

HISTORY OF THE TINTIC MINING DISTRICT



WRITTEN BY IAN WRIGHT, UCSS PROGRAM COORDINATOR
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



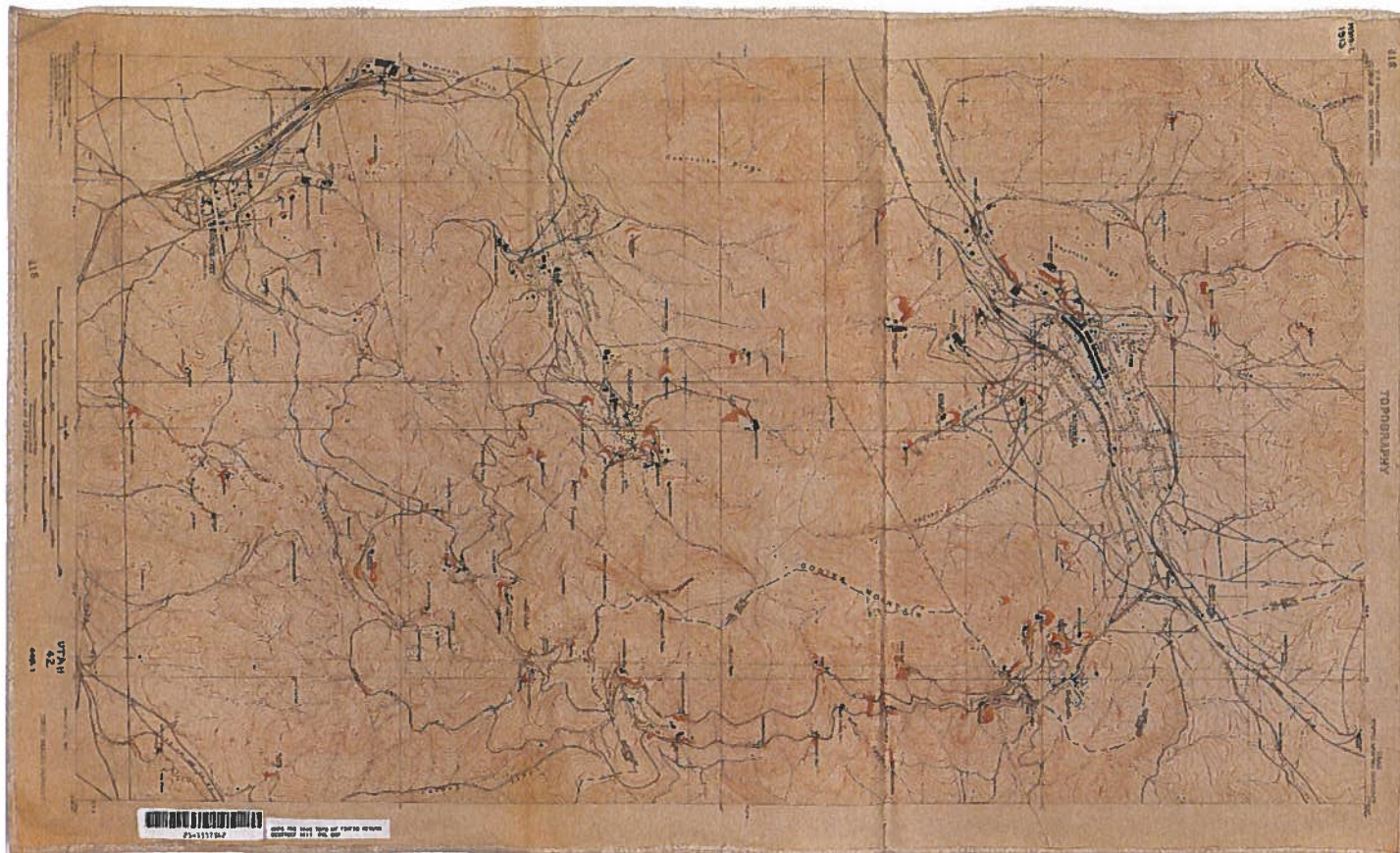


Image - 1911 map of the Tintic Mining District

Salt Lake City for a period of time was the mining center of the American West. The prosperity coming into the city from the many mining districts throughout the state is still evident in the elegant homes and buildings lining some of Salt Lake's most prominent streets. The Tintic Mining District (named after the formable Ute Chief Tintic) would become the leading mining center in the state, with an output of over \$5,000,000 by 1899. Titanic lead in production would continue on and off over the years. The mining district literally embodies just about every classic Western stereotype having to do with mining. Tintic remains one of the most intact examples of mining heritage within its original cultural context found anywhere in the American West.

Image - Utah has 13,000 years of human history. Image courtesy of the State of Utah ilovehistory.org.

The area that you are visiting today is rich in history, and has been occupied by humans for over 13,000 years. Each generation has contributed to the fascinating stories and places found throughout this cultural landscape.



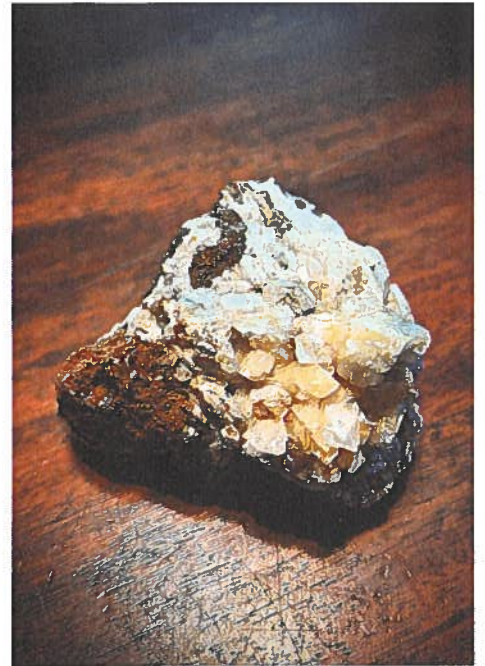


Image - Mormon Cowboys by celebrated Western artist Minerva Teichert ca. 1956. Courtesy Brigham Young University.

Despite Brigham Young's famous edict against early Mormon settlers in Utah becoming involved in mining, it was Mormon cowboys who effectively discovered the Tintic Mining District. In 1869 the attention of a group of cowboys pushing cattle into the Tintic Valley was focused when a beam of light broke through the clouds illuminating a nearby hillside. The hill looked like it was sparkling due to a high concentration of iron pyrite. The Sunbeam mine located on that very spot became the first mine in the district. The Sunbeam is located in between Diamond and Silver City.

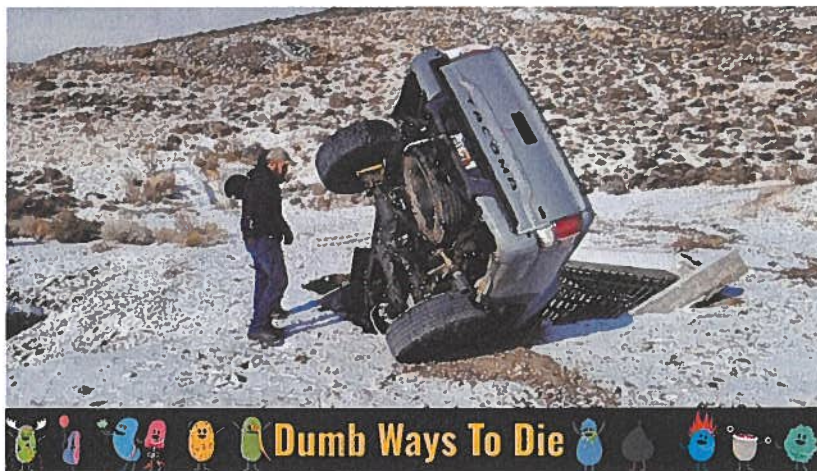


Images - Iron pyrite ore samples



Image's - Left, the only known photo of Diamond, Utah ca. 1870's. One of the original mining camps in the Tintic district, courtesy of the blog, *A Short History of What's Important*. Right, naturally occurring quartz crystal from the Tintic mining district, courtesy of the State Historic Preservation Office.

The city of Diamond was established in Diamond Gulch and received its name from the white quartz crystals naturally occurring in the area and which resemble diamonds. The city was established in 1870 shortly after the discovery of the district by Mormon cowboys pushing cattle into the Tintic Valley in 1896. The population of Diamond would reach 900 - 1000 people. The



town was abandoned by 1890, however the post office remained open until 1906. Today the remaining mine dumps are used by recreationalists, and have possessed a safety concern due to people driving their OHV's into open pits.



Image - Photograph of Silver City, Utah, ca. 1880's, courtesy of *Faith, Hope and Prosperity: The Tintic Mining District* by Philip F. Notarianni.

Mining quickly spread north of Diamond. Silver City was established at the mouth of Dragon Canyon in an open valley. Silver City was the iconic Western boom town with all the vices that accompany any self-respecting mining camp. One of the last people to have lived in Silver City before it was abandoned recently passed away in 2019.

Image - Photograph of Silver City, Utah ca. 1880's, courtesy of *Faith, Hope and Prosperity: The Tintic Mining District* by Philip F. Notarianni.



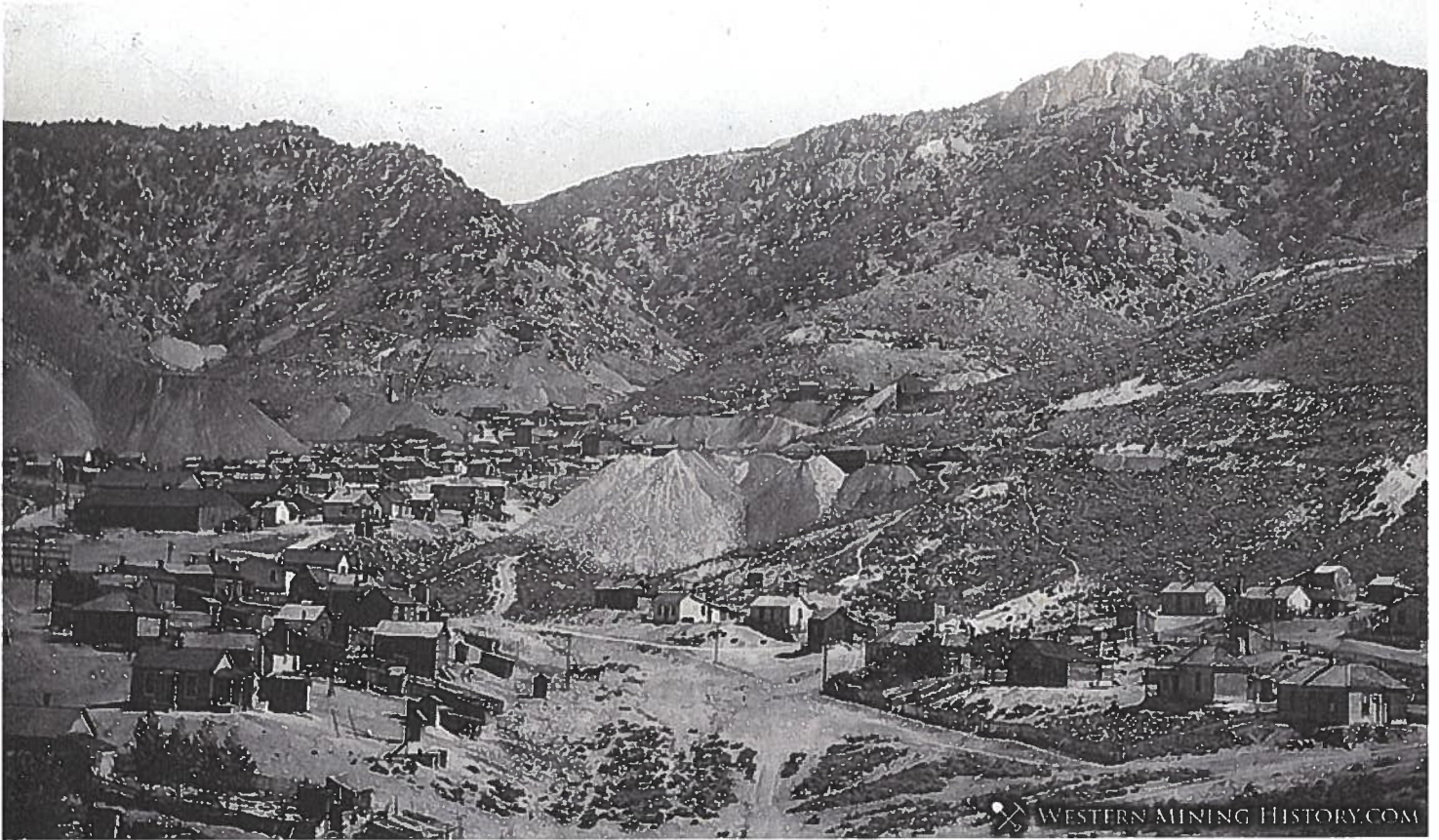


Image - Photograph of Mammoth, Utah ca. early 1900's. Image courtesy of the website westernmininghistory.com.

Mammoth was originally two separate cities. The upper part was called Mammoth and the lower part Robinson. The two cities would eventually be incorporated into one city. The Mammoth Mine is one of the most significant mines in the Tintic District. The McIntyre brothers traded a herd of longhorn cattle that they pushed up from Texas into the Tintic Valley for substantial interest in the Mammoth mine. The cattle all froze during a harsh winter of 1874 but the mine prospered. Much of the gold in the Gold Room in the Utah Capitol Building came from the Mammoth Mine. Today, there are some fifty people living in Mammoth. There is no running water in the town and residents haul their own water from Tintic Junction three miles away.



Image - Gold Room, Utah State Capitol, image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.



Image - Eureka, photograph probably taken in the nineteen teens, courtesy of the Utah State Historical Society.

Eureka, Utah

The city of Eureka really began with the staking of a claim that would eventually become the Eureka Hill mine. Prior to that, the area where the city is now located was called Eureka Gulch and primarily a stop over for teamsters hauling water and other supplies to Mammoth, Utah. During the 1870's Eureka Gulch only consisted of a few rough cabins, and campsites where teamsters would rest on their journey. They would camp approximately in the vicinity of the current downtown business district. With the establishment of the Eureka Hill, other claims were quickly filed, including the Bullion Beck, Blue Rock, Keystone and Sunday School mines. Eureka rapidly became the largest town in the district and ninth most populous city in the state.



Image - Eureka, photograph early twentieth-century, courtesy of the Utah State Historical Society.



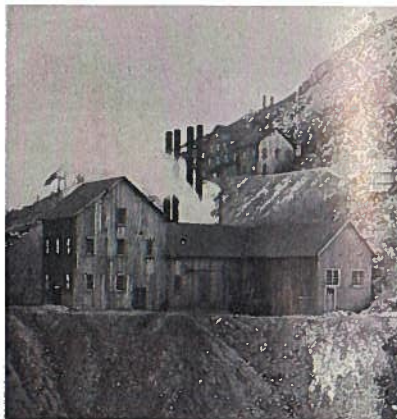
Image - Photograph of one of the first non-log buildings constructed in Eureka Gulch ca. 1871. Eureka Hill mine superintendent Watson Nesbitt with his wife and two others standing in front of the stone building. Courtesy of *Faith, Hope and Prosperity: The Tintic Mining District* by Philip F. Notarianni.



Knightsville (The Sunday School Mines)

Knightsville was established as a company town by local mining mogul Jesse Knight. Jesse Knight first came to the Tintic Mining District in 1896 and began mining operations in East Tintic. It is said that Jesse received a revelation from God instructing him where to dig. Despite objections from experienced geologists, Jesse sank a shaft and struck a rich body of ore. He called his mine the Humbug, which was what the geologist said when Jesse insisted on digging despite recommendations. Jesse would go on to develop several mines that became known as the Sunday School Mines.

Jesse was also a prominent member of the LDS church and would establish the town of Knightsville near his mining operations. Knightsville became the only mining town camp in the United States without a saloon. Jesse Knight gave his miners Sunday off and increased their daily wages to make up for the lost day. For his many kindnesses he was affectionately called "Uncle Jesse".

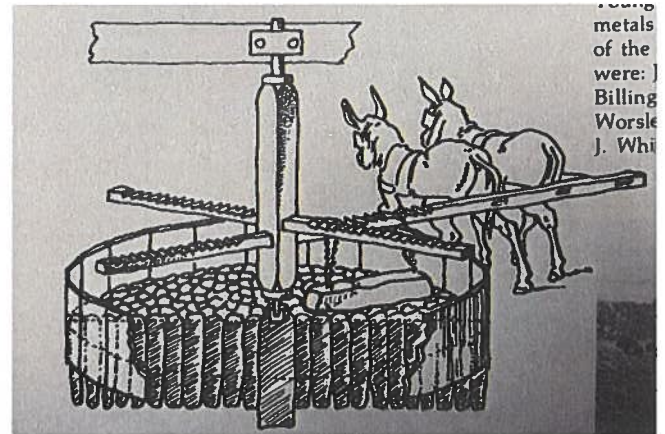


Godiva Mine & Mill, Jesse Knight, Brigham Young Academy Provo

"The earth is the lord's bank, and no man has a right to take money out of that bank and use it extravagantly upon himself. -- Jesse Knight"

Milling & Smelting

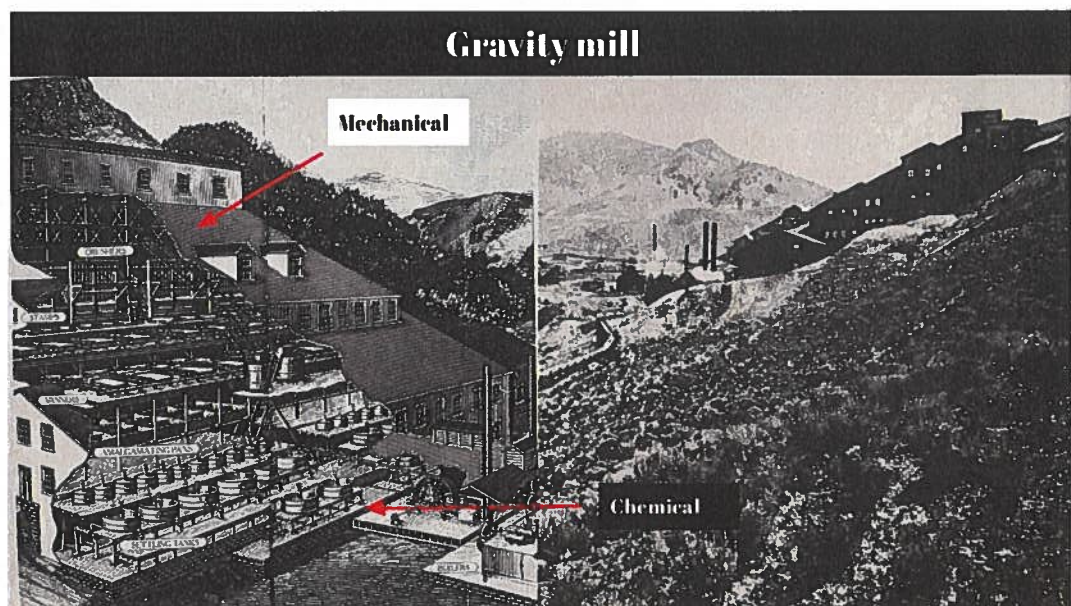
Image - Arrastra, a primitive form of milling often associated with early Spanish prospectors in the American Southwest.
Courtesy of Faith, Hope and Prosperity: The Tintic Mining District by Philip F. Notarianni.
 Legends abound throughout Utah of Spanish prospectors and lost gold mines. There are even reports from early Tintic inhabitants who claim to have unearthed abandoned Spanish mines.



Jesse Knight's Tintic Smelter - Silver City 1908

The ruins of this mill can still be seen between the ghost town of Silver City and Eureka.

Image - Left, general milling operations cut-away drawing of an early Tintic Mill. Right, Mammoth Mill.
Courtesy of Faith, Hope and Prosperity: The Tintic Mining District by Philip F. Notarianni.



Railroads

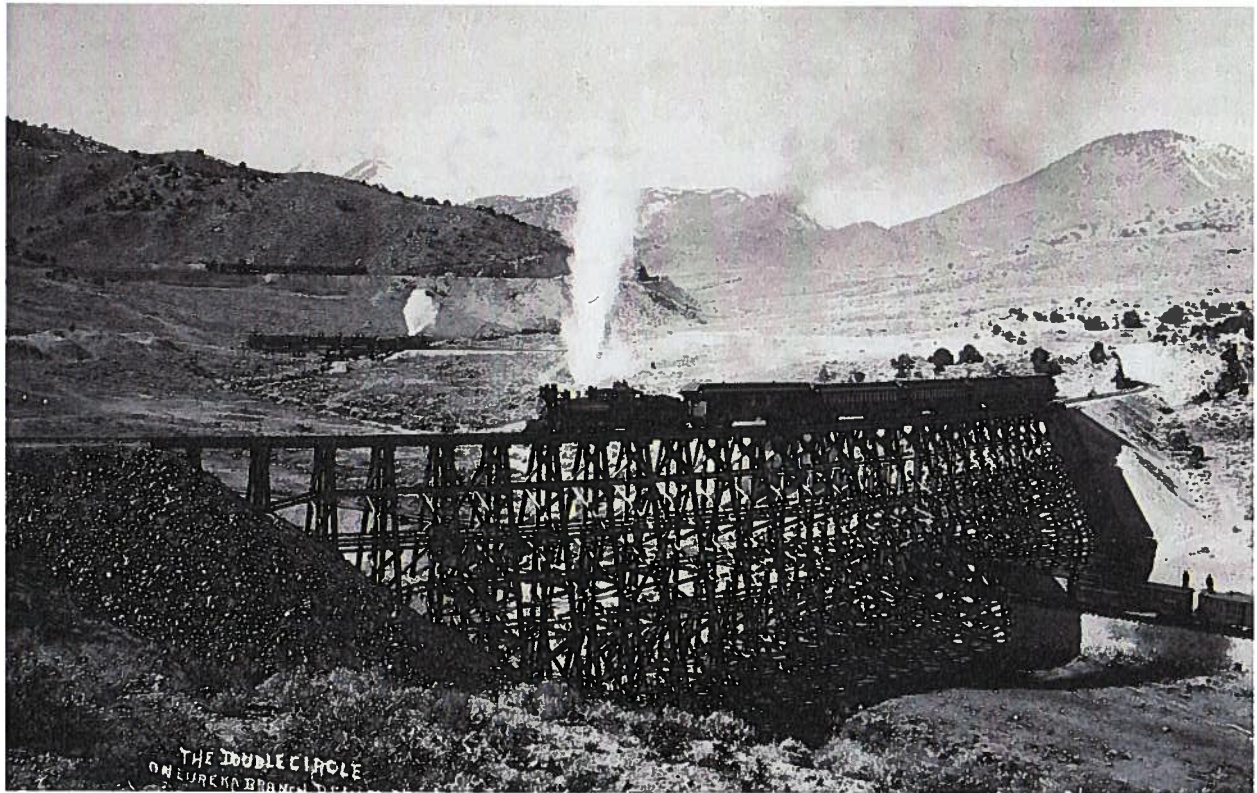
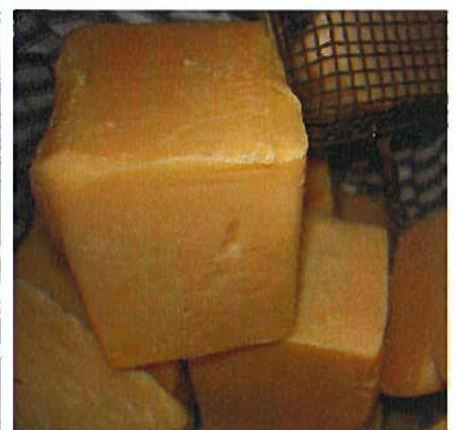
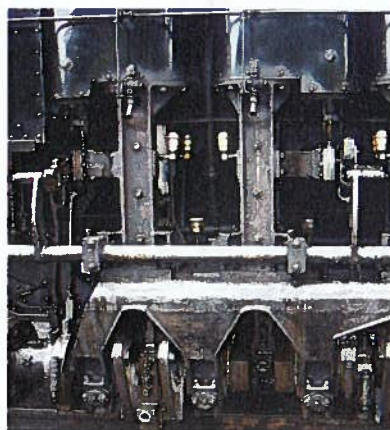
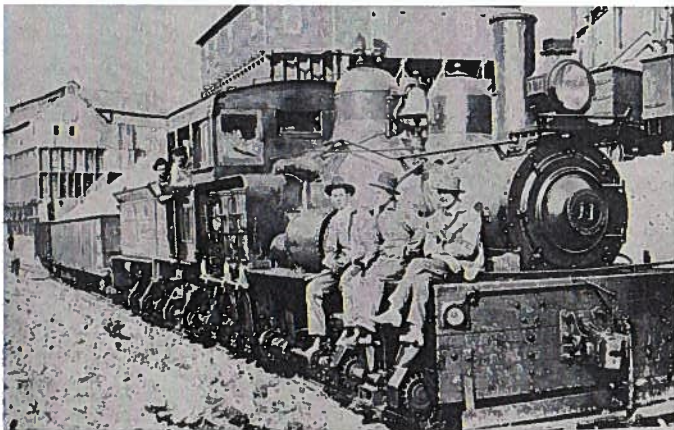
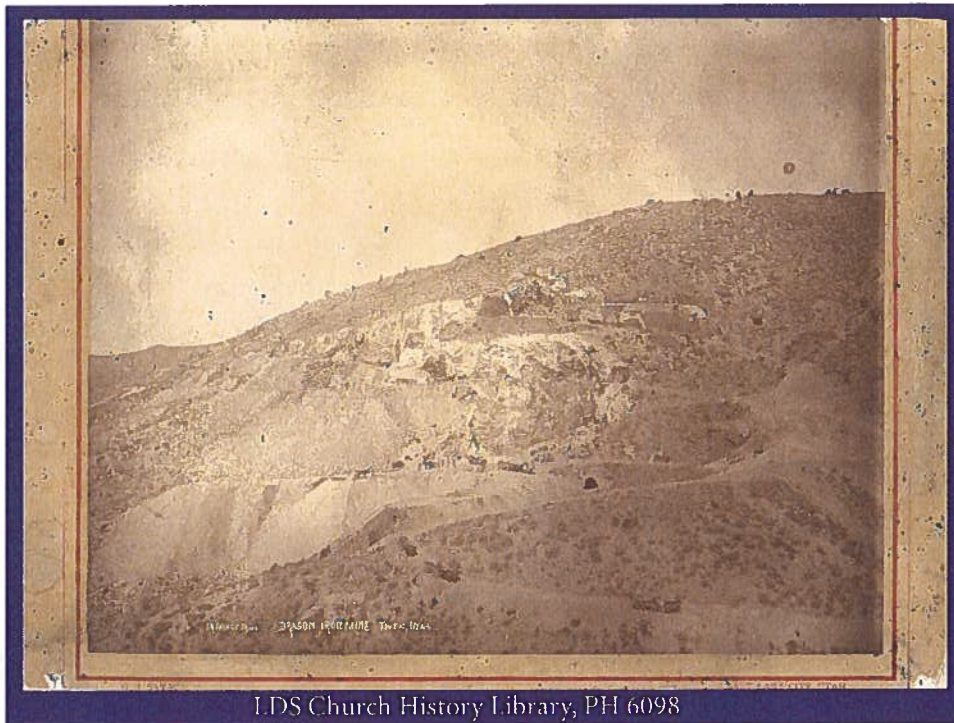


Image - Photograph of the famous “Double Circle or Loop” on the Eureka Branch of the Denver Rio Grande Western ca. 1892. Courtesy of the Utah State Historic Historical Society.

Both standard and narrow gauge railways serviced the mines of Tintic. Many of the trains that used the narrow gauge routes winding through the mountains were shy engines. Shy engines are uniquely suited for mining, logging, and other industrial operations. They can operate on steep terrain and poor track. The boiler that is offset to make room for three vertical cylinders that drive power a drive shaft.





Image's - Left, Shy No. 11 in upper Mammoth, Utah. Middle, Shy engine cylinders. Right, lye soap.

The Dragon Mine - 1886'ish

With regards to the Dragon Mine, the Salt Lake Tribune ran an article that stated *"Ever since the early days of smelting in Utah it has been the chief source of supply for iron fluxing material"*.

The Dragon mine is also one of the earliest mines in the district and continues to operate today. However, it is now considered one of the largest measured resources of halloysite clay in the Western Hemisphere. Halloysite clay is prized for the manufacture of thin porcelain, bone china, fine china, and aluminous tableware.

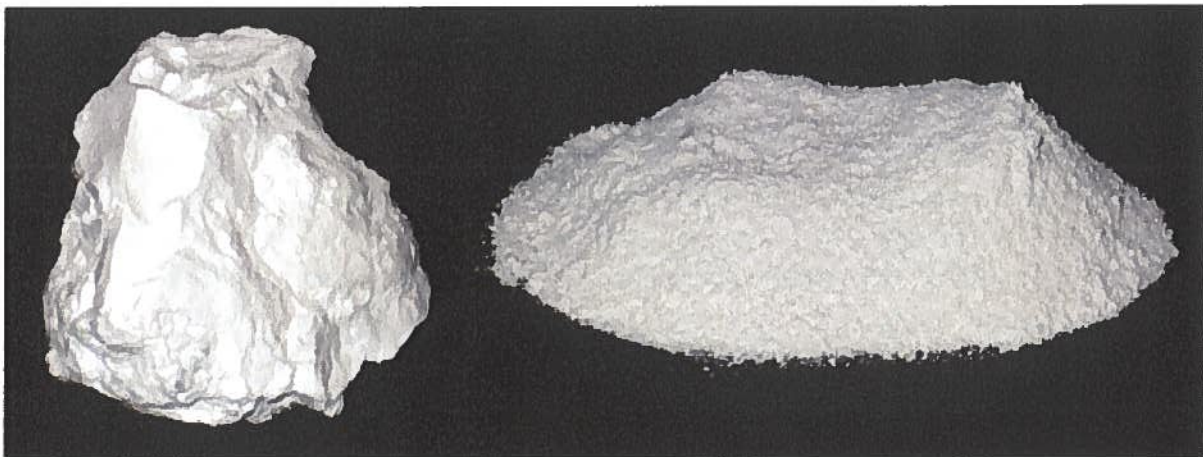


Image - Pure Halloysite oar and powder (Not cocaine...?) from the Dragon Mine Tintic.

The Big Four

By 1886 the Bullion Beck, the Eureka Hill, Blue Rock (later Eureka Centennial) and the Gemini mines became known as the "Big Four" for their massive amounts of ore production. They are also within eyesight of one another and are located on the same ore channel.

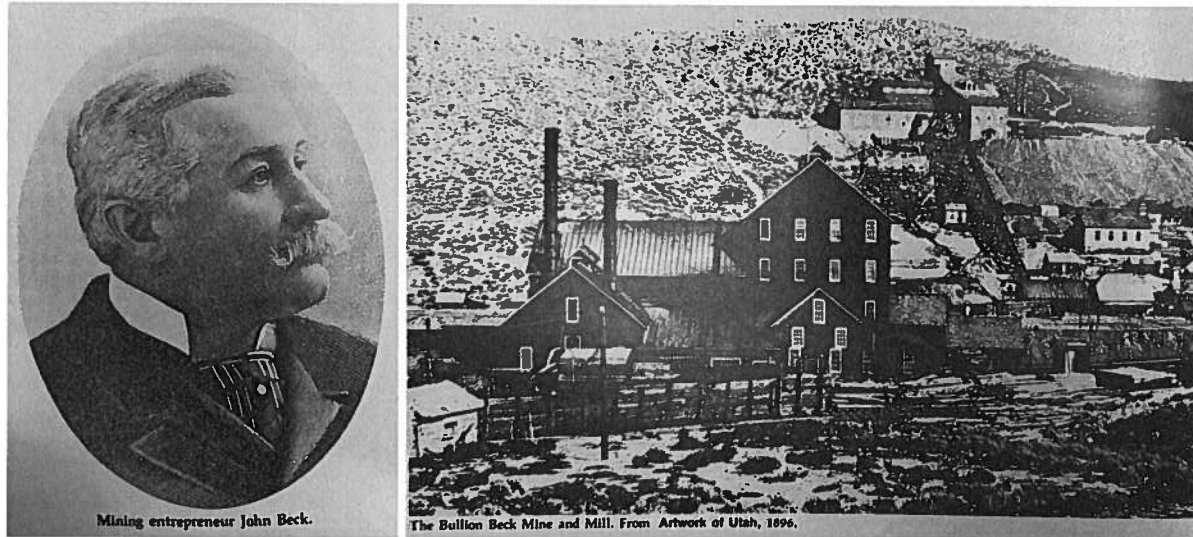
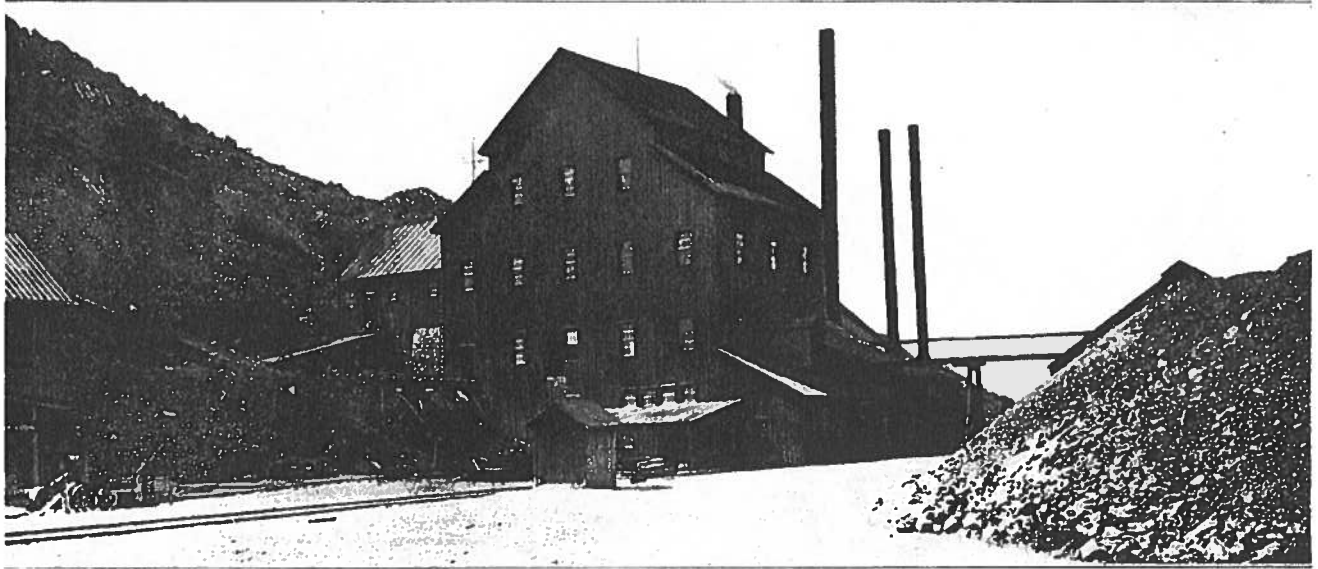


Image - Left Joan Beck, Right the Bullion Beck mine, courtesy of *Faith, Hope and Prosperity: The Tintic Mining District* by Philip F. Notarianni.

John Beck. Beck came to Eureka in 1871 where he staked claims at the bottom of the cultch near downtown Eureka. Because of the local skepticism about his mining operations, he was called the "Crazy Dutchman" and his mine became known as the Bullion Beck Mine. At one point he began to pay his miners in script and many shops in town would not accept them. After much struggle and poverty, the Bullion Beck struck riches and Beck and those who held onto Bullion Beck Script became wealthy overnight.

In 1893 economic downturns and labor strife significantly impacted Tintic. The Bullion Beck became the center of labor disputes over wages. Around 200 men soon found themselves out of work.

When the Bullion Beck employed forty scab laborers, union men met the train at the mine and attempted to dissuade them from commencing work. Three days later about 40 women marched to the Beck mine in an unparalleled move to express their disconnect with the mine being reopened. U.S. marshals were requested by the Beck mine to help prevent violence. For a mining town during this time, the number of arrests and violence was surprisingly low.



The Eureka Hill

In the 1870's only a few cabins existed in Eureka Gulch. One of the earliest mines in the valley was the Eureka Hill just across the road from the Bullion Beck mine and owned by John Q. Packard. Packard contributed funds from the Eureka Hill mine to build a public library in Salt Lake City that would become the Hansen Planetarium, now O.C. Tanner Jewelers. A mine war broke out between Packard's superintendent, Watson Nesbitt, and another man whose claim overlapped the Eureka Hill. Nesbitt would ultimately come out on top but only after reportedly hiring gunmen and clear cutting the hillside where the Eureka Hill Claim is located. He then constructed a fort under the Gemini Mine dump. The fort provided a clear line of view for rifles to deter trespassing.



O.C. Tanner Jewelers SLC, built with Eureka Hill mining money.

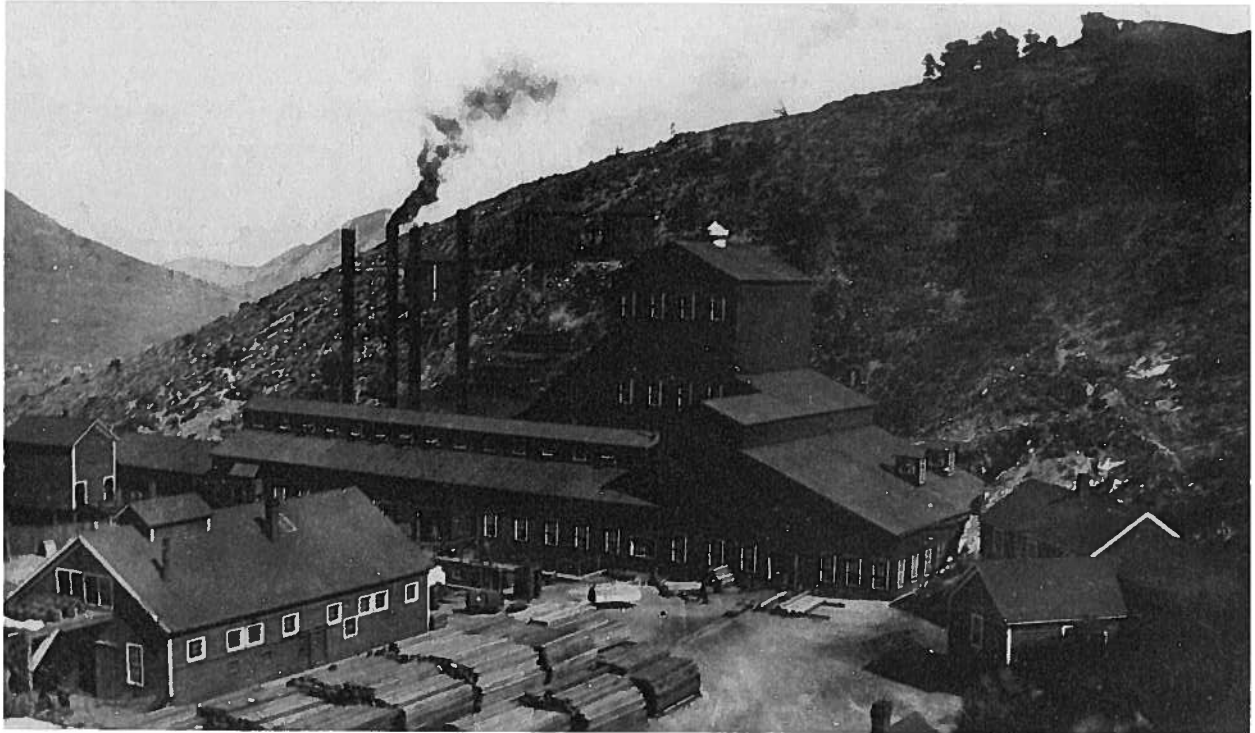


Image - Photograph of the Blue Rock or Eureka Centennial mine. Courtesy of the Utah State Historic Historical Society.

On September 17, 1914 the Centennial-Eureka became home to one of the worst mine disasters in Utah history. Just after 3 o'clock in the afternoon twelve miners were buried when the Oklahoma Stope collapsed. It was said that some remained alive behind the rubble because faint tapping could be heard. However it proved impossible to rescue them.

- Edward Allen, 32 years, married
- Edward Barrick, single
- Thomas Bottrell, 28 years, married
- Jack Hewson, married
- William Knipe, single
- John Knipe, single
- Bert Lossee, 28, years, married
- Earl. D. Brison, 27 years, married
- Frederick Sunquist, 42 years, married
- Mike Rosa, 47 years, married
- Jacob Timperella, 25 years, married
- Kurt Zierolo, 42, years, married



Image - Photograph of the Gemini Mine

The Gemini Mine was one of the Big Four and set on top of the gray mine dump just to the Northwest of the Bullion Beck headframe. The mine dump was originally not this color. It has been capped by the EPA during the Superfund Clean up project. Many locals believe that the vibrations from the EPA machinery and possible negligence on the part of machinery operators caused the historic Gemini headframe to fall down prematurely.

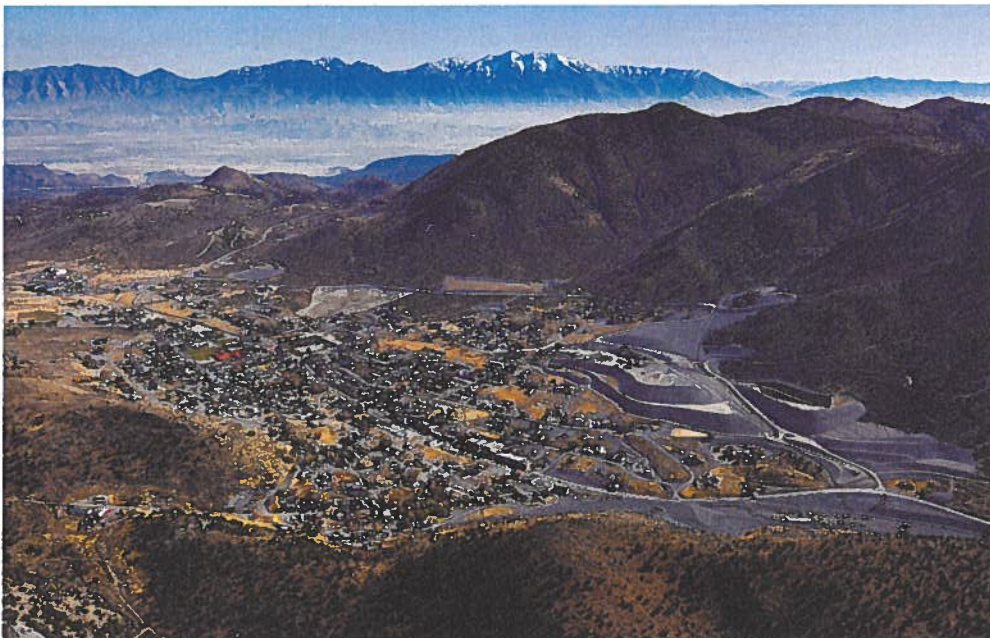


Image - All the gray rock is from the EPA superfund cleanup ca. early 2000's.

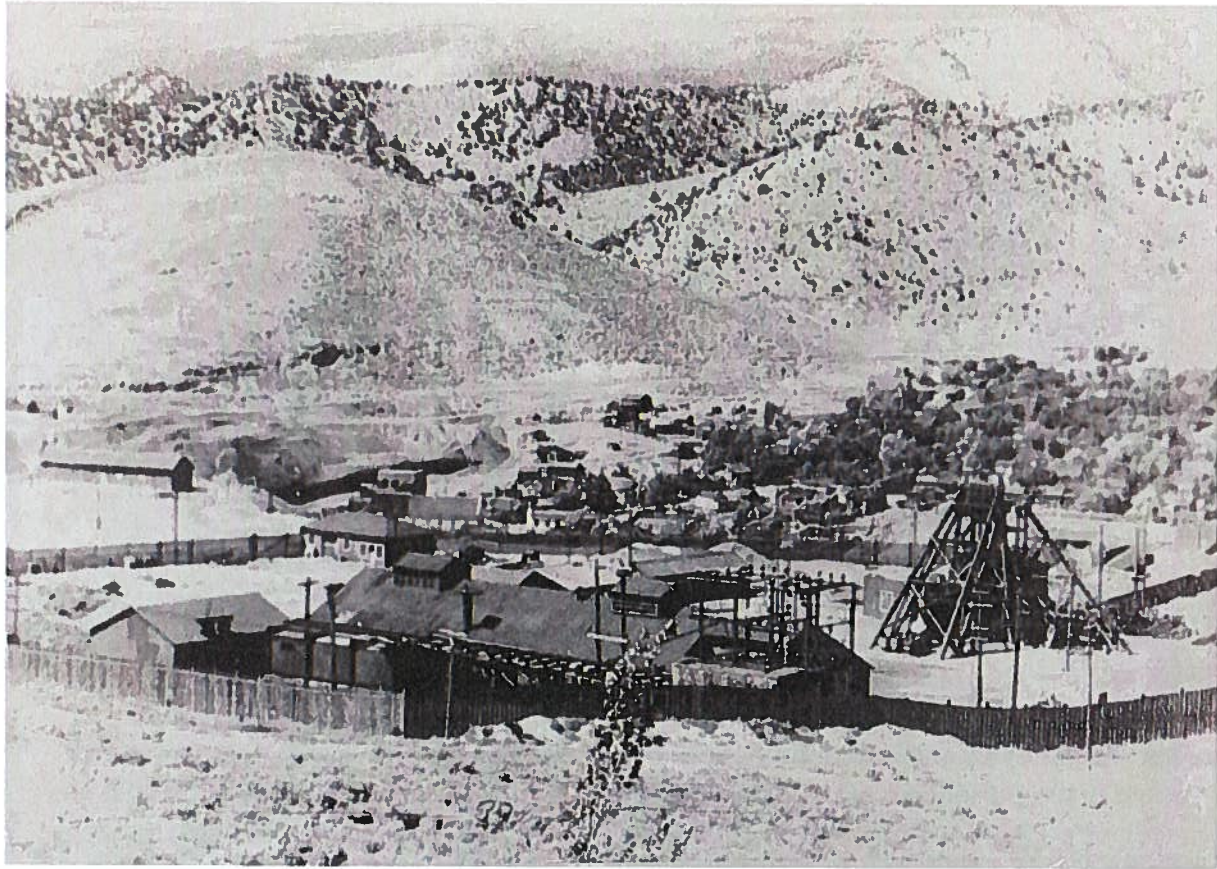
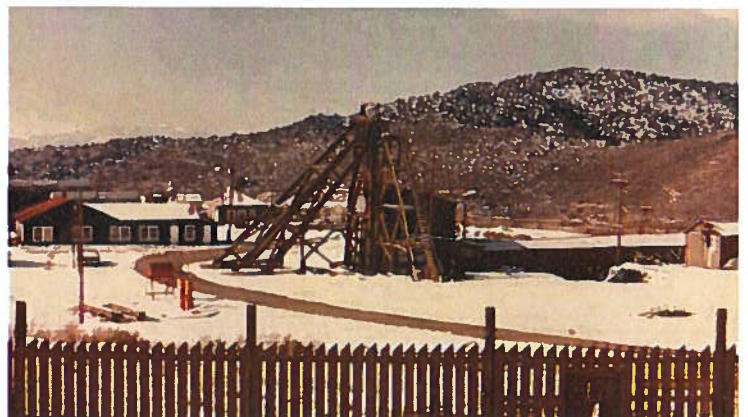
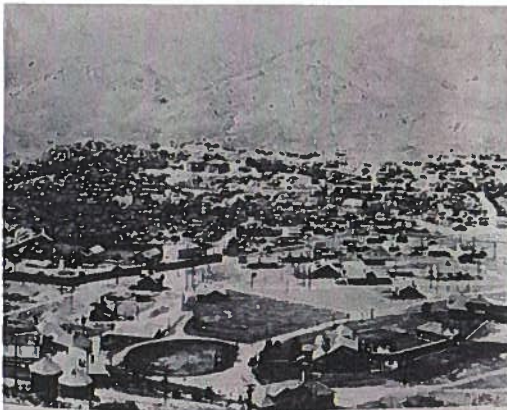


Image - The Chief Consolidated Mine. Courtesy private collector.

In the late 1890's a man named Walter Fitch Sr purchased shares of the Little Chief Mining Company. By 1909 a new company, the Chief Consolidated Mining Company, was incorporated. The mine operated underneath the town of Eureka and has works that extend 1 mile underground and branch off in all directions. The Chief rapidly became one of the leading interests in the district and would operate until 1957. The Fitch family was unique because they had their primary homes built near the mines; they are still standing. The neighborhood around the mine became known as Fitchville and it is said that even the police would have to receive permission from the mine before entering.



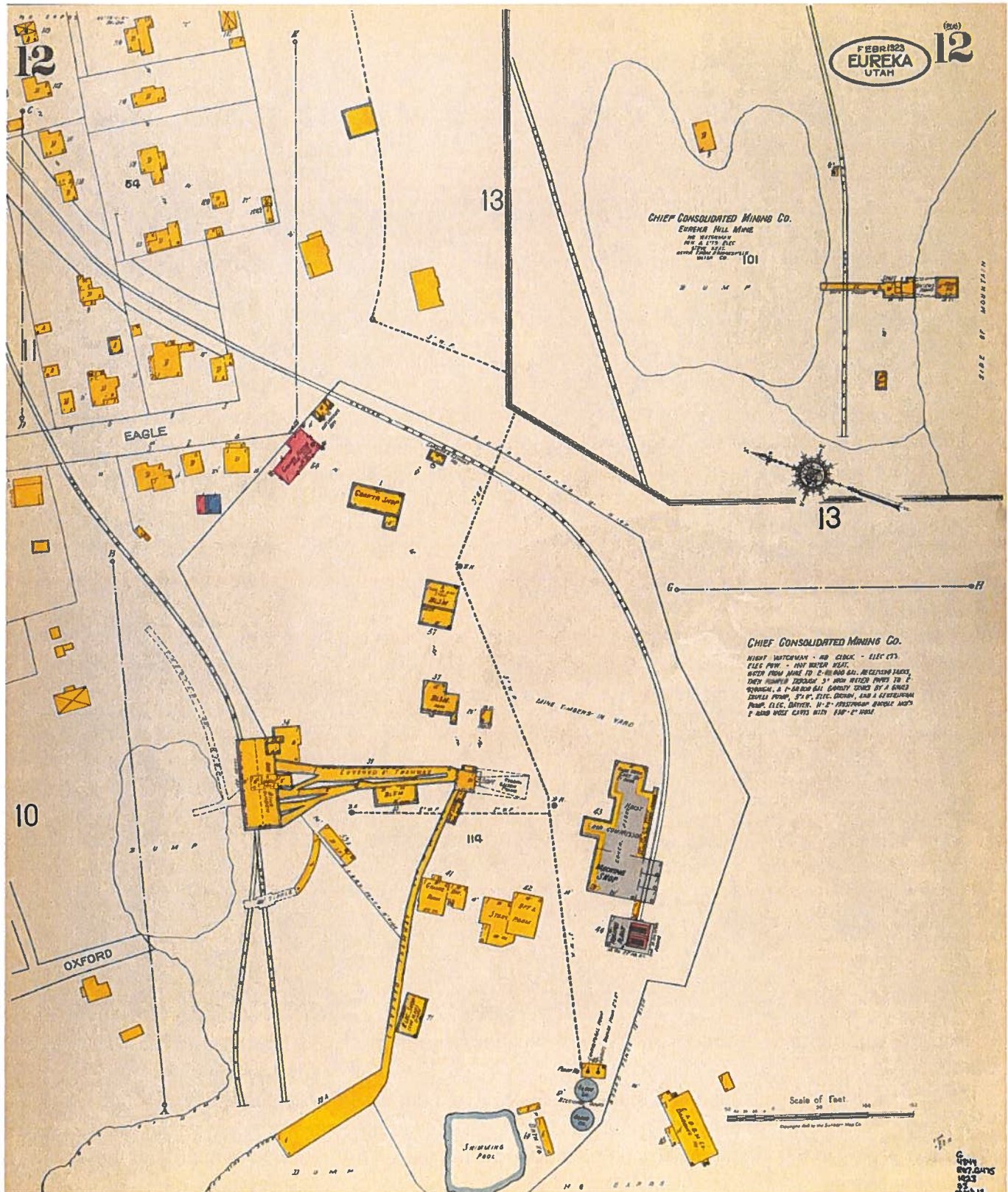


Image - Chief Consolidated Mine Sanborn Map 1923. Courtesy of the Utah State Historic Historical Society.



The Chief's Connection to Tangible and Intangible heritage (Maud Fitch)

The Chief is also significant for its intangible history and cultural connections with historical figures. Fitch Sr.'s daughter was the Utah herrowin Maud Fitch, who heroically drove ambulances in France during WW1.



Earhart's plane on a flatbed truck from the Chief mine in Fitchville Utah ca. 1928.

Amelia Earhart is also connected to the site after having damaged her plane during a rough emergency landing in the Tintic Valley. Her plane was picked up by the mine, and she was invited to stay in the Fitch home as a guest. Maud Fitch toured her around the mine and they became friends.

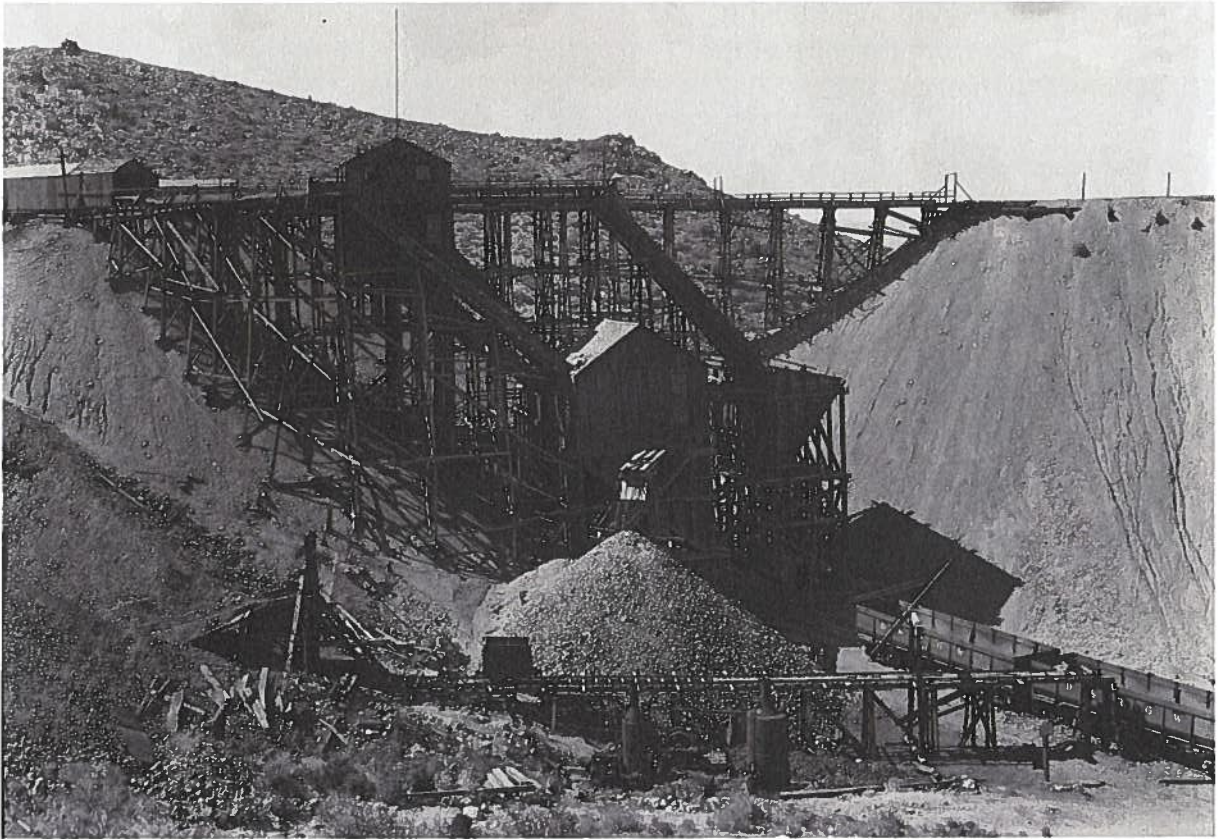


Image - The Eagle and Blue Bell (previously the Arizona). Courtesy of the Utah State Historic Historical Society.

This mine has an interesting and sorted history that is somewhat shrouded in legend. Originally the mine was known as the Arizona. After not having any success, unscrupulous operators purchased a load of high grade silver ore, carried it down to the face (face - where the miners are working) and detonated charges of dynamite. This is what is called "salting" making it look like the section of the mine where the miners are operating is following a rich vein of ore. The mine was sold and the new owners quickly realized that they had been swindled. But they continued digging and soon struck a rich body of ore and the mine became extremely valuable. The mine closed down in 1949. At the time of the closing there were a dozen mules still underground. The photo above shows Ben, the last mine mule, brought out of the mine. Ben was probably the last mule taken from a mine through a vertical shaft in the United States.



The Eagle and Blue Bell is also the location of a local ghost story about a vampiric shapeshifter who lives in the mine. The vampire can shift into a wolf and prey on the people of Tintic. The story is known as the Ghost of Level 13.

Image - Right, Photograph looking towards Eureka from the yard of the Eagle and Bluebell ca. 1982.

City overshadowed by the mine bins and dump.

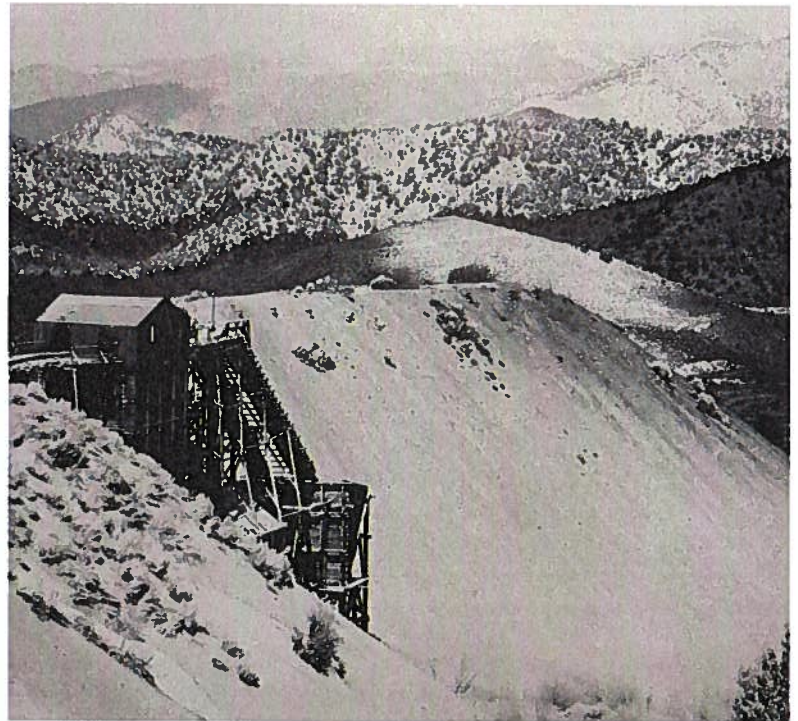
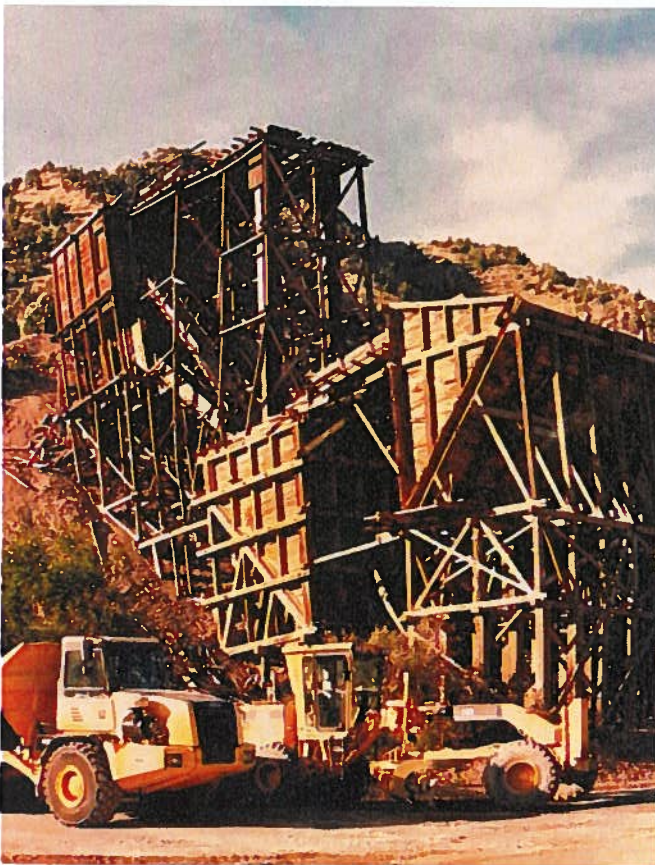


Image - Left, Eagle and Bluebell loading bin during EPA Superfund project ca. 2000s.

Many historic mine dumps including the Eagle and Bluebells were removed, pulverized and cyanide leached in an attempt to reclaim precious metals that early mining techniques were unable to recover.

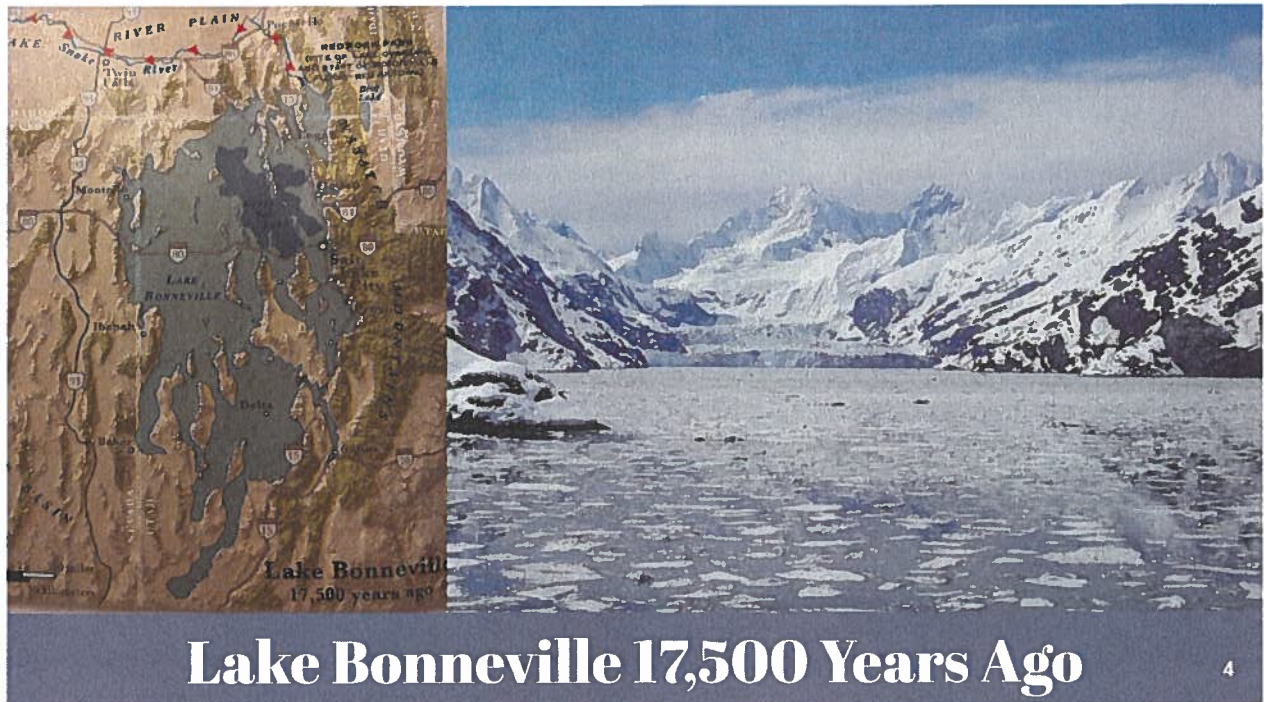


Right, The Ghost of Level 13, the vampire shapeshifting demon who haunts Tintic.

Legend has it that the monster came from the old country disguised as an immigrant miner. The monster took up residence in the 13,000 foot level of the Eagle and Bluebell after the mine closed in the 1940s. The creature has terrorized inhabitants and travelers in the district for almost 100 years. It is said that the beast's lair is full of the corpses of its victims and that it roams the underground workings beneath the city.



On The Way To Tintic



Lake Bonneville 17,500 Years Ago

4

Brown dots represent 7,000 recently vandalized archaeological sites



Image - Utah is home to some of the most recognisable archaeological sites found anywhere in the world.

To better safeguard cultural and archaeological sites Utah has established a centralized Cultural Site Stewardship (UCSS) Program made

up of hundreds of volunteers, state & federal land managing agencies, municipalities, counties, for-profits, non-profit organizations and private landowners. UCSS was written into state code in 2020 and is now the largest stewardship program in the nation.

Image - Archaeologists found 11,000 year old human footprints, projection points with mastodon blood and evidence of the earliest proven consumption of tobacco by humans in North America.

Utah's West Desert contains some of the earliest evidence of human existence in the state.

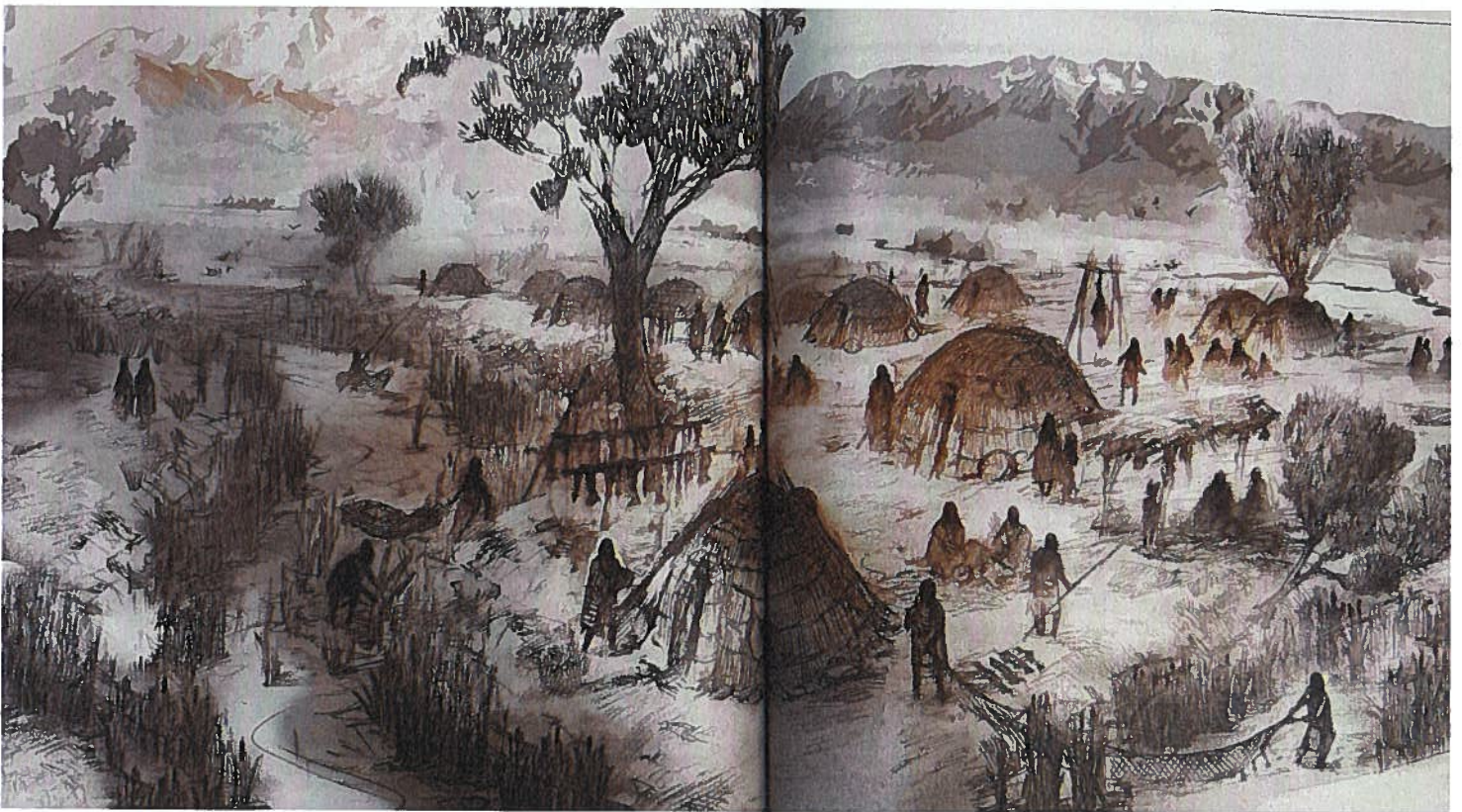


Image - A Timpanogots Village on the banks of the Provo River with Mount Timpanogos in the background. Art by Eric S. Carlson, courtesy of First Peoples of Great Salt Lake: A Cultural Landscape from Nevada to Wyoming.

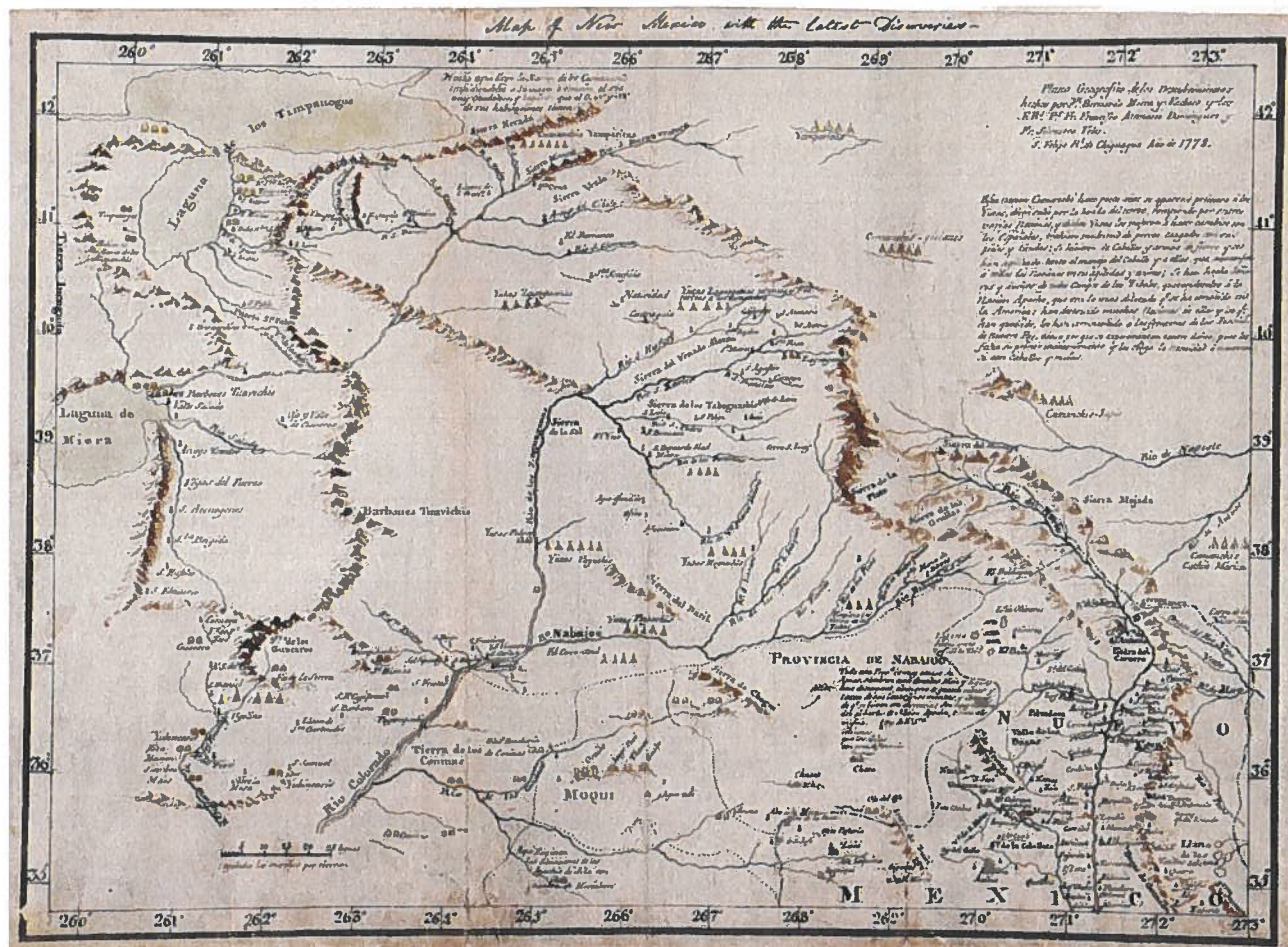


Image - Map created by Bernardo de Miera y Pacheco the cartographer for the 1776 Escalante Dominguez expedition. Mieras maps were of immense value to subsequent explorers engineering the region known to the Spanish as north-western New Mexico. Map 1778, courtesy of the National Archives.

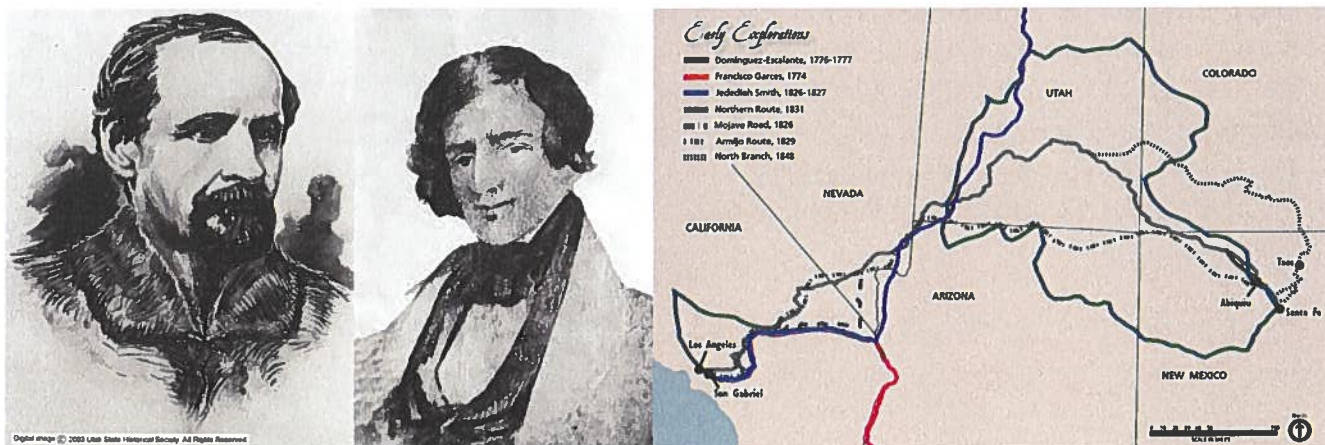


Image - Left, Etienne Provost, Provo cities namesake. Middle, Jedediah Smith early Utah explorer. Right, routes of the Old Spanish Trail.

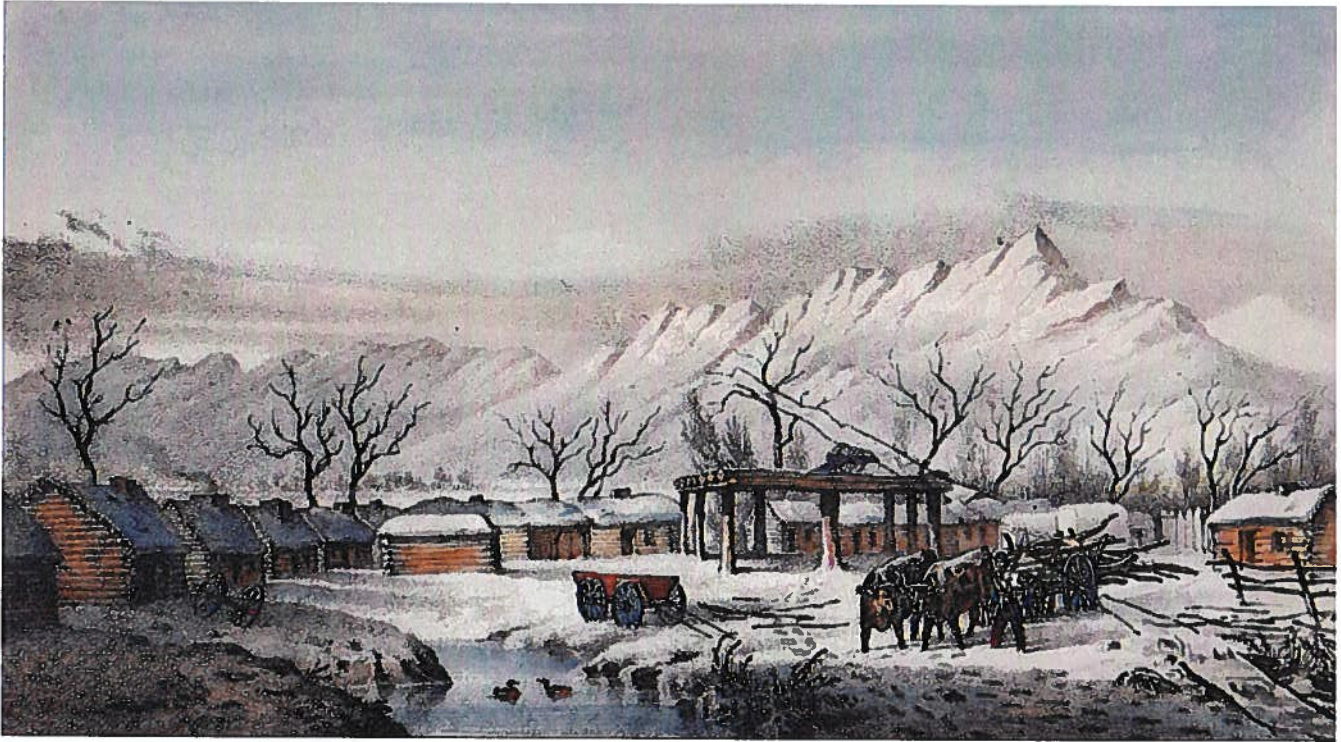


Image - Fort Utah on the Provo River by Capt Howard Stansbury ca. 1851.

In 1849 150 LDS pioneers were sent by Brigham Young to settle the provo valley. The fort they established consisted of several log cabins surrounded by a 14 foot palisade.

Image - Photo thought to be Ute war Chief Antonga, better known as Black Hawk.

The Utah Black Hawk war (1865-1872) was fought between Mormon settlers, United States military and some 16 native tribes including the Ute's, Paiutes, Goshutes, Navajos and others. It is estimated that 150 battles, skirmishes, raids and military engagements took place during the period of hostilities.





Image - The Tintic Standard Reduction Mill or Harold Mill ca 1920's. Courtesy of *Faith, Hope and Prosperity: The Tintic Mining District* by Philip F. Notarianni



Image - Orrin Porter Rockwell known as the Mormon Avenging Angel, famous Utah frontiersmen, lawman, outlaw bodyguard to Joseph Smith & Brigham Young. Below Rockwell's, Cherry Creek cabin built ca. 1865. Restored and moved to downtown Eureka, Utah.



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