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Mormons Find New Home - II

Lead: Forced to quit their homes in Nauvoo, Illinois the Mormons under Brigham Young moved west to find a new home.

Intro.: "A Moment in Time" with Dan Roberts.

Content: Their founder Joseph Smith had been killed by a mob and the Church of the Latter Day Saints was under increasing pressure from its neighbors. Persecution had convinced the new Mormon leader Brigham Young that they had to move to find a place of refuge. This decision was

made in the fall of 1845 and soon Nauvoo became provisioning headquarters as Mormons sought to sell their farms and homes prepare for the journey.

Young and his closest advisors known as the Twelve Apostles left in February, 1846. Slowly they crossed Iowa and by the summer had reached the point where the Platte River flows into the Missouri. Behind the advance party 2500 wagons with 12,000 Mormons in various groups stretched for 120 miles across the prairie. During the winter of 1846 the Young established a base camp which he called Winter Quarters now part of Omaha, Nebraska. Many died and many more families depended upon the charity of their fellow church members.

In Spring Young who had determined that their destination should be the Basin around the Great Salt Lake left with about 150 companions to scout the trail and establish a pioneer settlement. Moving swiftly they traveled up the Platte to Fort Laramie and then turned southwest to Fort Bridger on the Green River. Young lagged behind suffering from an attack of Rocky Mountain tick fever and so was not present when the advance scouts entered the giant valley on July 21st. But three days later he roused himself from his pallet laid out in the bottom of a carriage and observed the new home of the church.

The small company began immediately to plant crops and

prepare for the arrival of the larger parties to come. Within a year over 2000 Mormons had begun to settle the valley. The settlement of Utah was one of the best-organized migrations in American history. Whereas other frontier communities grew slowly or emerged overnight in pursuit of some mineral discovery, the Salt Lake Valley was, within three months of its settlement, the home to thousands and ready for commerce and government.

At the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.

Resources

Arrington, Leonard J. *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-Day Saints*. New York, NY: Knopf Publishing House, 1979.

Lyman, Edward Leo. *Political Deliverance: The Mormon Quest for Utah Statehood*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1986.

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