

OUR PAST, THEIR PRESENT

Teaching Utah with Primary Sources

Utah Social Studies Core
UT Strand 2, Standard 2.5-6, 8

Engines of Change: Railroads in Utah

By Michael Huefner

Railroads Arrive in Utah, 1868-1880

Rails to Unite America

Well before the Civil War began, railroads had proven to be engines of economic growth, westward expansion, and industrialization in America. In 1861, the northern states boasted 21,000 miles of well-connected railroads, while the agrarian South had about 9,500. As railroad lines extended from eastern hubs toward the Midwestern frontier, states and towns lobbied to secure a railroad connection, competing for new settlers and businesses. Remote villages could secure future growth through a railroad, while established towns could fall into decline if they were passed by. The expansion escalated further after the 1849 California Gold Rush.

But the Civil War threatened this progress. It was at this time that the idea of a transcontinental railroad connecting California's riches to America's eastern core of business gained traction. Such a railroad promised to strengthen the northern economy, to symbolically unite the country, to conquer the continent, and to dramatically reduce the time and expense of travel and shipping. Reaching for a future beyond the war, Congress passed the Pacific Railway Act in 1862, granting government bonds and new lands to two companies created to build this railroad across the country. For every mile of track built the companies would receive a valuable tract of land beside it. In 1863, the Central Pacific Railroad Company began laying rail from its Sacramento, California headquarters. The Union Pacific started building westward from Omaha, Nebraska in 1865. Shovelful by hammer stroke, the two companies crept toward each other across 1,500 intervening miles.

This massive project depended largely on the toil of many poorly paid laborers, most of whom were immigrants recruited by the railroad companies. The Central Pacific imported thousands of workers from southern China. The Union Pacific employed Irish workers driven from Ireland by rampant starvation and disease. The railroads also hired Civil War veterans, freed slaves, and Utah Mormons to meet their labor needs.

About These Documents

Maps: Railroad development in Utah, Ogden, Kenilworth mining town.

Oral Histories: Interviews with people who tell how the railroad affected their lives.

Photographs: Building the transcontinental railroad and other rail lines, new immigrant groups, Utah towns before and after.

Questions for Young Historians

What would it have been like to be a worker on the Transcontinental Railroad?

Why were people in Utah Territory eager to bring the railroad to Utah?

Brainstorm the types of change that railroads brought to Utah. How many changes can you identify?

Why did new groups of people come to Utah after railroads were built?

What kinds of new opportunities did the railroad bring?

What was it like to live in a railroad town?

What kinds of jobs were needed to operate the railroads after the rails were built?

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Once they arrived in America, both Chinese and Irish immigrants generally suffered from intense racism, and this would hold true on the railroad. For example, the Central Pacific paid Chinese workers just \$30 a month, about half of what a “white” laborer could expect to receive. Chinese railroad workers had to build and tunnel through the Sierra Nevada Mountains, without question the most difficult terrain along the transcontinental route. To do this they had no more than picks, shovels, and unstable explosives. The Chinese gained a reputation as tenacious, skilled workers. While the Central Pacific advanced slowly through the mountains, the Union Pacific was able to build quickly across the plains. But workers on the Union Pacific line faced their own challenges. Irish immigrant laborers lived on the fringes of society, hated and underpaid because of their Catholic religion and poverty. Union Pacific workers also built directly through Native American bison-hunting territory. They faced attacks from Cheyenne and other tribes who were determined to protect their homelands, food sources, and way of life from the railroad and the expansion of American forces across the plains. Railroad companies, white settlers, and federal soldiers slaughtered bison by the thousands, in part to undermine Native American food economies and weaken Indian resistance

East and West Meet at Promontory, Utah

In May 1869, immigrant workers from both rail companies set the stage for the final joining of the transcontinental railroad. A team of Irish workers from Union Pacific on the one hand and a team of Chinese workers for Central Pacific on the other lined up the final rails and support timbers. Officials from both companies gave speeches and drove in four ceremonial railroad spikes to complete the seven-year effort. One golden spike was commissioned by a relative of California Governor Leland Stanford, a second golden spike was given by the *San Francisco Newsletter*, a gold- and silver-embossed iron spike came from Arizona, and a solid silver spike represented Nevada. Although Chinese workers are absent from the photographs taken during the day’s celebrations, the *San Francisco Newsletter* reported that Central Pacific foreman J. H. Strobridge welcomed a group of Chinese workers from Victory Camp to his private car. “All the guests and officers present cheered them as the chosen representatives of the race which have greatly helped to build the road ... a tribute they well deserved.” (*San Francisco Newsletter*, May 15, 1869.)

Further Exploration

Leonard Arrington, “The Transcontinental Railroad and the Development of the West,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 39, no. 1 (Winter 1969): 3-15.

Doris Dant, “Bridge: A Railroading Community on the Great Salt Lake,” *UHQ* 53, no. 1 (1985): 55-73.

Richard Francaviglia, “‘Rather a Curious One’: Remembering Utah’s Sanpete Valley Railway,” *UHQ* 71, no. 1 (2003): 52-68.

Rebecca Phillips Guevara, “Boxcars and Section Houses,” *Beehive History* 6 (1980): 10-12.

Michael Johnson, “Rendezvous at Promontory: A New Look at the Golden Spike Ceremony,” *UHQ* 72, no. 1 (2004): 47-68.

Michael Lansing, “Race, Space, and Chinese Life in Late-Nineteenth-Century Salt Lake City,” *UHQ* 72, no. 3 (2004): 219-238.

Brigham D. Madsen, “Frolics and Free Schools for the Young Gentiles of Corinne,” *UHQ* 48, no. 3 (Summer 1980): 220-233.

Christopher W. Merritt, “Wooden Beds For Wooden Heads: Railroad Tie Cutting in the Uinta Mountains, 1867-1938,” *UHQ* 84, no. 2 (2016): 103-117.

Robert S. Mikkelsen, “Growing Up Railroad: Remembering Echo City,” *UHQ* 62, no. 4 (1994): 349-362.

Utah Historical Quarterly, Railroads and Transportation Special Issue: *UHQ* 85, no. 4 (2017).

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Utah: Disputed Territory

As the two tracks neared Utah in the late-1860s, they did so following a hot period of conflict between Mormons and the federal government in the 1850s. Violently forced from their homes in the Midwest, in 1847 Mormon settlers had fled to Utah, in what was then Mexico. They arrived in a region already populated by Shoshone, Goshute, Paiute, Ute, and Navajo peoples, and represented the first wave of Euro-American settlers who hoped to colonize the territory. Soon after the Mormons arrived in Salt Lake City, however, the Mexican Cession of 1848 brought Utah under American rule. Although Mormon leader Brigham Young applied for statehood, Utah was admitted to the Union as a territory. This allowed the federal government to appoint territorial leaders to keep an eye on this unconventional group.

Places to Visit

Golden Spike National Monument

<https://www.nps.gov/gosp/index.htm>

Ogden Union Station, Utah State Railroad Museum, <http://theunionstation.org/>

Western Mining and Railroad Museum, Helper, <http://www.wmrrm.com>

At the time, many Americans were suspicious of Mormons because of their devotion to their leaders and practice of polygamy. Mormons for their part did little to cooperate with the first federally appointed leaders, looking instead to Brigham Young in most matters. The first several government appointees resigned their positions in frustration. Other misunderstandings followed, and tensions remained high. In 1857, war was narrowly avoided when the U.S. Army was sent to put down a falsely reported Mormon rebellion... Later that year, an armed posse of Mormons killed a party of overland emigrants from Arkansas as they crossed southern Utah. The Mountain Meadows Massacre remains the darkest moment in this chapter of Mormon relations with the outside world. In general, most Mormons distrusted outsiders because of the persecution they had experienced, while federal officials and others remained suspicious of the Mormons' polygamy and political unity.

As the railroads converged on Utah in 1869, 91 percent of the Euro-Americans who had settled here since 1847 were Mormons. But the railroad would soon bring a varied host of newcomers to Utah's doorstep. As much as the Mormons had hoped to build a new Zion in Utah based on their distinctive religious beliefs, Young understood that the railroad would help Mormon immigrants and businesses. When the Union Pacific chose its route through Weber Canyon, Young offered the company land for station buildings in Ogden. Mormon leaders promoted Ogden's success so that it might beat out the next town on the line, non-Mormon Corinne. The cultural competitiveness between Corinne, Salt Lake, and Ogden gained economic importance as the railroads arrived.

The Railroads Spread, 1880-1920s

Within eight months after the transcontinental railroad was completed, rails had connected Ogden and Salt Lake City and Utah's relative isolation was no more. The Salt Lake line tapped into nearby mining districts such as Alta and Park City, and mining production grew sevenfold in 1870 alone. Railroad companies employed many laborers, who laid and repaired track, and worked as security guards, baggage handlers, and other jobs. Many more people's work became closely tied to the railroad, as well, since it allowed Utahns to gain much easier access to markets from California to the East. From 1865 to 1890, American rail companies built over 70,000 miles of track west of the Mississippi River, a growing trade network in which Utah occupied an important place.. Salt Lake City and Ogden attracted tradespeople and new businesses. Because Mormon immigrants and others traveling west could now cross the plains more cheaply, the rate of settlement increased. Farmers prospered as their crops could now

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be more quickly transported to buyers within and beyond Utah. Utah consumers rejoiced as products from outside Utah, such as clothing, were now available at lower prices. Utah cities built streetcar lines and electric railroads to improve public transportation within and between cities, even to the fashionable Saltair Resort.

Ogden and Corinne: Two Railroad Towns

When the transcontinental railroad crossed through northern Utah, it spurred the hopes of many towns, but two that were greatly affected were Ogden and Corinne.

Ogden began as a small Mormon farm town, but after the Union Pacific arrived Ogden began to grow. Travelers in the 1870s would have seen small, hastily built buildings near the railroad stations including restaurants, taverns, and gambling houses. Beyond this remained a fairly quiet town that supplied most of its own needs through small shops, gristmills, and surrounding farms. Ogden's fortunes changed again in 1874, when the Union Pacific and Central Pacific made it the junction where passengers and freight were transferred between the two lines. Ogden's population surged from 3,000 in 1870 to more than 12,000 in 1890. A large new rail depot was completed in 1889, the same year the town elected its first non-Mormon mayor.

Corinne was also an important place of trade in 1870. Lying at the connection of the Bear River and the railroad line, Corinne's overland freight trade carried goods and ores between Montana mines and the transcontinental railroad. Chinese railroad workers settled there and established businesses, such as laundries and restaurants. Two dance halls and three churches were built, including the 1870 Methodist-Episcopal Church, the oldest Protestant church in the state. The railroad brought many tourists and curious observers, and Corinne's reputation for excitement brought people from neighboring towns to dances, sporting events, and dramatic performances at the opera house. Corinne's non-Mormon founders hoped it would become the cultural and economic center of Utah.

But during the 1870s a new rail line allowed Ogden to cut into Corinne's freight business. The Utah Northern Railroad, reaching north from Brigham City to Franklin, Idaho, soon absorbed Corinne's lucrative Montana trade. By the decade's end most of the jobs and people in Corinne had left seeking better opportunities.

The Lucin Cutoff

In 1904 Corinne's fate was sealed when the Southern Pacific Railroad (formerly the Central Pacific) completed the Lucin Cutoff. This bypassed the old Transcontinental route from the West Desert to Ogden by carrying trains directly across the Great Salt Lake. This ambitious project built a trestle system across twelve miles of open water. The trestles "were constructed by establishing stations at each mile end of the route and setting two pile-drivers to work back to back. The workmen were quartered right on the site 'well out of the way of storm-waves' in a boarding house resting on a platform supported by piles. For this privilege the men paid four dollars a week each, but supplies and cooks were free," (Dant). Work crews lived away from many comforts and without days off. The lake's extremely salty water was so heavy (seventy-six pounds per cubic foot) that storm waves could damage the trestle and move the massive boulders supporting it.

After the Lucin Cutoff opened, the railroad completely bypassed Corinne, and without this economic pillar the town withered.

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Rails and Mines Grow Hand in Hand

Colonel Patrick Connor, commander of the U.S. Army’s Camp [Fort] Douglas above Salt Lake City, played a critical role in the growth of Utah’s railroads. Connor’s official job was to keep mail routes safe, but he harbored strong concerns about the Mormons’ monopoly over goods and resources in Utah. To counter this, Connor worked to promote immigration. Connor saw the discovery of valuable minerals as the key to this plan, so he sent prospectors throughout the territory. When they found gold, silver, and other useful minerals it took the mining industry in Utah to new heights. This in turn fueled the spread of railroads and, as Connor hoped, brought thousands of ethnically and religiously diverse immigrants to Utah.

The Union Pacific and Southern Pacific continued to build rails across the state in the 1870s, especially into the mining districts. In the 1880s the Denver & Rio Grande (D&RG) Railroad connected the coal district of Price, Helper, Kenilworth, and Castle Gate to the string of settlements along the Wasatch Mountains. Thanks to the D&RG coal mining became an economic mainstay in Utah. These coal-mining towns expanded quickly, and Carbon County was organized in 1894. Like most mining areas in Utah Carbon County attracted a diverse population of workers and their families, especially from Italy, Greece, Finland, and Great Britain. As industry increased immigration continued, bringing a kaleidoscope of cultures to mining towns like Kenilworth across the state.

Many Americans might not have felt the impact of the transcontinental railroad immediately, but Utahns quickly experienced the changes. From a desert outpost to a crossroads, a Native homeland to a conglomeration of new settlements, the railroads set Utah’s evolution toward modernity in motion. Well into the 1950s, railroads would remain the best mode for interstate passenger travel as well as freight. Even in the 21st century, trains play a critical role in Utah’s industrial economy.

Utah Territory Settler Population: Changing Religious & Ethnic Demographics

Year	Settler Population	Mormons	Other Religious/Ethnic Groups
1860	40,273	92%	8%
1869	Transcontinental Railroad Completed May 10, 1869.		
1870	86,786	92%	8%
1880	143,963	79%	21%
1890	210,779	66%	34%

Data from the U.S. Census, May, *Utah: A People’s History*, p. 116, and Alexander, *Utah: The Right Place*, p. 140.

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STUDENT READING – Engines of Change: Railroads in Utah

After seven long years of laying track, the nation completed its first transcontinental railroad at Promontory Summit, Utah, on May 10, 1869. Before its completion, the stage coach ride from Chicago to San Francisco took almost a month. After 1869, people and goods could make the trip in 5 ½ days. In the following years, railroad expansion was especially important for towns along a line's path. A town connected to a railroad could flourish; a bypassed town risked decline. Utah had been a very isolated state, but the railroad brought businesses and people from all over the globe.

The transcontinental railroad launched Utah's railroad age. Eight months after the transcontinental railroad's completion, new rail lines connected Ogden to Salt Lake City. From there, lines connected Salt Lake City to mining areas like Alta and Park City. Mining became a major industry in the state. New rail lines to places like Price, Helper, and Castle Gate helped mining districts grow. Many other jobs became tied to the railroad as well. Laborers often laid and repaired track, worked as security guards, or handled baggage. The railroad made it easier and faster to ship goods, which allowed farmers to sell their crops to more distant markets without spoiling. Trade grew throughout the state and attracted more people and new businesses.

Utah's growth attracted thousands of immigrants and their families. Before 1869, 91 percent of Euro-Americans in Utah were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormons). However, after the arrival of the railroads, the population began to shift. By 1890, Mormons made up 66 percent of Utah's population. Many immigrants came from European countries like Italy, Greece, Finland, and Great Britain. Some came in hopes of finding mineral wealth in Utah's mining areas. Others saw Utah as a good place to practice trades they had learned in Europe. Immigrant settlers came from many different ethnic and religious backgrounds and made Utah a more diverse place.

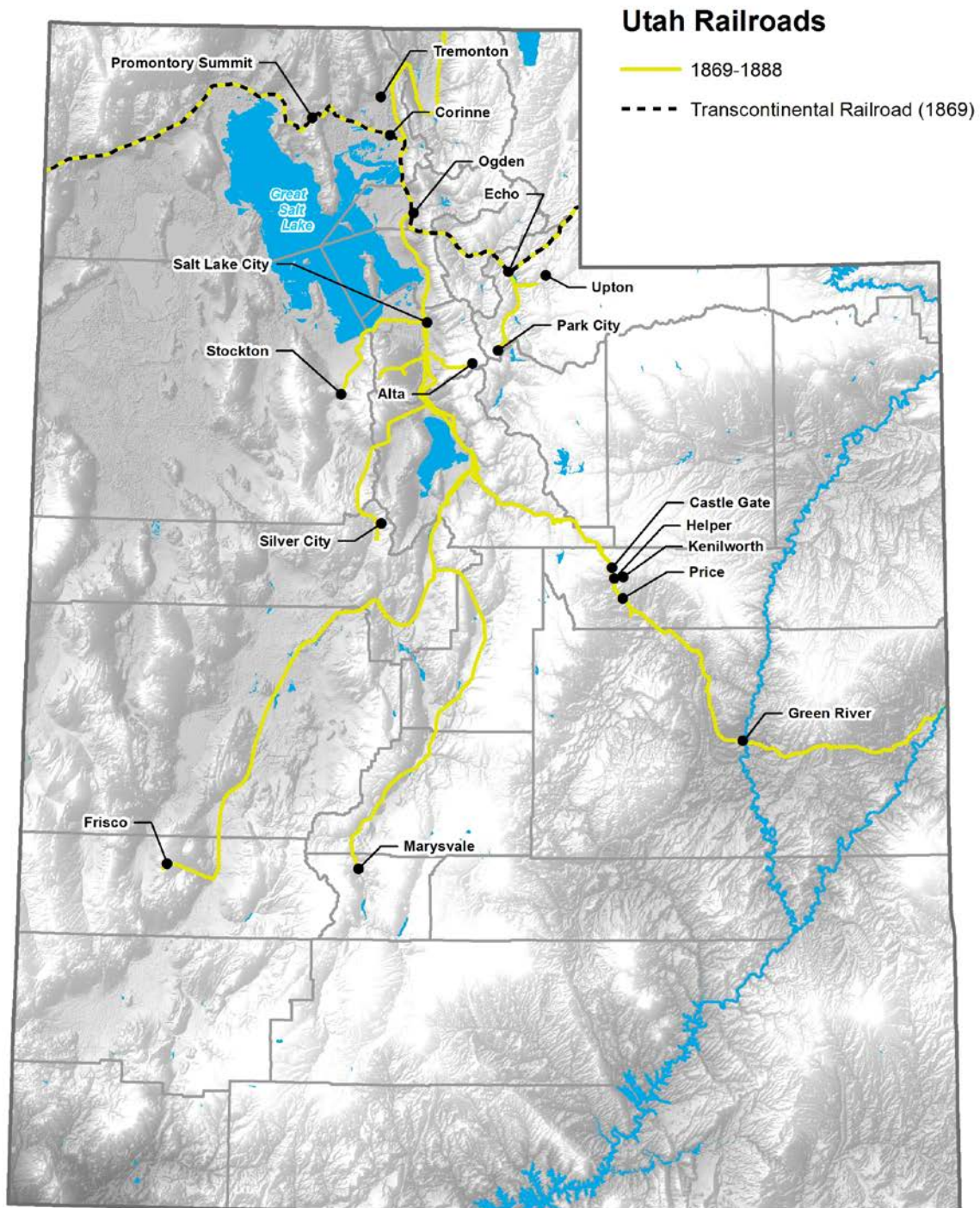
The story of Ogden and Corinne show how the railroad could make or break a town. Both were along the railroad's path and rivaled each other for growth. Railroad stations became home to restaurants, taverns, and places for entertainment. These attractions brought many visitors and settlers. But in the 1870s, a new rail line – the Utah Northern Railroad – diverted cargo bound for Montana away from Corinne, undermining Corinne's freight trade. Then in 1904, the Lucin Cutoff allowed trains to travel directly across the Great Salt Lake rather than around its northern tip. The new route was quicker, but it completely bypassed Corinne. As a result, the town shrank as its economy declined. Most of the people left Corinne seeking better opportunities.

The transcontinental railroad completely changed Utah's population and landscape. What was once a desert outpost became a crossroads for the continent. The mining industry created settlements along the Wasatch Mountains and attracted large populations of immigrants. The railroad continued to be an important mode of transportation well into the 1950s until cars took its place. However, even with large trucks and airplanes, trains continue to play a crucial role in Utah's industrial economy.

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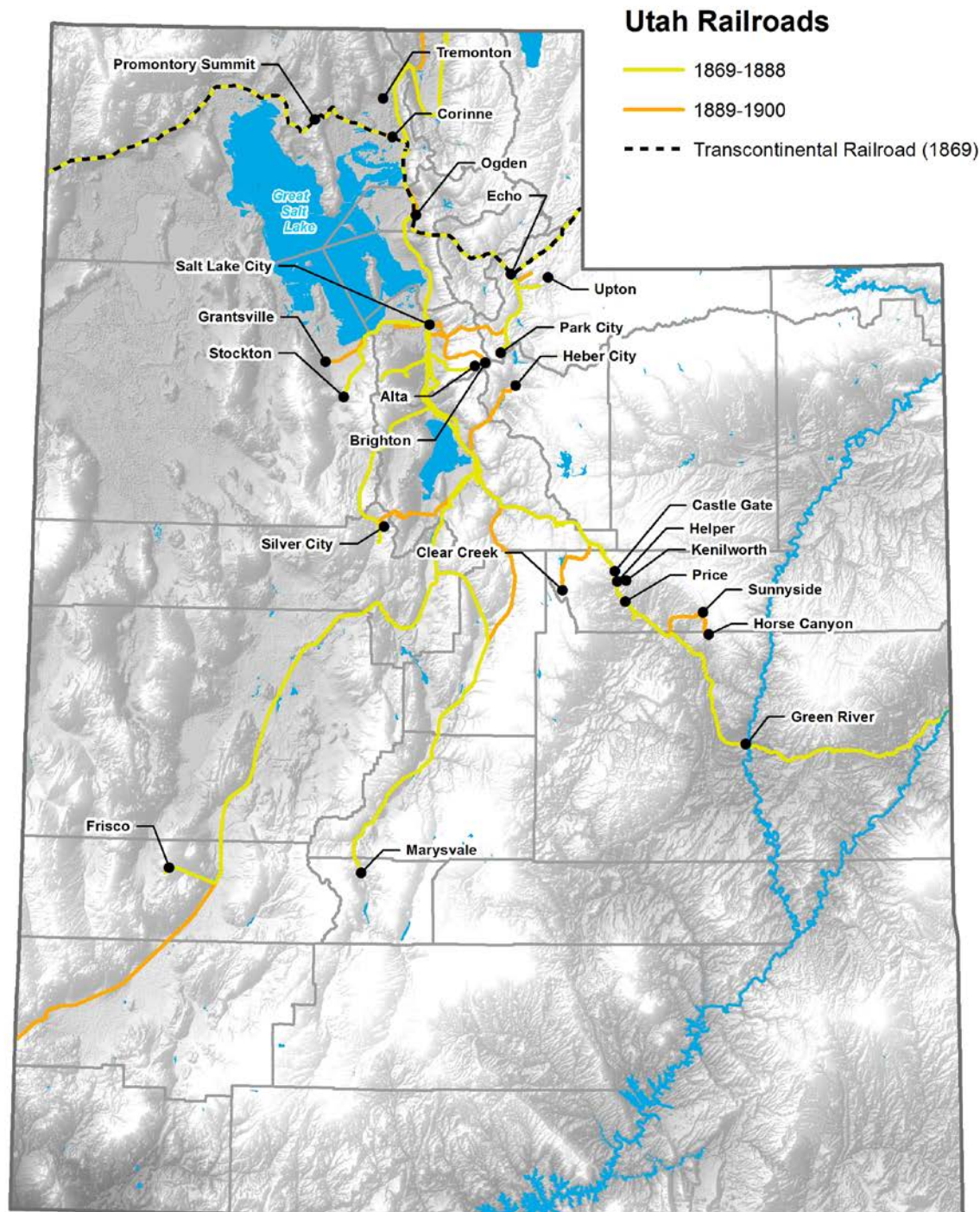
MAP SERIES: Railroads Spread Through Utah, 1869-1920



Source: Rand, McNally & Co's Utah, 1888.
Cartography Associates, David Rumsey Collection.

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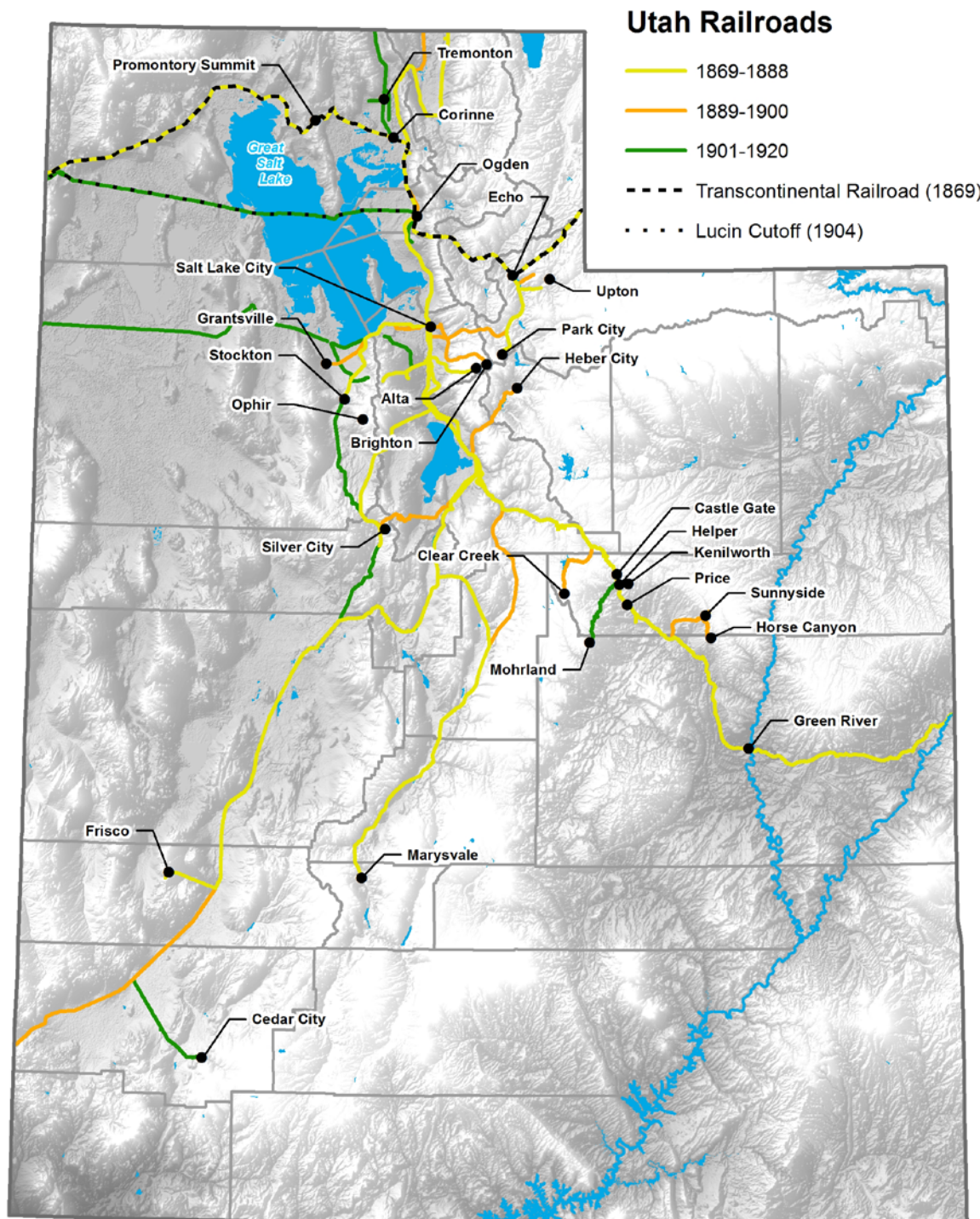
Engines of Change: Railroads in Utah



Source: Geo. F. Cram., 1900, *Cartography Associates*, David Rumsey Collection.

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Source: Rand, McNally Standard Map of Utah, 1920.
Cartography Associates, David Rumsey Collection.

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Oral History: William G. Smith (1938)

Source: Utah Division of State History, Works Progress Administration Biography Sketches Collection, MSS B 289, p. 16-17.
<https://collections.lib.utah.edu/details?id=697535>

Smith's family emigrated to the U.S. from England and settled in Huntsville, Utah. As a young man he worked for both the Union Pacific and Central Pacific to help build the first transcontinental line. His later work took him through Ogden and Corinne regularly. Define: apostle, board, cut, freight.

"Later that year, 1863, we moved to Huntsville. I knew old Captain Hunt, who settled it. I worked on the Union Pacific Railroad when it was being built from Echo to Ogden in 1868 and 1869. When the grade had reached Peterson, Apostle Franklin D. Richards took a contract to move the wagon road from down in the river bottom to the side of the hill above the tracks. He hired me for \$5 a day and board for myself and yoke of oxen. We cut the road on the hillside and he was paid so much a cubic yard for removing the earth. Then we piled the earth on the grade for the railroad, and he was paid so much a yard for the fill, and thus made money both ways.

When the road progressed as far as Promontory station, Benson, Farr, and West, a firm of contractors, had a hundred mile contract on the Central Pacific building east. Just about a mile west of where the golden spike was driven they had to make a cut of about a mile. This was heavy work and they were afraid they could not finish on time, so they sent word to Ogden to secure as many men as possible. Jack Wilson, Henry Bronson, and myself went out with yokes of oxen and helped them finish that cut. They paid us \$2.50 a day and board. We did most of the work with wheelbarrows as that was before the day of the steamshovels....

Then [Calvin] Wheeler hired me to help him drive 300 head of cattle from Promontory to Ogden. He used to get \$3 a head for taking care of cattle all winter for people who did not want to herd their own. I helped him bring the cattle in just before the last spike was driven so I missed seeing the golden spike celebration.

In 1870 I hauled freight to Pioche, Nevada, where the mines had opened up. Then in 1871 I went to freighting to Montana. Great herds of buffalo blackened the Sun River prairies at that time and we often killed one for meat. I never believed in slaughtering more than we could use. We would pick out a young buffalo with a black color because they get browner as they get old. The meat is excellent. I always enjoyed the tender chops off the hump of the bison. We would roast them over the hot coals by putting sharp green sticks in the ground to hold the chunks of meat near the fire. Sometimes we fried the meat or cooked it in Dutch ovens in the ashes. I had two men with me and we drove two ten-mule teams. We often shot a deer and would cook the entire hindquarters for a meal.

It used to take us twenty-one days to drive from Corinne, Utah to Helena, Montana.... I used to haul freight for a merchant named Kleinsmid. We got 5¢ a pound for heavy stuff, 7½ ¢ for dry goods, and 10¢ for millinery, because that was light and took up a lot of space in the wagons. We could put 3,000 pounds in a wagon, the trail and swing wagons, and 7,000 pounds on the lead wagons when we had three hooked up in a line. There were a lot of cutthroats and robbers in Helena in the early days."

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Oral History: Isabella Wade Allred (1940)

Source: Utah Division of State History, Works Progress Administration Biography Sketches Collection, MSS B 289, Box 1, Folder 14, p. 4-6. <https://collections.lib.utah.edu/details?id=700797>

When Allred was a girl her father worked for Union Pacific. They lived on the plains of Nebraska near Omaha, before moving west to Utah. Define: handcar, calico, government mules.

"The old engines on the railroad had real large smokestacks because they were wood-burners and burned cedar wood. Mother did all her buying in Omaha and I always went along with her. Little towns along the way would probably be nothing but water tanks and a pile of cedar wood alongside with which to refuel the engine. The sparks from the trains often set fire to the grass growing along the tracks, and these prairie fires would send the buffalo running to get out of the burning grass. A large tract of the ground around our home was plowed up to protect us from the fires.

When mother purchased flour or sugar or syrup, they came in barrels, and the tea was purchased in 50-pound cans. The inside of the cans were lined with lead paper. I used to make doll dresses and things out of the paper. Even after we moved to Utah, father would buy tea in these large cans or caddies. Many of our neighbors in Utah would come over and mother often gave them some of the tea to take home with them.

Father often rode on one of those handcars that were pictured in the motion picture *Union Pacific*. It brought the recollections back to my mind so vividly. The buffalo didn't browse near the handcars as shown on the screen though; they were much too wild for that. But I have seen many herds of buffalo. Father and some of the section men very often would shoot a buffalo or some wild animal. When we came to Utah we brought five buffalo skins with us.

If a train went by with soldiers on it, I would hear my brother or father remark that the Indians must be on the warpath or there was trouble somewhere along the way, because Uncle Sam was out in full force. They were never referred to as soldiers but always as Uncle Sam. There would be three cars of them with the flag held high by those in the front car. They were a pretty sight in their uniforms and with their rifles and bayonets shining in the sun.

In the picture *Union Pacific*, it showed one place where the Indians tore up the tracks and set fire to the railroad. I have often heard my father tell of that, so it really did happen. He said how the Indians rode by with yards and yards of calico flying behind them. They wrecked the train by tearing up the ties and burning them, and then they upset the flour and sugar barrels and scattered foodstuffs everywhere. They took the bolts of materials and fastened them to their horses and dragged it along behind them as they rode by. They decked themselves up with any of the clothing they found. Father brought some of the sugar and flour home with him when he came back after investigating.

In 1868 father decided to quit the railroad and come to Utah. We went into Denver and there he bought a new wagon, a span of government mules, and a bay mare, and we came to Salt Lake City."

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Photo: Railroad workers curving iron rails, 12-Mile Canyon, Nevada, 1868

Source: "Central Pacific R.R. – Construction P. 16," by Alfred A. Hart, official Central Pacific Railroad photographer, Utah State Historical Society Classified Photo Collection. <https://collections.lib.utah.edu/details?id=455316>

This process used the weight of six men standing on the side of a rail, while another struck it with a heavy hammer, to gradually curve the metal.

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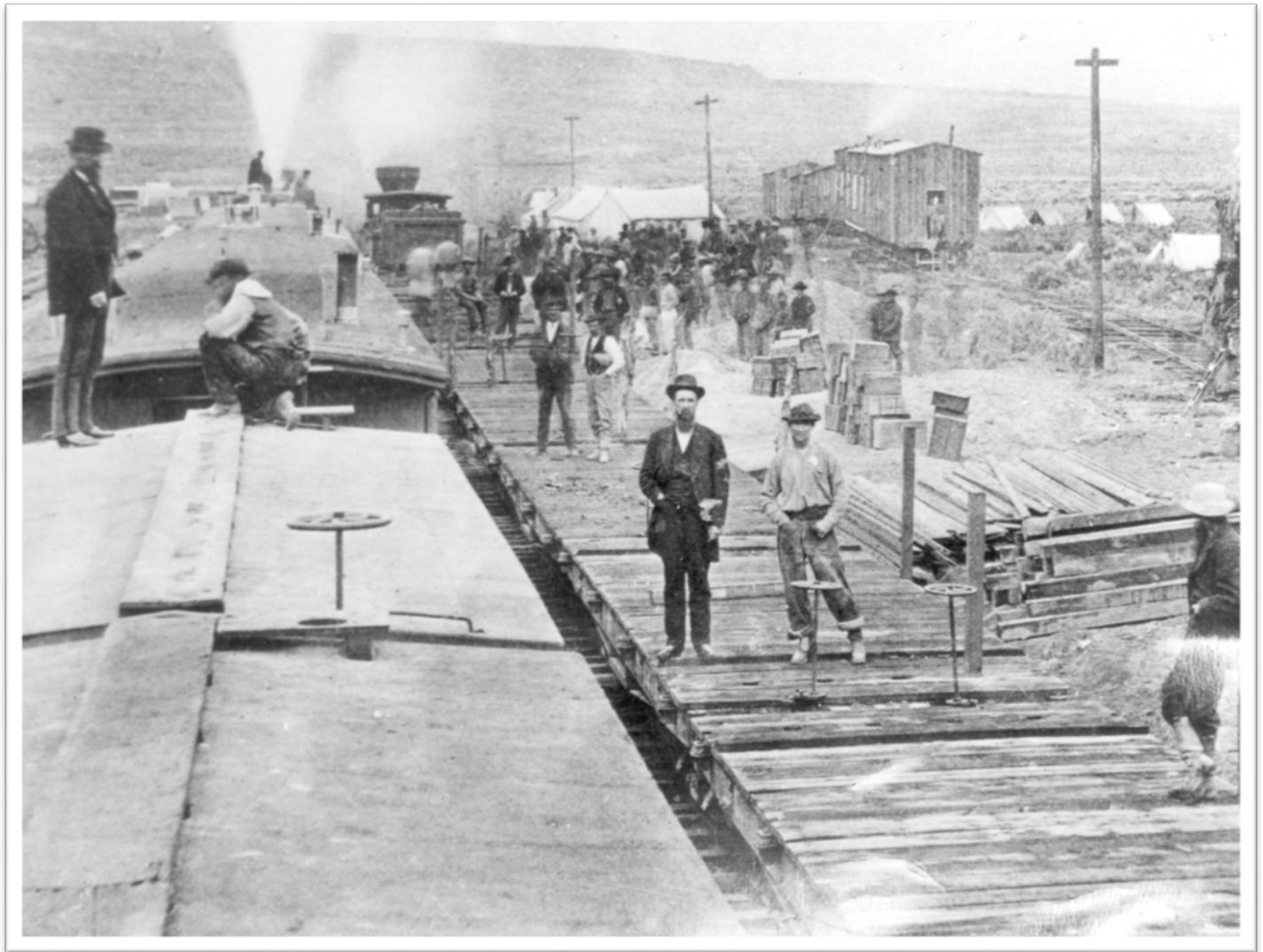


Photo: Central Pacific Workers and Officials at Victory Camp, Utah, 1869

Source: "Central Pacific Railroad – Construction, P. 2," 1869, Utah State Historical Society Classified Photo Collection.

<https://collections.lib.utah.edu/details?id=454934>

This photo shows Central Pacific workers at Victory Camp, Utah. These workers had just finished laying 10 miles of rail in 12 hours. This feat won a bet for Central Pacific's president, who wagered \$10,000 with the Union Pacific president that his workers could build more in one day.

- Look closely at the photo. Where do you think all the wood came from? What do you think is in the crates? What might the white buildings be for? How about the little tents in the distance? What are there wooden poles?

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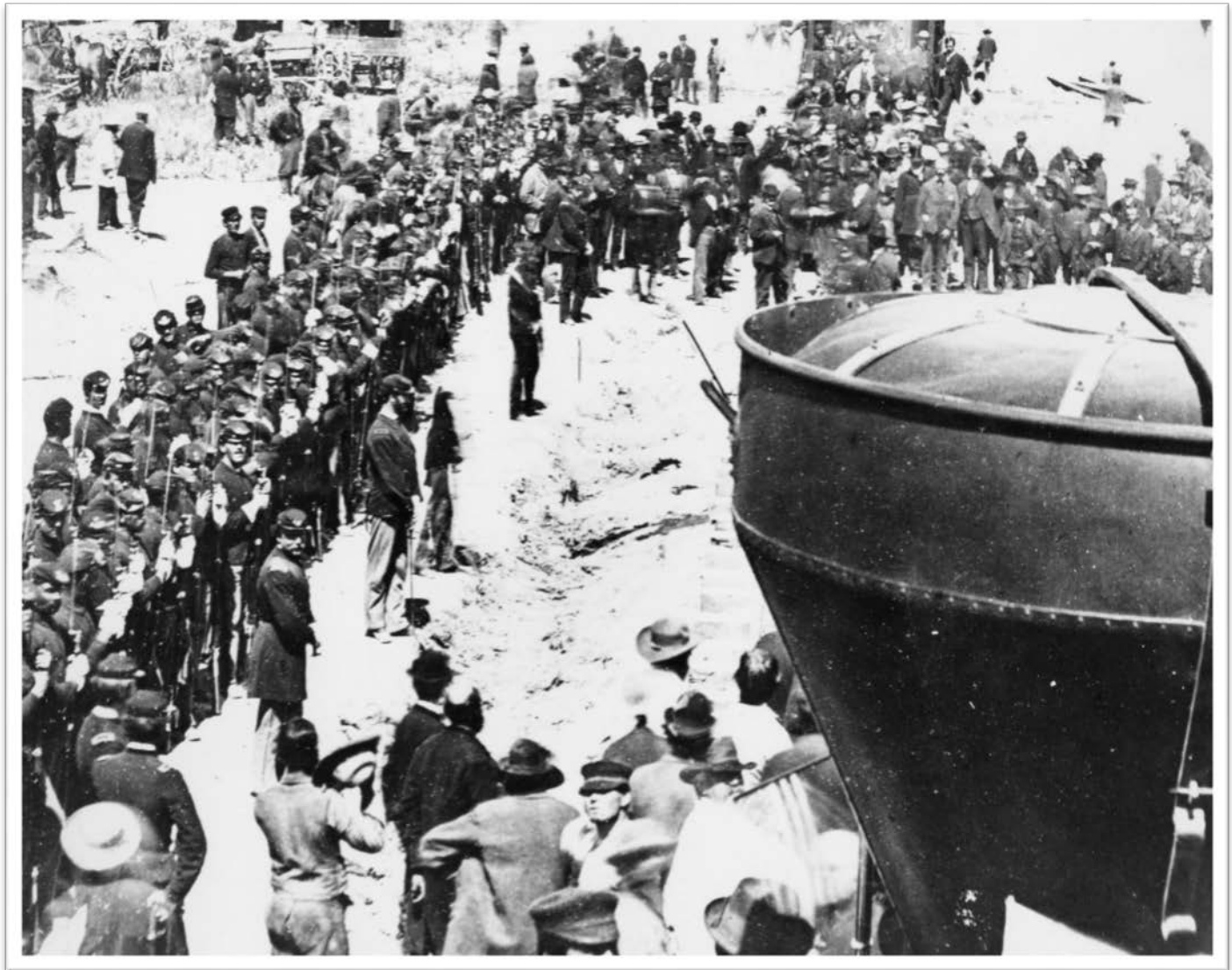


Photo: The “Golden Spike” ceremony and the meeting of the trains, May 10, 1869

Source: “Railroad Construction – Promontory P. 16,” by A.J. Russell, Promontory, Utah, Utah State Historical Society Classified Photo Collection <https://collections.lib.utah.edu/details?id=439127>

This picture was taken from the top of the “Jupiter” Central Pacific locomotive (the other U.P. train is just outside the top of the picture). Below, state and railroad officials gathered with workers and members of the U.S. Army 21st Infantry unit to lay the last rail of the transcontinental railroad.

- What feelings do you think the different people here might have had to see the railroad finally finished?

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Document Clips Regarding Chinese Railroad Workers, 1869

Clip 1:

The *San Francisco Newsletter* printed on May 15, 1869, a description of the celebration at Promontory after the last rails were joined. Chinese foreman Hung Wan and several Chinese workers had helped to finish the project, including by adding additional iron spikes to secure the rails after the ceremonial spikes were driven.

J. H. Strobridge, when the work was all over, invited the Chinese who had been brought over from Victory [Camp] for that purpose, to dine at his boarding car. When they entered, all the guests and officers present cheered them as the chosen representatives of the race which have greatly helped to build the road ... a tribute they well deserved and which evidently gave them much pleasure.

Source: "Chinese American Contribution to Transcontinental Railroad," Central Pacific Railroad Photographic History Museum, June 2017. <http://cpr.org/Museum/Chinese.html>.

Clip 2:

Charles Crocker, general superintendent of the Central Pacific, said the following at a Sacramento celebration in 1869 following the completion of the transcontinental railroad:

In the midst of our rejoicing, I wish to call to mind that the early completion of this railroad we have built has been in great measure due to the poor, destitute class of laborers called the Chinese—to the fidelity and industry they have shown.

Source: Don C. Conley, "The Pioneer Chinese of Utah," in Helen Z. Papanikolas, *The Peoples of Utah*, (SLC: Utah State Historical Society, 1976).

Discussion Questions

Chinese laborers typically worked for about \$30 a month, about half of what other workers would make. They typically had some of the most dangerous jobs.

- What do these quotations show about the way leaders of the Central Pacific Railroad felt about their Chinese employees?
- Do you think they were treated fairly?
- Some historians have wondered why no Chinese workers appear to have been included in the famous photos on May 10, 1869. Based on these sources, do you think this group was shown enough appreciation by the Central Pacific?

OUR PAST, THEIR PRESENT

Engines of Change: Railroads in Utah



Photo: Denver and Rio Grande (D&RG) train, Castle Gate, Utah, ca. 1885

Source: "Denver and Rio Grande Western R.R. P. 26," D&RG train, Castle Gate, UT, ca. 1885, Utah State Historical Society Classified Photo Collection. <https://collections.lib.utah.edu/details?id=455959>

OUR PAST, THEIR PRESENT

Engines of Change: Railroads in Utah



Photo: D&RG Rail Workers, Helper, Utah

Detail from "Denver and Rio Grande Western R.R. P. 23," D&RG workers at Helper, UT, ca. 1890-1910, Utah State Historical Society Classified Photo Collection. <https://collections.lib.utah.edu/details?id=455563>

Apparently these people are Croatians, Slovenians, and Serbians, but Chinese or others might be present as well.

- What do you notice about the clothing and appearance of the workmen? What might this tell you about their work?
- Can you identify the woman in the photo? What might it be like to spend time or work in an environment surrounded by men?
- What would it be like to work alongside people from so many different countries and cultures? What might be the benefits and problems?

OUR PAST, THEIR PRESENT

Engines of Change: Railroads in Utah

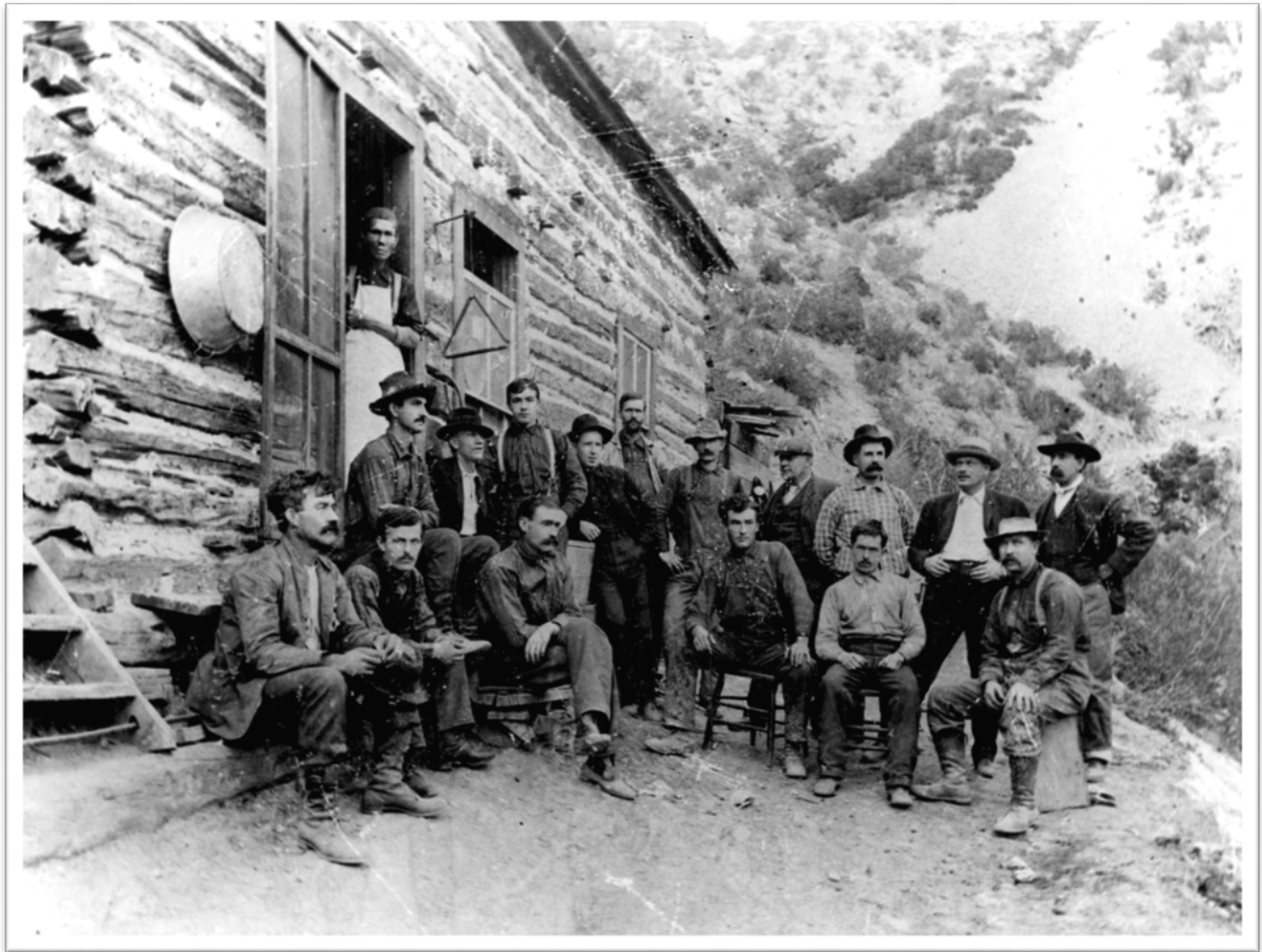


Photo: Buckhorn Mine boardinghouse, Ophir, Utah, near Tooele, 1903

Source: "Ophir, Utah," Buckhorn Mine boardinghouse, Ophir, Utah, near Tooele, 1903," Utah State Historical Society Peoples of Utah Collection, MSS C 239. <https://collections.lib.utah.edu/details?id=508725>

Boardinghouses were group homes where workers could eat and sleep for a set price, and were common in mining towns across the West. Often, men came to work in the mines without bringing their wives or families, and many immigrant miners worked to send money home to their families in Europe. Miners had some of the most dangerous and lowest paying jobs in America,

- What would it be like to live in a boardinghouse?
- What might it be like to work in a mine?
- Locate the cook standing in the doorway, a man from China. What brought Chinese immigrants to Utah? What kinds of jobs were available to them here after the completion of the railroad?

OUR PAST, THEIR PRESENT

Engines of Change: Railroads in Utah

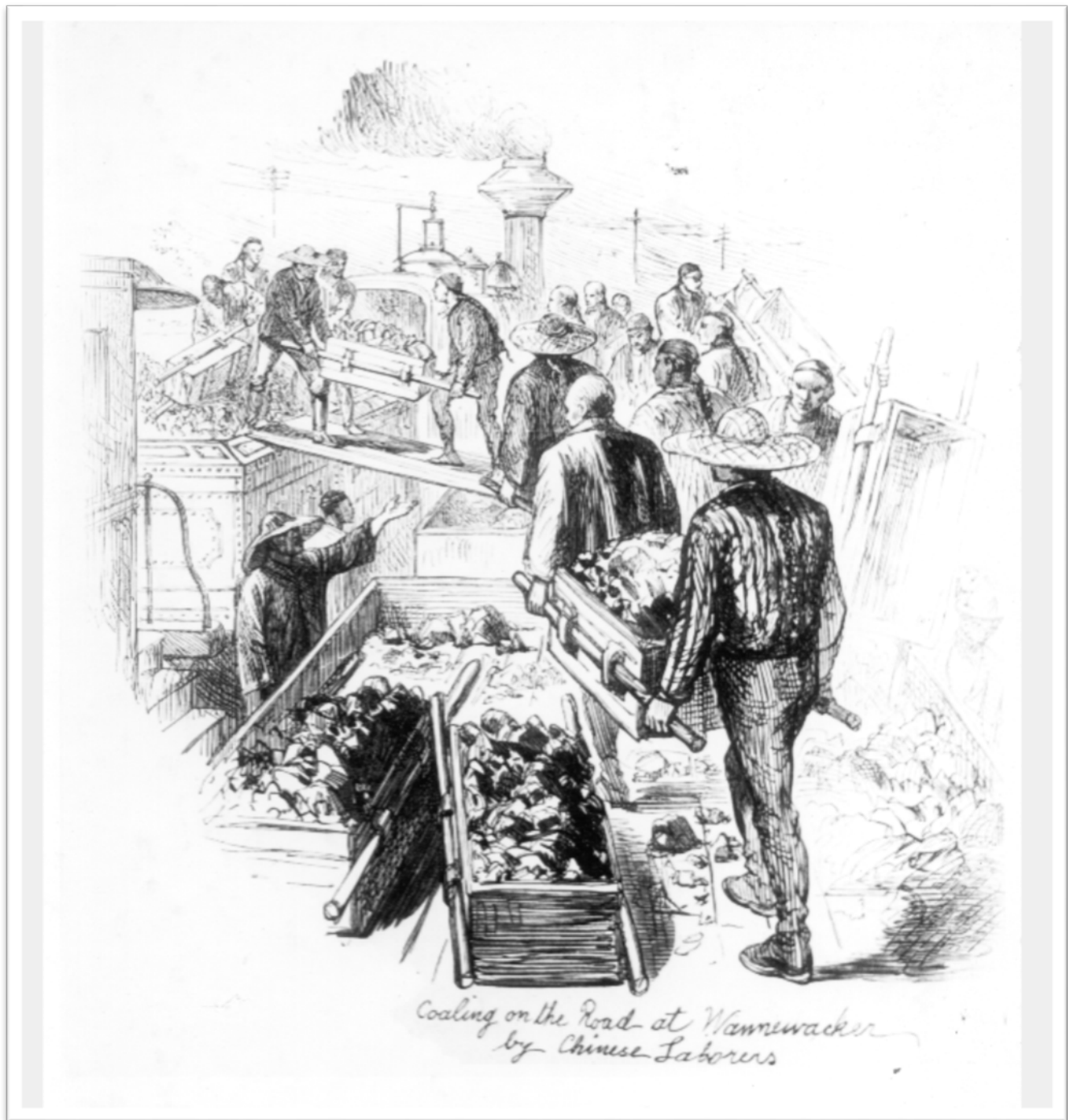


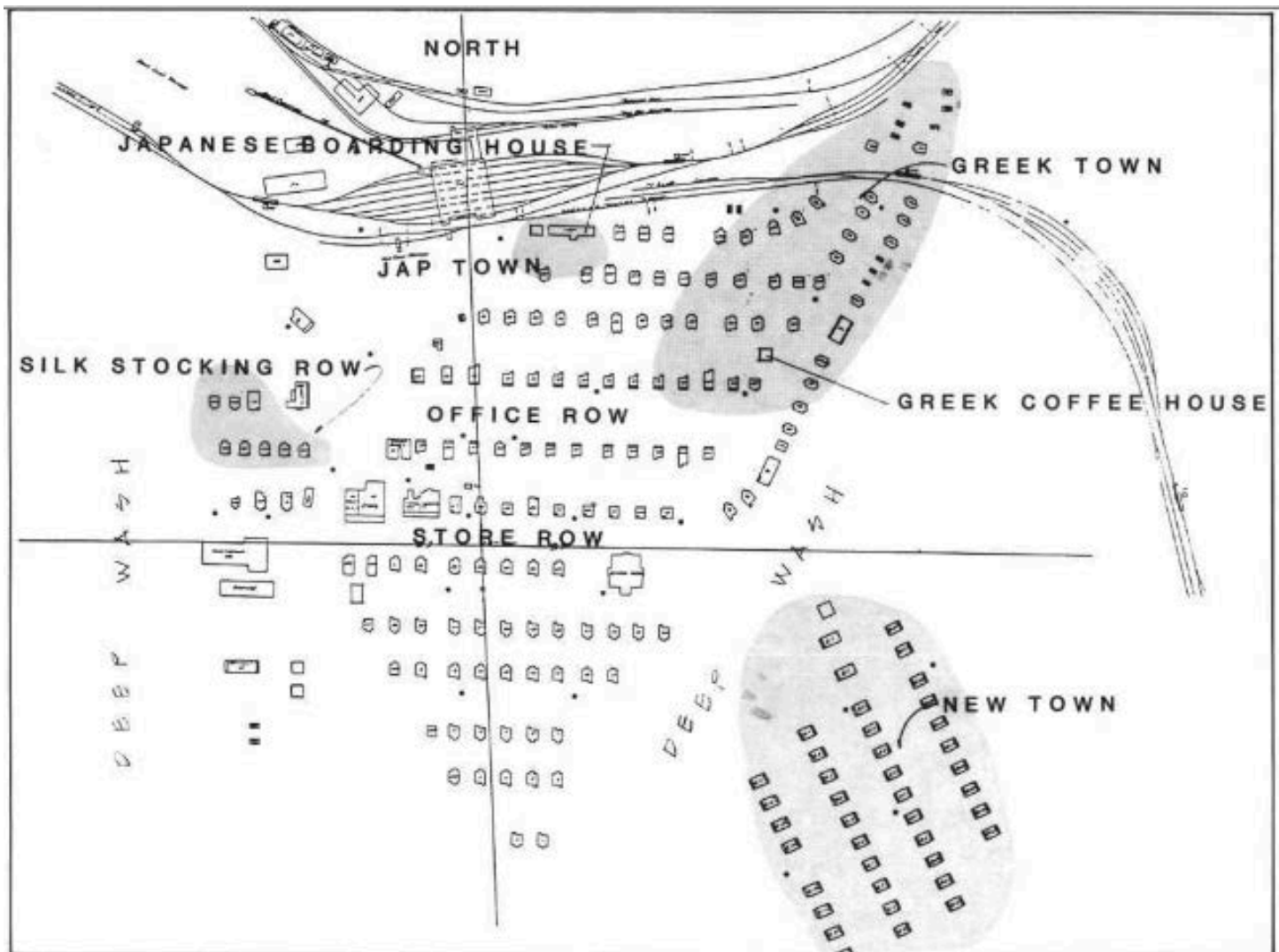
Photo: Chinese workers at Wannewacker, 1876

Source: "Central Pacific Railroad – Construction P. 18," drawing of Chinese workers hauling coal at "Wannewacker," (possibly Winnemucca, Nevada), 1876, Utah State Historical Society Classified Photo Collection.

<https://collections.lib.utah.edu/details?id=455198>

OUR PAST, THEIR PRESENT

Engines of Change: Railroads in Utah



Map: Kenilworth, Utah, ca. 1923

Source: Wayne L. Balle, "'I Owe My Soul': An Architectural and Social History of Kenilworth, Utah," *UHQ* 56, no. 3 (1988): 250-278. <https://collections.lib.utah.edu/details?id=422725>

Notice the lines for the railroad at the top. The homes of company managers were built on "Silk Stocking Row," as it was called. "Greek Town" and "Jap Town" were nicknames for the parts of town where Greek and Japanese workers lived (although commonly used at the time, the term "Jap" is derogatory and is inappropriate to use today).

- The success of mines often depended on having quick transportation close by to ship out what was mined. Even though Kenilworth was a small out-of-the-way town up a canyon, how might it still have been successful?
- In 1910, there were miners from eight different countries in Kenilworth (180 Americans, 117 Greeks, 91 Italians, 42 Austrians, 30 Japanese, 24 British, 14 Germans, and 1 Swedish worker). Why do you think the neighborhoods of some ethnic groups picked up nicknames while others didn't? What might be the benefits of living in a town like this? What might be the challenges?

OUR PAST, THEIR PRESENT

Engines of Change: Railroads in Utah



Photo: Ogden, Utah, near Washington Avenue, ca. 1863-1865

Source: "Ogden, Utah P. 11," ca. 1863-1865, Utah State Historical Society Classified Photo Collection.

<https://collections.lib.utah.edu/details?id=453263>

- How did the town of Ogden change in the late 1800s? What might be some reasons for these differences?
- What would you consider to be the most important changes?
- Would you be more likely to start a business in Ogden in 1900 than in 1865? Why?
- Would you be more likely to live there?

OUR PAST, THEIR PRESENT

Engines of Change: Railroads in Utah



Photo: Ogden, Utah, near Washington Blvd., 1900

Source: "Ogden, Utah-Washington Blvd. P. 13," 1900. Utah State Historical Society Classified Photo Collection.

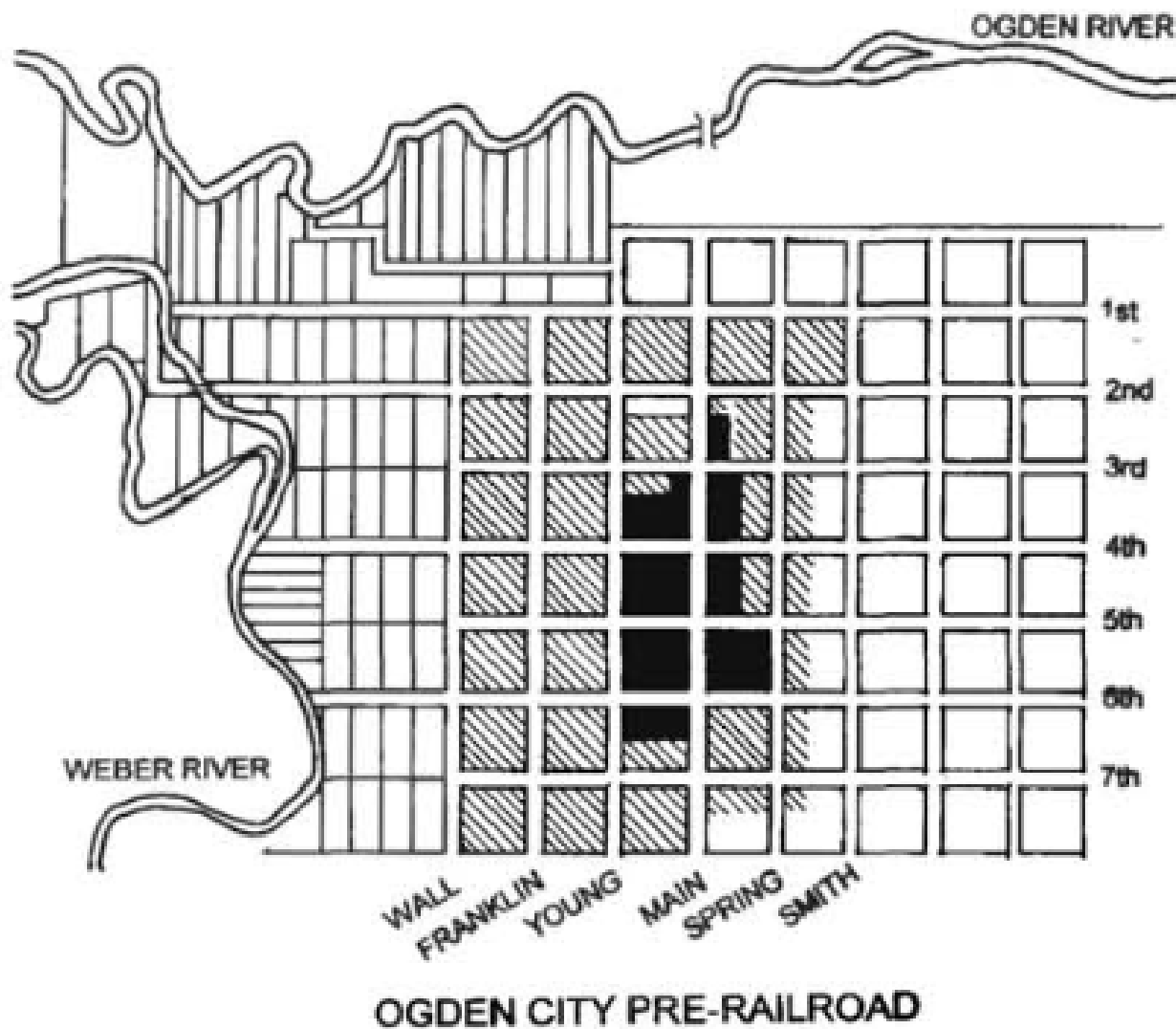
<https://collections.lib.utah.edu/details?id=453326>

Notice the telegraph cables and power lines.

- Can you see evidence of the options people had for traveling around Ogden in 1900? (Did you notice the rails for Ogden's streetcar train system, which was new back then?)
- How would your life change if these were the only options your family had to get around town?

OUR PAST, THEIR PRESENT

Engines of Change: Railroads in Utah



KEY:
COMMERCIAL
INDUSTRIAL
RESIDENTIAL



Map A: Ogden, Utah, ca. 1870

Source: Map by Gordon Turley, in Jalynn Olsen, *Building by the Railway: The Historic Commercial and Industrial Architecture of Ogden, Utah* (Graduate School of Architecture, University of Utah, 1998). <https://collections.lib.utah.edu/details?id=418969>

OUR PAST, THEIR PRESENT

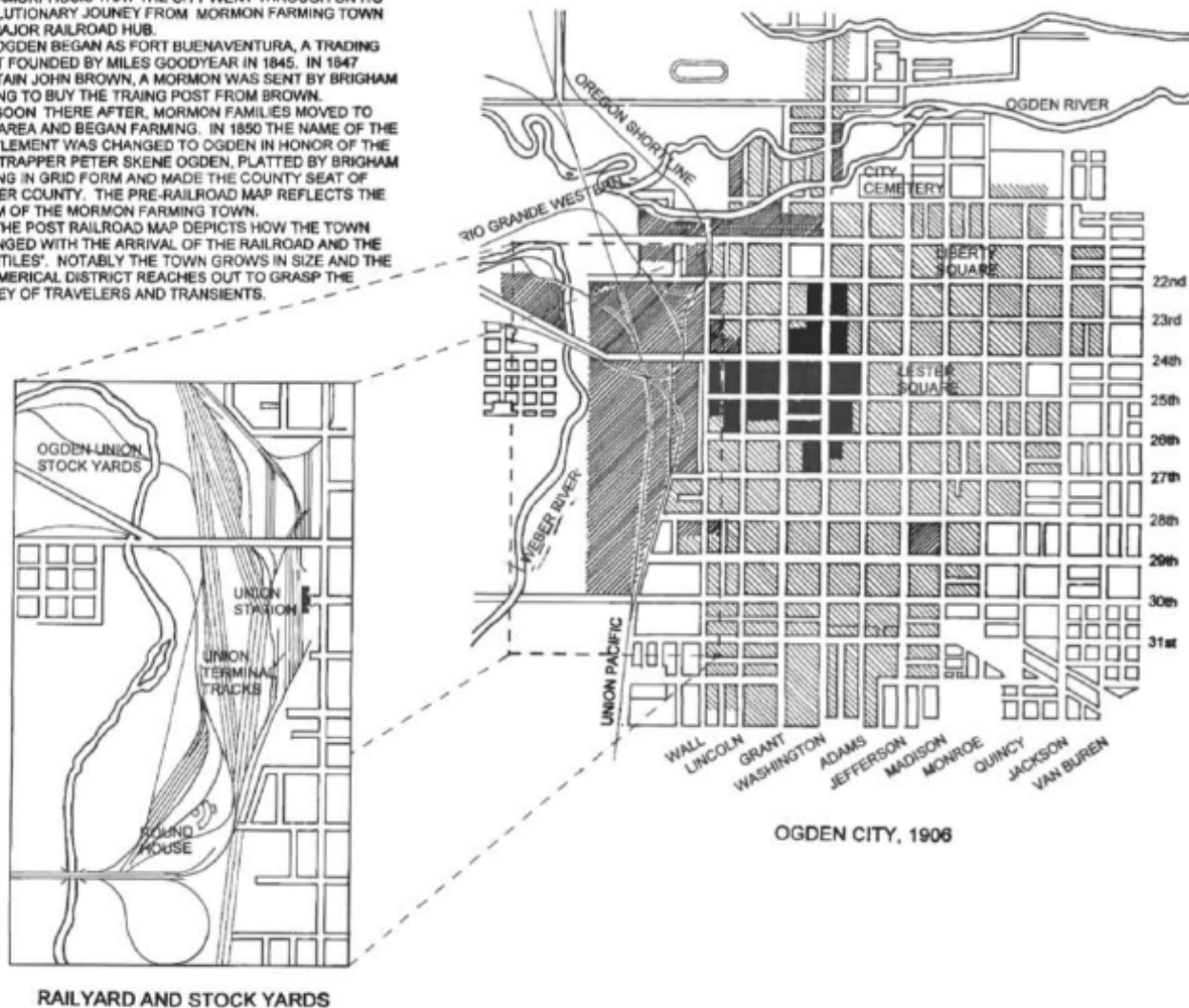
Engines of Change: Railroads in Utah

THE MAPS OF OGDEN CITY, UTAH DEPICT PART OF THE METAMORPHOSIS THAT THE CITY WENT THROUGH ON ITS EVOLUTIONARY JOURNEY FROM MORMON FARMING TOWN TO MAJOR RAILROAD HUB.

OGDEN BEGAN AS FORT BUENAVENTURA, A TRADING POST FOUNDED BY MILES GOODYEAR IN 1845. IN 1847 CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN, A MORMON WAS SENT BY BRIGHAM YOUNG TO BUY THE TRADING POST FROM BROWN.

SOON THERE AFTER, MORMON FAMILIES MOVED TO THE AREA AND BEGAN FARMING. IN 1850 THE NAME OF THE SETTLEMENT WAS CHANGED TO OGDEN IN HONOR OF THE FUR TRAPPER PETER SKENE OGDEN, PLATTED BY BRIGHAM YOUNG IN GRID FORM AND MADE THE COUNTY SEAT OF WEBER COUNTY. THE PRE-RAILROAD MAP REFLECTS THE FORM OF THE MORMON FARMING TOWN.

THE POST RAILROAD MAP DEPICTS HOW THE TOWN CHANGED WITH THE ARRIVAL OF THE RAILROAD AND THE "GENTILES". NOTABLY THE TOWN GROWS IN SIZE AND THE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT REACHES OUT TO GRASP THE MONEY OF TRAVELERS AND TRANSIENTS.



Map B: Ogden, 1906

Source: Map by Gordon Turley, in Jalynn Olsen, *Building by the Railyard: The Historic Commercial and Industrial Architecture of Ogden, Utah* (Graduate School of Architecture, University of Utah, 1998).

- How did Ogden change between 1870 and 1906? What accounts for these changes?
- Which direction did the commercial district (black) move? Why would Ogden's businesses want that?
- Where did businesspeople build Ogden's stockyards? How would this help the sale of beef?

OUR PAST, THEIR PRESENT

Engines of Change: Railroads in Utah

Oral History: Lizzie Weaver Brown, 1939

Source: Utah State Historical Society Works Progress Administration Biography Sketches Collection, MSS B 289, Box 2, Folder 27, p. 1-3, 6. <https://collections.lib.utah.edu/details?id=699142>

Lizzie Weaver Brown immigrated to America from England as a child. Her family were among the first Mormon pioneers who were able to use the train instead of wagons, coming in 1869. A resident of Ogden, she remembers life there during this time of change. Define: domestic girl, ward, calico, basque.

When they arrived in New York, and [Lizzie's father] went to get his transportation, he found that a mistake had been made, and it had been given to another person. He was rather stunned at first.... He decided to remain in New York and work at his trade as a stone mason until he was able to pay his own fare to Utah. This took him about three and a half years, and in the meantime the railroad had been completed, and they were spared the hardship of crossing the plains by ox teams or handcarts.... The family reached Ogden in the fall of 1869. Mrs. [Lizzie] Brown, although only six years of age at the time, remembers how those old trains would stop and the Indians would get on. Lizzie tells what happened in her own words:

"I don't remember of ever hearing of [the Indians] doing any harm.... It was the first time I had seen Indians and I was very frightened.

The first home we lived in in Utah was a tent, but it didn't take my father long to build us a two room house. We settled out at Riverdale, where we had a nice farm. My father worked at his trade ... besides the work on the farm. We got here after some of the worst hardships were over. I don't remember of any times of famine, and as the railroad came through and trade was opened, we hadn't the worry of clothing that the early pioneers had.

I attended school where the South Washington School now stands. It was called the end of the lane school at that time.... It wasn't much of a school then though. It is the only school that I remember attending, because I was twelve years old when I had to quit school and I started to work. I worked as a domestic girl until I married....

We went to parties whenever we could, and I loved to go to dances. I remember one night my boyfriend, the man I later married, took me to Uintah to a dance. It was daylight before we got home. We went in a spring wagon and the roads aren't what they are today. They were so sandy that if we weren't careful they would sink to the hubs in sand. He was awfully sorry for having kept me out so late, and told my parents that if they would forgive him he'd never do it again. We used to go to all of the ward dances and parties, and also the dances held in the regular dance halls. Of course there weren't so many things to go to then....

Before I was married, Mr. Brown [my future husband] was working on the railroad, and wasn't always able to come and get me to go to the dance, but I always tried to go anyway even if he didn't get in from work in time to take me. One time I was so anxious to go to the dance and I made myself a calico dress. I thought it was grand, but it was only a little basque and a full skirt and I guess it would look pretty plain today. It had buttons all the way down the front, and it took me so long to get the dress finished that I didn't have time to work the buttonholes. So I just cut them and went to the dance without them worked. I was surely worried for fear someone would notice it, but Mr. Brown was there, and I had a lovely time."

OUR PAST, THEIR PRESENT

Engines of Change: Railroads in Utah

Oral History: Mary Nelson Johnson Felshaw, 1936

Source: Utah State Historical Society Works Progress Administration Biography Sketches Collection, MSS B 289, Box 3, Folder 72, p. 1-3. <https://collections.lib.utah.edu/details?id=701698>

Mary Nelson Johnson Felshaw immigrated to America from Denmark as a child and grew up in Corinne, Utah, during its heyday as a railroad town. She was the first woman in the United States to run for governor. Define: placer mine, freight, diphtheria, caustic.

“My father was a railroad contractor and he was fighting in the war between Germany and Denmark in 1863.... It was shortly after this that father and mother decided to come to America. We sailed on a three-mast wooden hull sailing boat in the early part of 1864.... Our family then went directly to St. Joseph, Missouri, arriving there just after the close of the Civil War. Father got work on the railroad and we stayed there about five years....

We came to Corinne, Utah on the second passenger train which ran from St. Joseph, Missouri to Corinne, after the driving of the Golden Spike on May 10, 1869. Corinne at that time was a frontier town of many excitements with stages operating to the gold mines of Virginia City, Montana and the placer mines on the Snake River. Freight was shipped by train as far as Corinne and then freighted by ox-teams or horses into Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington. Sometimes there were 50,000 freighters at Corinne.

Upon the completion of the railroads into Promontory Point there were more than 5,000 Chinamen, who had been shipped direct from China to work on the railroads, turned loose around Corinne. They were imported to work because they worked so cheap. Some of them remained in Corinne and started up restaurants and laundries but the greater majority scattered all over the country, particularly the Pacific Coast....

I was in Corinne at the time the steamboat “City of Corinne” was launched on the Great Salt Lake. It was a pleasure boat and took passengers from Corinne to Garfield. It wasn’t used for many years though because it became corroded with salt from the lake....

About 1876, 150 Indians surrounded Corinne and troops had to be sent up from Fort Douglas in Salt Lake City for our protection. The Indians came and walked into our house and helped themselves to flour, sugar, bread and everything they wanted.... I got out of the house and through these Indians without them bothering me and I told Mr. DeMarr.... We got back the flour, sugar and things ... but let them keep the bread....

Father used to gather salt along the shore of Great Salt Lake and I drove a team of oxen over the Sardine Hill taking it to Logan where we traded it for wheat and produce....

When I was but fourteen years of age (1872) there was a diphtheria epidemic in Corinne. Nearly everyone was sick with it. I assisted Dr. Cass by going with him from house to house swabbing throats with plain caustic. It was a dreadful time and I have seen as many as eight die in one family of it. Dr. Cass praised my work and he wanted to send me away to study and train for a nurse but I was afraid that I didn’t have enough of an education as I had only gone to school for one month in my whole life and that was in St. Joseph, Missouri. The tuition for school in Corinne was \$3 per week for each child so it was out of the question for anyone with a large family to send their children to school.“

OUR PAST, THEIR PRESENT

Engines of Change: Railroads in Utah



Photo: Corinne, Utah, 1870

Source: "Corinne, Utah p.2" Corinne businesses, 1870, Utah State Historical Society Classified Photo Collection, MSS C 239.

<https://collections.lib.utah.edu/details?id=452653>

- What can you tell about the city of Corinne from this picture?
- How do the earliest pictures of Corinne and Ogden compare?

OUR PAST, THEIR PRESENT

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Photo: Corinne, Utah, Main Street, 1940

Source: "Corinne, Utah p. 1," Corinne Main Street, 1940, Utah State Historical Society Classified Photo Collection.

<https://collections.lib.utah.edu/details?id=452663>

- Compare to the picture of Ogden in 1900.
- Why did Ogden grow? Why didn't Corinne grow?

OUR PAST, THEIR PRESENT

Engines of Change: Railroads in Utah

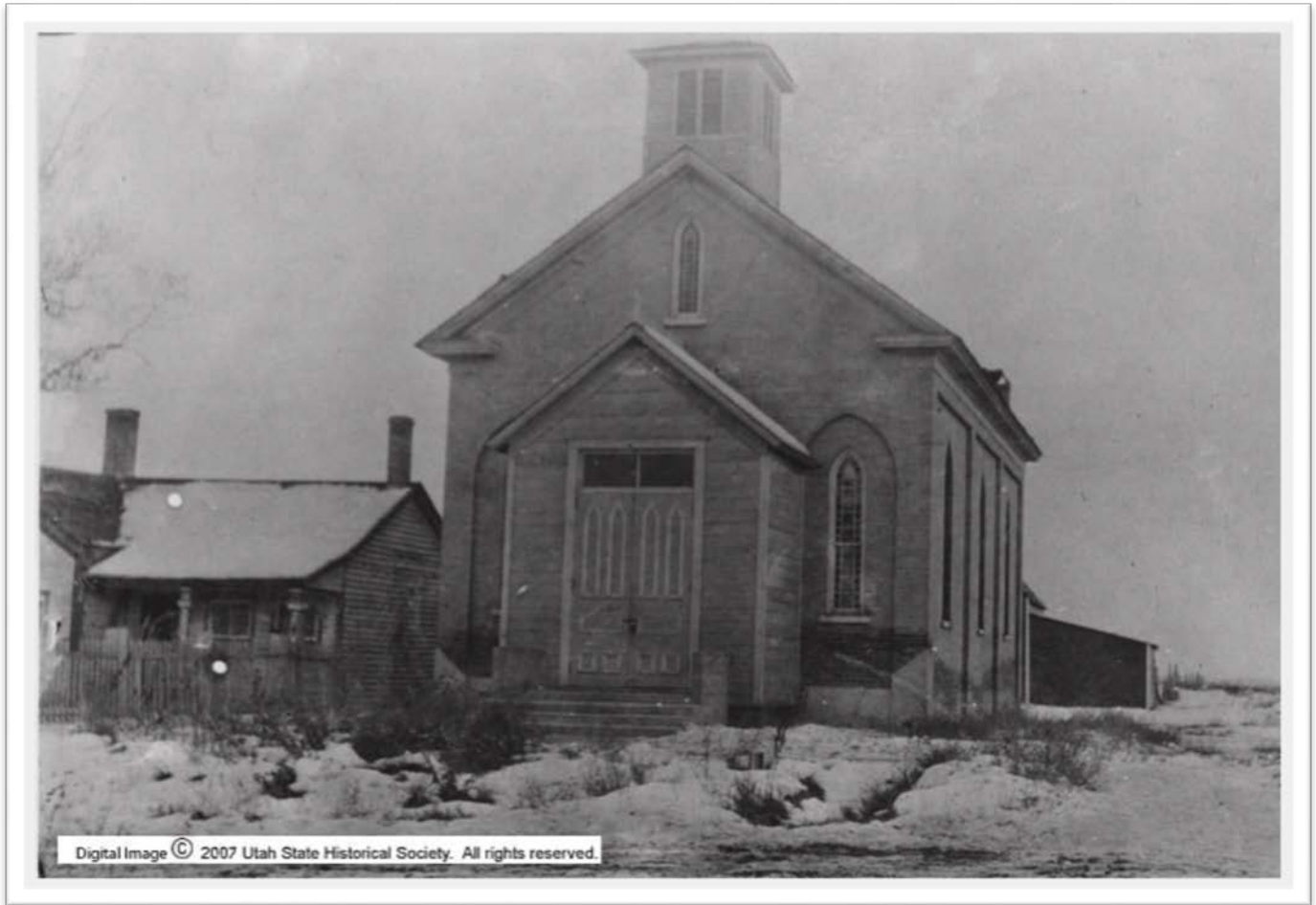


Photo: Methodist-Episcopal Church, Corinne, Utah

Source: "Methodist-Episcopal Church, Corinne, Utah. p. 3," n.d., Utah State Historical Society Classified Photo Collection.
<https://collections.lib.utah.edu/details?id=436081>

This church was one of three Christian churches in Corinne during the 1870s, and is now the oldest Protestant church in Utah.

OUR PAST, THEIR PRESENT

Engines of Change: Railroads in Utah



Photo: Travelers walk near a station on the Lucin Cutoff trestle, 1905

Source: "Southern Pacific Railroad – Lucin Cutoff P. 10," 1905, Utah State Historical Society Classified Photograph Collection.
<https://collections.lib.utah.edu/details?id=440031>

This photo shows the Lucin Cutoff trestle at one of its widest points in 1905. A trestle is a railroad bridge supported by a sloping framework of beams. The Lucin Cutoff was a railroad that included a twelve-mile stretch over the open water of the Great Salt Lake. Notice the small station buildings in the background.

- Imagine what it would be like to work at the station here. Would you enjoy working in this environment? Imagine traveling this way. How might this railroad be an improvement over traveling by boat or stagecoach?

OUR PAST, THEIR PRESENT

Engines of Change: Railroads in Utah



Photo: Boys playing marbles, Echo City, ca. 1930s

Source: used in Robert S. Mikkelsen, "Growing Up Railroad: Remembering Echo City," *UHQ* 62, no. 4 (Fall 1994): 353.

<http://utahhistory.sdlhost.com/#/item/000000031001012/view>

Robert remembers times he and his friends would often play a game of marbles here all day. The surface of this combination basketball and marble court was covered with cinders spewed from the smokestacks of freight trains that arrived at the platform next to the court. Because baggage carts often rolled across this ground, they packed the cinders down smooth with just the right amount of bounce.

- What would it be like to grow up in a small town like Echo City, crowded next to the railroad?

OUR PAST, THEIR PRESENT

Engines of Change: Railroads in Utah

Teaching Ideas to Meet Core Standards

1. Did railroads change Utah in important ways or not very much? Study some of the attached primary sources and write an argumentative essay about how much the railroad changed Utah's economy and/or its human geography. Be sure to think about specific things that might have changed or stayed the same: who lived in Utah, the cultures of Utah, and the jobs available in Utah. Compare examples from before and after the transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869 and then connected to Ogden in 1870. How important were the changes? Why did some towns thrive while others came and went? (Comparing Ogden and Corinne is a powerful example of how closeness to the fastest transportation could alter the future of American towns; Standard 2.5)
 - a. Analyze the photos of Ogden.
 - b. Analyze the photos of Corinne. What can you tell about the city of Corinne from these pictures? Who might be attracted to a town like this? What was important to people there? How did Corinne change or not change over the years? Why might this be? (Ogden gained much of its wagon freight business when the Utah Northern Railroad connected Ogden to Franklin, Idaho; then the Lucin Cutoff bypassed Corinne completely in 1904.)
 - c. To see some examples of what frontier work and life was like in Ogden and Corinne, read some of the interviews above.
 - People who lived and worked in Ogden include William G. Smith and Lizzie Weaver Brown.
 - People who lived and worked in Corinne include William G. Smith (worked) and Mary Nelson Johnson Felshaw.
 - Questions for Mary Nelson Johnson Felshaw's interview: Did railroads replace all other forms of transportation and shipping in frontier Utah? What does Felshaw's interview show about how shipping materials (freight) had to be moved in areas without railroads? Why did railroad companies go to the trouble of bringing in workers all the way from China, from a different culture too?
2. How could railroads create communities? Use some the sources about Kenilworth, Castle Gate, and Helper above, as well as your own research to write an informative essay describing how railroads helped the coal mining industry grow in Utah. What towns and jobs did it help create? (Best suited to Standard 2.6)
3. Create a photo essay or creative short story documenting a day in the life of a rail worker. What challenges, dangers, and adventures might these workers have experienced? Conduct background research on various groups who worked for the railroad (Chinese, Irish, Mormon, etc.) to add depth to your writing. (Does not meet an exact requirement in Strand 2, but the use of oral histories is specifically encouraged in the Core; see Standard 3.2)
 - a. Imagine you are working for either the Central Pacific (starting in Sacramento, CA) or Union Pacific (starting in Omaha, NE) railroad companies racing to finish the most track for the transcontinental railroad. Consider using the photo "Central Pacific – Construction, P. 2," where the workers have just completed the most track in one day in history. Think about these questions:
 - Can you read any emotions on their faces? How would you feel to be a part of this group? Do they all look like they have worked in the dirt all day? Can you tell the laborers from the supervisors (some are in suits and some are in jeans, then a new invention)? Can you see where some of them might have slept? What might that day have been like for a railroad worker?
 - b. Read the article excerpt below and study the photo of the Lucin Cutoff station above. Picture yourself living and working on the Great Salt Lake for the two years it took to build the Lucin Cutoff.
 - c. Use the interview sources to find stories of people whose lives were changed by the railroad, such as William G. Smith, Isabella Wade Allred, and others.

OUR PAST, THEIR PRESENT

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- Question to consider: Isabella Allred refers multiple times to the movie *Union Pacific* when describing her childhood memories. How can visual evidence like movies and photos help us learn about places we've never been? On the other hand, have you ever seen a picture of something and then have suddenly believed you could remember it? Can movies and photos interfere with our memory? Why do we have to be careful when reading oral histories like this? What are the benefits?