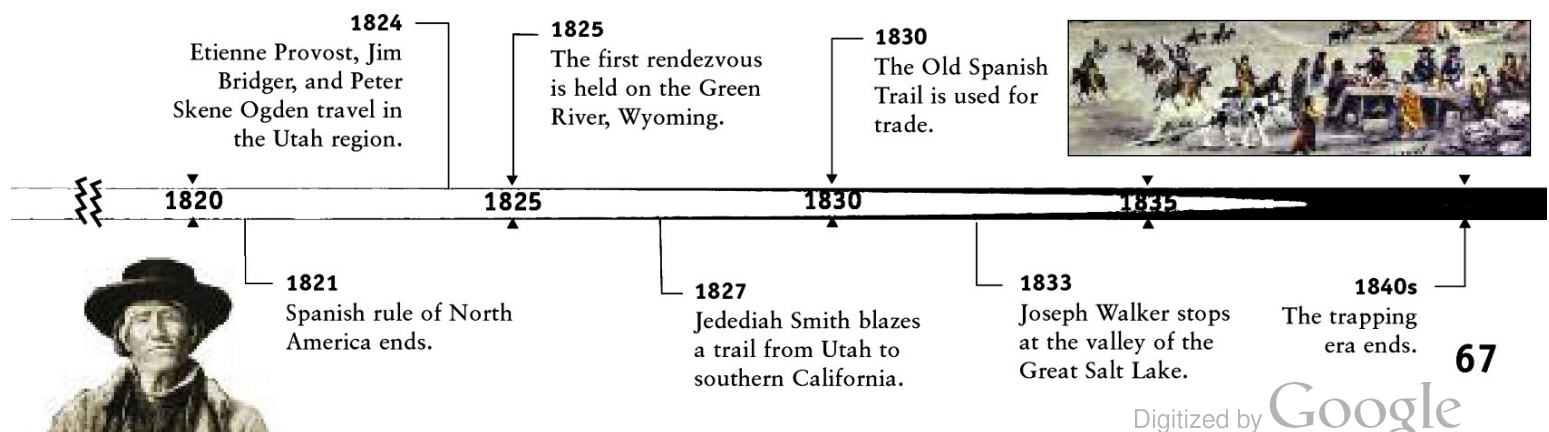
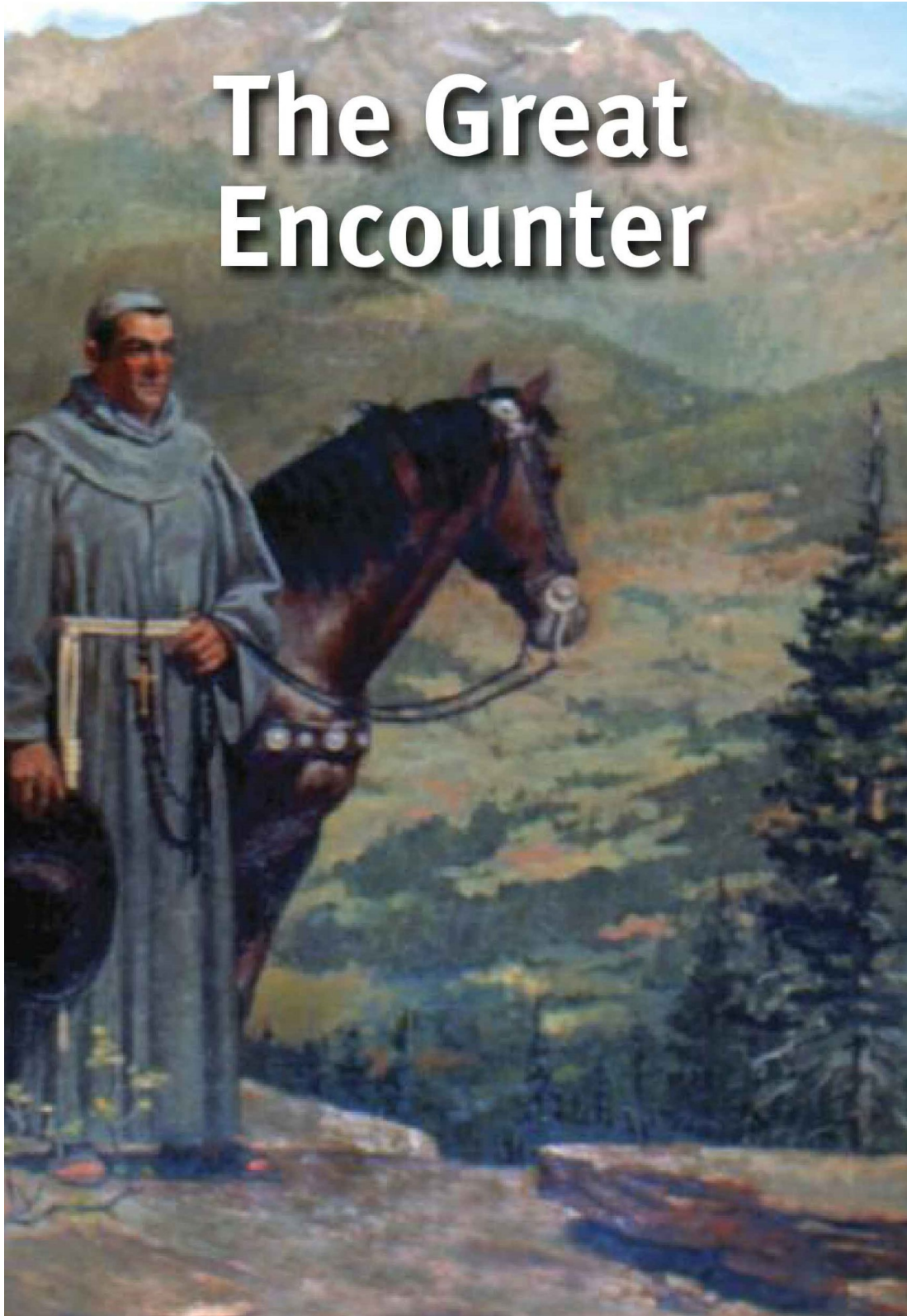
The Great Encounter

Chapter

SETTING THE STAGE

Spanish explorers and Catholic priests visited the region we now call Utah. Later, trappers came to trap beaver for their soft, thick furs. They often traded with Indians, used Indian guides, and married Indian women. Then Mormon settlers crossed the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains into Utah. They were here to stay.

This interaction between the American Indians and the first white people is called “the Great Encounter.” There were many peaceful encounters, but there were also conflicts. Eventually the Indians were forced to change their lifestyle.



Age of Exploration

Millions of American Indians lived all over the American continents. The people lived in many groups with distinct cultures. They had a long history. At the same time, the people of Europe and the rest of the world did not even know the highly populated American continents existed. Then a series of events began that would change Indian life in dramatic ways.

In the 1400s, merchants in Europe wanted to buy and sell goods with people in faraway places. Travel on water is usually easier and faster than travel on land, so Christopher Columbus convinced the king and queen of Spain to give him ships and a crew to explore a new ocean route to the Indies and convert the people there to Christianity.

Instead, the ships ran into a small group of islands in the Caribbean Sea of North America. Columbus claimed the land, the wealth, and the native people for Spain.

For hundreds of years after Columbus, other explorers came to Central and South America seeking glory and gold and bringing their Catholic religion to the people. They set up large Spanish colonies and started ruling the Indian people. The Spanish opened mines and forced Indian men to work in them, often as slaves.

The Spanish Spread Out

Spanish explorers and priests moved on horseback from Mexico into today's New Mexico, Arizona, and California. Of course, this land was all Indian land then, but the Spanish had claimed it.

The large Coronado expedition of 1540–42 explored to the south rim of the Grand Canyon and went east into the Great Plains. Despite their valiant efforts, they found no rich cities of gold.

After a time, Santa Fe (in today's New Mexico) became an important Spanish town. Soldiers, explorers, and Catholic priests gathered there and then branched out in all directions. In the late 1600s, a report told about Indian tribes living west

During the last years of Spanish rule, Juan de Anza led an expedition from a presidio at Tubac, Arizona, into the San Francisco Bay area. A caravan of 240 potential settlers, more than half of them women and children, were escorted by soldiers, priests, and Indians. The group never came into Utah, but showed the zeal of the Spanish in strengthening their presence in the Southwest.



of the mountains of Colorado. It told of a lake with people living around it. This place was probably Utah Lake, near today's Orem and Provo.

Juan Rivera Enters Utah

Almost 300 years after Columbus first came to the Americas, a Spanish explorer made his way to today's Utah. Juan Antonio Rivera and his party searched for the Colorado River and silver deposits. They entered present-day Utah near today's Monticello and passed the La Sal Mountains. Then they moved down Spanish Valley to reach the future site of Moab on the Colorado River. That October, on a white poplar tree there, Rivera carved a large cross. He wrote "Viva Jesus" at the top of the cross and his own name at the bottom.

Missions and Presidios

The Spanish did more than just explore. They also established missions and *presidios*. A *presidio* was a military post controlled by a governor and used to protect priests and other settlers from

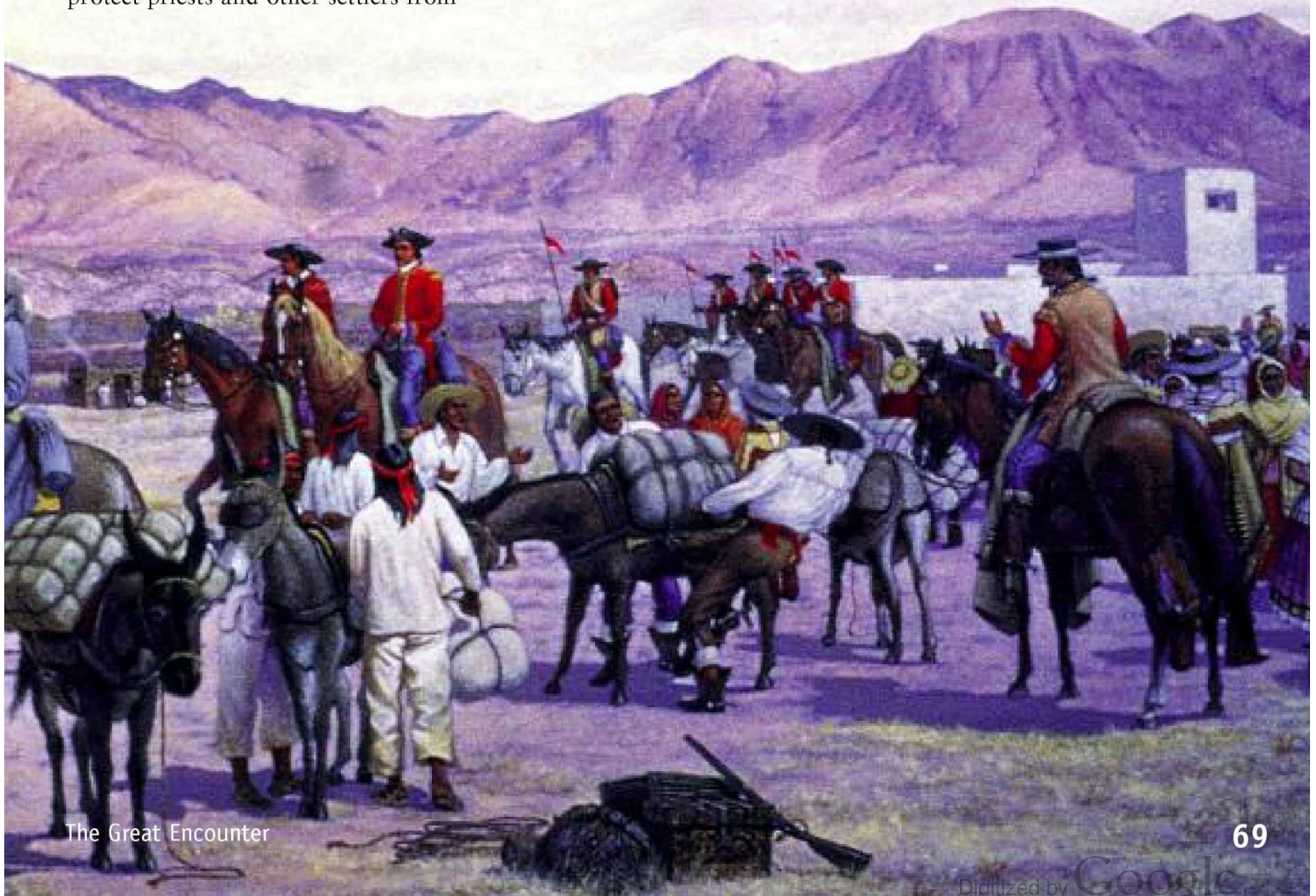
Indian attack. A mission was a place where the priests and Indians built a church and other buildings. Indians could live near the church, grow crops, and raise cattle, sheep, and horses. Missions were near the *presidios*. Two important missions were in San Diego and Monterey (in today's California).

Devoted young priests from Europe built and lived at the missions. They worked to teach Indians the teachings of Jesus Christ and how to live like Europeans. Indians often helped the priests by showing them where and how to get food and served as travel guides.

What do you think?

The Spanish explored for gold, conquered Indians, and brought devout missionaries to spread the Catholic religion.

What do you think about their mixed desire for wealth, power, and religion? Think of instances of these ideas in the world today. Why do people often think "my way, or no way" when it comes to power and religion?



The Utes Meet Father Escalante

Fathers Francisco Dominguez and Silvestre Escalante were Spanish Catholic priests who became the first non-Indians to explore the Great Basin. The priests, along with Spanish soldiers, mapmaker Miera y Pacheco, translators, and Indian servants, had been sent by the Spanish government to find a better route from Santa Fe to the mission in Monterey.

The group of fourteen men on horseback left Santa Fe eager for adventure. When they heard there were hostile Indians in what we now call Arizona, they avoided that route and went farther north into what is now Colorado. They moved north through rough terrain with little water and became lost.

After a time they met a Yuta (Ute) who guided them to an Indian man Escalante called Silvestre.

The Dominguez-Escalante expedition in the West started in July, 1776. What was happening at the time in the thirteen colonies in the East?

Dominguez-Escalante Expedition, 1776

Spanish explorers searched for a route from Santa Fe to their Catholic mission in Monterey. Where did they go instead?

- What present-day states are Santa Fe and Monterey located in?
- Did the group ever reach the Great Salt Lake?
- What present-day Utah towns are located on the explorers' route?
- What major river did they cross on their return trip?

Escalante wrote in his journal:

Aug. 30. Then we presented to . . . Silvestre a woolen cloak, a hunting knife, and some white glass beads, telling him we were giving these things to him so he would accompany us and continue as our guide to his country. He agreed and we gave him the present.

Sept 2. Besides the guide Silvestre, we found here another Indian, still a youth, who wished to accompany us. Since we had not previously known of his desire we had not provided him with a horse, and so to avoid any further delay [one of the explorers] took him behind him on his horse. Very gladly, with Silvestre and the boy, whom we named Joaquin, we continued our journey.

The party made its way south, then followed a river through a canyon. Coming out of the canyon near today's Provo, the Spanish fathers were awed to see the many Indian villages dotting the shore of Utah Lake.

While the rest of the group set up camp at the foot of the mountains, Silvestre, the boy Joaquin, and an interpreter entered the Indian village. Here the Indian guides proved valuable and may have saved the lives of the others.

Sept. 23. Some of the men came out to meet them with weapons in their hands to defend their homes and their families, but as soon as Silvestre talked to them, the guise of war was changed into the finest and simplest expression of peace and affection. . . .

On seeing that the boy Joaquin was on such good terms with us that he paid no attention to his own people. He even refused to leave the father . . . sleeping at his side. . . .

The Spanish fathers then preached to the people, and Indian leaders offered the Spaniards land if they would stay, adding that the Indians would protect them from the Comanches, another Indian group in the region.

We told them that after finishing our journey we would return . . . to baptize them and live with them. . . . We then presented the chief . . . with a hunting knife and strings of beads, and Miera gave him a hatchet.

Since Silvestre was staying with the Utes, Dominguez asked for another guide, and it was agreed that “not only Joaquin, but also a new guide should go with us.”

After about ten days, however, without explanation, the new Indian guide “left us and went back without saying goodbye.” The men and Joaquin continued on. Lack of food, much hardship, and an early winter blizzard just north of today’s Cedar City stopped the explorers from going on to California. Instead, they returned to Santa Fe.

Outcome of the Expedition

After more than six months and 2,000 miles, the expedition ended. The men never found a route to Monterey, but Father Escalante’s journal and Miera’s map became a valuable tool for future explorers. Most of all, the Spanish fathers established friendly relations and trust with American Indians.

Father Dominguez was in charge of the expedition. Father Escalante, who kept a journal of the trip, was only in his twenties at the time. He died at age thirty of disease.

Ethnocentricity

Ethnocentricity is the belief in the superiority of one’s own ethnic group or culture. It is also a tendency to view other groups only from one’s own perspective.

The Catholic fathers offered to teach the Indians “how to farm and to raise livestock, whereby they would then have everything necessary in food and clothing.” However, the trip’s journal states that the Indians already ate well from fishing, hunting, and gathering.

“Round about it [Utah Lake] are these Indians, who live on the abundant fish of the lake. Besides this, they gather grass seeds . . . which they supplement by hunting hares, rabbits, and fowl. There are also buffalo not very far to the north, but fear of the Comanche prevents them from hunting them.”

Escalante noted with concern that the native people had no horses, guns, or metal pots. The priests thought the Indian people would benefit from changing to European ways.

