



Family History Sources in the Beehive State

Utah History

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (more commonly called "Mormons") arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in 1847. Fleeing religious persecution suffered in Missouri and Illinois, large groups of Mormons, under the direction of their prophet, Brigham Young, trekked west into Utah by covered wagon and handcart until the railroad was completed in 1869. Prior to their arrival the only permanent inhabitants were Gosiute, Southern Paiute, Ute, Shoshone, and Navajo tribes.

Known for a time by these new settlers as the State of Deseret, colonies were established as far north as the Salmon River in Idaho, south to



The Great Salt Lake of Utah, 1874, chromolithograph by T Moran, from the Library of Congress Photo Collection, 1840-2000

New Mexico and Arizona and west into Nevada and California. These boundaries were submitted to the U.S. government for entry into the Union but the Compromise of 1850 created the Territory of Utah with much smaller land coverage. For the first six years, the territorial government seat was Fillmore before Salt Lake City was designated as the capital.

Utah history and growth is intimately tied to rise of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. As the Mormons sent missionaries out into the world to proselytize, tens of thousands of immigrants from the British Isles, Scandinavia and the South Pacific streamed into the territory. Mining operations were soon setup in various areas of the territory that quickly brought non-Mormon immigrants from Italy and Greece. The railroad brought additional immigrants of Asian and African descent. The transcontinental railroad, connecting the Central Pacific and Union Pacific, was completed with a ceremony at Promontory Summit on 10 May 1869. This opened the country for even more westward expansion.

Tension between Utah territorial leadership and the U.S. federal government was troublesome from the time the Mormon settlers first arrived. Federal governors and judges were sent to the territory. Federal troops were deployed and military camps were setup. Federal laws clashed with Mormon religious practices. Those religious practices were revised in 1890 and in 1896 the federal government granted statehood to Utah.

The turn of the century brought additional Mormon immigrants and mining interests, including the beginning of copper mining in the well-known Bingham Canyon Copper Mine. The 1930s saw more than 116 CCC camps setup within the state. Over time several national parks were created in the state of Utah. These parks, together with Temple Square (the largest tourist attraction in the state and home to the world famous Family History Library), serve to bring millions of tourists to Utah each year.



ancestry

Family History Sources in the Beehive State

Utah Census Records

Federal censuses for Utah began in 1850. Mortality schedules for Utah exist for 1850-1880. The 1890 Veterans schedule also survives.

The LDS Church conducted a membership census known as a Bishops' Report in 1852. An official state census was taken in 1856. This census, however, has been found to be padded, including some people multiple times and including records for people known to be deceased at the time. An additional census was taken in 1872 but only covered Kane, Rich, Tooele and Utah counties.

An additional six censuses of LDS Church membership were published for the years 1914-1960. These cover worldwide church membership, the largest percentage of which were within the state of Utah.

Related Censuses Available on Ancestry.com:

- <u>U.S. Federal Census Mortality Schedules</u>, <u>1850-1885</u> (includes Utah schedules <u>1850-1880</u>)
- <u>1890 Veterans Schedules</u>

Utah Immigration and Travel Records

- Utah, Naturalization and Citizenship Records, 1858-1959
- <u>Utah Pioneers</u>, 1847-1850
- Pioneer Immigrants to Utah Territory
- Sons of Utah Pioneers Card Index, 1847-1850
- Utah Naturalization and Declarations of Intention, 1878-1895

Population	
1850	11,380
1860	40,272
1870	86,336
1880	143,963
1890	210,779
1900	276,749
1910	373,351
1920	449,396
1930	507,847
1940	550,310
1950	688,862
1960	890,627
1970	1,059,273
1980	1,461,037
1990	1,722,850
2000	2,233,169
2010	2,763,885







Family History Sources in the Beehive State

Utah Vital Records

From 1847 until 1898 birth and death records were kept at a city level. In 1898 the state law changed to require counties to keep these records. Statewide registration of births and deaths began in 1905. Utah privacy laws keep birth records private for 100 years. Death records are private for 50 years.

Civil registration of marriages was not required in Utah until 1887, though there are civil records of a few that exist prior to that year. Some marriages from 1850 were published in the statewide newspaper, The Deseret News. Marriage records are private for 75 years.

• <u>Utah State Archives</u>: All surviving registers are available on microfilm through the Utah State Archives. Some have been digitized and are searchable on their website.

Utah Vital Records on Ancestry.com

- Utah, Select County Marriages, 1887-1937
- Utah, Select Marriages, 1887-1966
- Salt Lake County, Utah, Death Records, 1908-1949
- <u>Utah Cemetery Inventory</u>
- Utah Death Registers, 1847-1966
- Utah, Death and Military Death Certificates, 1904-1961
- Utah, Salt Lake County Birth Records, 1890-1908
- Utah, Birth Certificates, 1903-1911
- Utah, Birth Registers, 1892-1944
- Utah, Marriage Records, 1887-1914

Military Collections

- U.S., Union Soldiers Compiled Service Records, 1861-1865
- Utah, Military Records, 1861-1970
- Utah, Veterans with Federal Service Buried in Utah, Territorial to 1966
- <u>Utah Index to Indian War Service Affidavits</u>, 1909-1919
- The History of the Utah volunteers in the Spanish-American War and in the Philippine Islands...





Family History Sources in the Beehive State

Other Collections

- Sons of Utah Pioneers Membership Applications
- Utah, Our Pioneer Heritage
- Utah Pioneers and Prominent Men
- Utah Since Statehood, Volumes 1-4
- U.S., Indexed County Land Ownership Maps, 1860-1918
- <u>U.S. City Directories</u>, <u>1821-1989</u> (Use the browse box in the upper right corner to determine what directories are available for your ancestor's area. If they lived in a rural area, check to see if that area was included with a larger city in the vicinity.)

View all Utah collections on Ancestry.com

Other State Resources

- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) Family History Library
- Harold B. Lee Library at Brigham Young University
- <u>Chronicling America</u>: Online newspapers: Provides searchable online versions of selected Utah newspapers.
- Utah Digital Newspapers
- Utah Genealogical Association
- <u>Utah State Library</u>: Includes a link to <u>Pioneer Utah's Digital Library</u>, a central source for important collections of digitized historical information from Utah archives.
- Utah State Archives
- <u>Utah State History</u>
- Utah GenWeb
- <u>National Archives at Denver</u>: This facility maintains records from Federal agencies and courts in Utah, including census, military, court, naturalization, and immigration records.
- <u>Bureau of Land Management (BLM) General Land Office Records</u>: The BLM administers Federal Land for public land states including Utah, and maintains records of land patents which granted land from the Federal Government to individuals. Use the Land Patent Search to locate land grants by name. Many record images are available on the web site. See the FAQ for more information on how to locate and use land patents.

Help and Advice

- Utah Family History Research
- Utah Background Sources
- Map of Utah



ancestry

Family History Sources in the Beehive State

Significant Dates (through 2002)

- **1776** Fathers Silvestre Velez de Escalante and Francisco Atanasio Dominguez sought a new route from Mexico to California and explored Utah.
- **1821** Mexico won independence from Spain and claimed Utah. Following the Mexican Revolution, traders from Spanish and Mexican territory bartered actively in Utah.
- 1824 General Ashley sent trappers to northern Utah and Jim Bridger discovered the Great Salt Lake.
- 1826 Jedediah Smith led the first overland expedition to California.
- 1843 John C. Fremont and Kit Carson explored the Great Basin.
- **1847** The first party of Mormon pioneers entered the valley of the Great Salt Lake on 24 July 1847, led by Brigham Young to establish a new home free from religious persecution.
- 1848 The U.S. won the Mexican War and the ensuing treaty ceded Utah to the United States.
- **1849** The Mormon Church initiated the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company with the purpose of helping Mormon refugees migrate to Utah. From 1852 to 1887, it was primary funding for more than 26,000 immigrants from Europe.
- **1850** The first institution of higher education was chartered and the first newspaper was published in the territory.
- **1851** Brigham Young became the first territorial governor.
- **1851** The first mining operation was setup near Cedar City.
- 1853 The Walker War with the Ute Indians began over slavery among the Indians.
- **1857** U.S. President James Buchanan removed Brigham Young as governor and appointed Alfred Cumming, starting the Utah War.
- 1863 Silver and lead were discovered in Bingham Canyon
- 1865-1868 The Ute Black Hawk War, the last major Indian conflict in Utah, was fought.
- **1869** John Wesley Powell explored the Colorado River. The transcontinental railroad was completed with the driving of the "Golden Spike."
- 1870 Utah Territory enfranchised women.
- **1887** U.S. Congress denied women in Utah the right to vote.
- **1896** Utah became the 45th state. With statehood, Utah women regained the right to vote.
- 1906 Open pit copper mining started in Bingham Canyon.
- **1908-1915** Three national monuments were declared in Utah.
- **1919-1937** An additional four national monuments and a national park were created in Utah.
- **1938** The first skiers chairlift opened at Alta, constructed from mining hoist parts.
- **1965-1978** Three additional national parks were create in Utah.
- 2002 Salt Lake City hosted the world for the Winter Olympics.



Formations at Bryce Canyon National Park Garfield County, Utah, abt 1940 From the Library of Congress Photo Collection, 1840-2000