

Where The Western Country Got Its Names.

ROMANCE ever will tenderly cling about the names which bodeck a country's geography. Whatever the use of names as means of identification, their other use—that of perpetuating the incidents and adventures of the country's cradle-days—will never cease to command absorbing interest.

Of the good ship Columbia which sailed in that river from the Pacific and left a trace of her visit in the name of the great waterway whose drainage area marks our Great Basin's northern edge, we shall always want to know.

And of how Hat Island out in the lake came by its name; and why the Wasatch carries its title, and whence the origin of Great Salt Lake, are questions of interest to those who, dwelling near them, are intimate in their acquaintanceship.

No western state can boast of so great a diversity of name sources as can Utah.

If Idaho in the name of Boise feels an echo from the old days of British occupation, when the masters of the fur trading business took out of western America a wealth destined to display itself in the ostentations of the British court Utah can match this influence in the name of our Bear River and our Ogden canyon and river and city.

Is Oregon proud of her American explorers who left her Astoria? Utah has names to recall their brother, Captain Ashley, who left us Ashley valley and Ashley fork of the Green river, and carried on the story of their discoveries toward the Spanish frontier as they carried them toward the British.

Will Washington boast of her good old Siwash Chief Seattle? Utah had her Tintic, and Uintah.

To the days of the government explorers and their military escorts, Colorado claims a lineage of direct descent in Pike's Peak, but here too, Utah has the same fellowship in our Fremont and Stansbury islands. Would California cling to her padres and the memory of the Santa Fe caravans? We, too, had our Father Escalante, and the "old Spanish trail," to Monterey led through southern Utah and its travelers gave the names that many of the streams along its route still carry.

To tell whence came more than a few of our geographical names is impossible in this article, partly because as yet little of the data has been collected. The small beginning here made is in the hope that more information will follow along the trail now breaking. Many a pioneer sat in at the incidents resulting in the names of many of our towns and valleys and rivers and mountains, and the narratives of all such would enrich the writings of such a story as this at a future date. Whatever our fellowship with the explorers and trappers, the British, and Spaniards, most of our Utah names date back to the great movement of settlement and soil conquest which honor the names of our pioneers, and beautiful achievements with success.

An interesting thing to trace is the vicissitudes through which many of our important titles passed before finally reaching the state in which they are now known.

UTAH LAKE.

Take Utah lake, for instance. The diary of Father Escalante, which is now in the Museum of the City of Mexico, and a transcript of which is soon to come permanently into the possession of a Utah historian, shows him as seeking the "land of the Timpanogos," where he has been told he will find Indian pueblos similar to those of the Zunis and Moquis. We find him after leaving Santa Fe, July 23, 1776, finally striking the head waters of the Provo and working down it to the valley, whose expanse of water he formally christened the lake of "Nuestra Señora de la Herce de los Timpanogos."

To the student of old English manuscripts dating back to Chaucer's day and thereafter it is nothing surprising when a single word finds half a dozen spellings in a single page of manuscript. Therefore the Spanish scribe of Father Escalante's visit is to be fully forgiven for treating us to a dozen or more spellings of the word we now love to honor in the most beautiful of all our Wasatch mountain peaks. It is well known that Artist Hafen, whose delight above all other delights is to picture this mountain in its varying moods, objects to the spelling of the name as ordinarily given, and indeed this is Timpanogos, instead of as the older most common form. Escalante's spellings are besides "Timpanogos," "Timpanogols," "Timpanoutzils," "Timpanosis," and "Timpanois."

Then there drifts into American lore stories about the wonderful Timpanogos lake of the west, mingled with the peculiar data about the Great Salt Lake. The result is that a map printed in 1896, reproduced by Bancroft, places Timpanogos lakes north of "Lake Salado," and much bigger than it, the apparent confusion being that of trying to make descriptions of the Great Salt Lake fit the Escalante descriptions of Lake Timpanogos, which had found their way east over the old Santa Fe trading trail.

Until 1825, Lake Timpanogos seemed to thrive unmolested in whatever descriptions of the west were written. Then came Ashley from his ill-fated Green river trapping and exploring expedition, to build his trading post on the lake shore for which, in 1827, a wheeled cannon was brought overland from St. Louis.

With Ashley came a whole series of new names, often replacing names already given by the Spaniards. One of these was "Lake Ashley" for Lake Timpanogos. Lake Ashley thrived in its turn—it was always written as being at the mouth of the Timpanogos river, which became one of our most famous western streams, and with it came the name of "Ute Outlet," for Jordan river, a name which the pioneers used before selecting that of Jordan river for the stream.

Then came Fremont and with him the name of Utah lake. Fremont, always careless of the rights of previous explorers, had already lifted the name of Ogden river from the Humboldt, and re-christened it with its present title. So when he came over the trail from southern California, in May, 1844, and camped on the 24th of the month, on the shores of Lake Timpanogos, he knew not the christening formerly given it by its Spanish discoverer, and knew not also his own American predecessor of a score of years before. Therefore writing in his journal of the lake he put it thus:

"Early the next day we came in sight of the lake of the Utahs; and as we descended the broad bottoms of the Spanish Fork three horsemen were seen galloping towards us who proved to be the Utah Indians,—scouts from a village which had encamped near the mouth of the river. . . . It is a lake of note in this country, under the domination of the Utahs who resort to it for fish."

Fremont wrote the name "Utah" upon his map just as he had in his diary, and thus came about the present title, the third which the lake had known.

SPANISH TITLES.

The handling of Spanish names in the orthographies of other languages has produced in its day some curious spellings. The word "Utah" is one of them.

When first the Americans came west they found Spanish names for much that was here, and they spelled them as best they could from the pronunciation given. Our word "Kanyon," is one

that has recently been rescued from its trapper spelling and returned to its original, "canyon." Before they encountered this name the trappers had that of "pass," "defile," "hole," "gap," and "park."

Lieutenant Gunnison, for instance, writing a description of the Mormon country put it that "between the ridges . . . in some places the ranges are abruptly terminated for a space leaving a gap termed a kanyon, or pass, according to the width of the break in the mountain. These are the names given by the trappers who were the pioneer white men of those solitudes."

Just such a grasping at a Spanish spelling gave once the "Youaba" valley to Juab and once it was "Yutax," instead of "Utah." Father Escalante gives us the first use of the word when he mentions reaching a "rancheria of the Yutas" on the Grand river, from whom he tried to secure a guide to the country of the Timpanogos, of whom he had heard from the Zunis and Moquis. In 1829, Thomas J. Barnham crossed the country to Oregon, by way of Pueblo, Colo., Brown's Park, then known as Brown's Hole, and Soda Springs. He spoke in a book of his adventures of meeting with trappers who told him of the "Spanish Yutes," and extensive trade with Santa Fe.

Before settling down to its present form we find it "Eutaw," "Utau," "Youta," and "Euta."

Before "Sanpete" had fully evolved into its present state, Jedediah Smith had noted the "Sampatche" Indians dwelling in that valley and General Connor, in the Bear river campaign had led his forces against Chief Sanpete whose name still survives in the name of a range of hills and a creek.

That a heavy Spanish influence on the Utah names south of Utah lake existed, it is apparent from even the most modern maps. Many of these names come from the trading era, however, and do not date back to the Escalante visit. Escalante named Provo river the Purisima; the Grand river, St. Javier; the White river, San Clemente; the Green river, San Buenaventura; the Uintah, San Cosme. His name of San Rafael for the Green river, still remains in the name of an important branch entering it southeast from Castel Dale, where it takes its rise.

FABLED BUENAVENTURA.

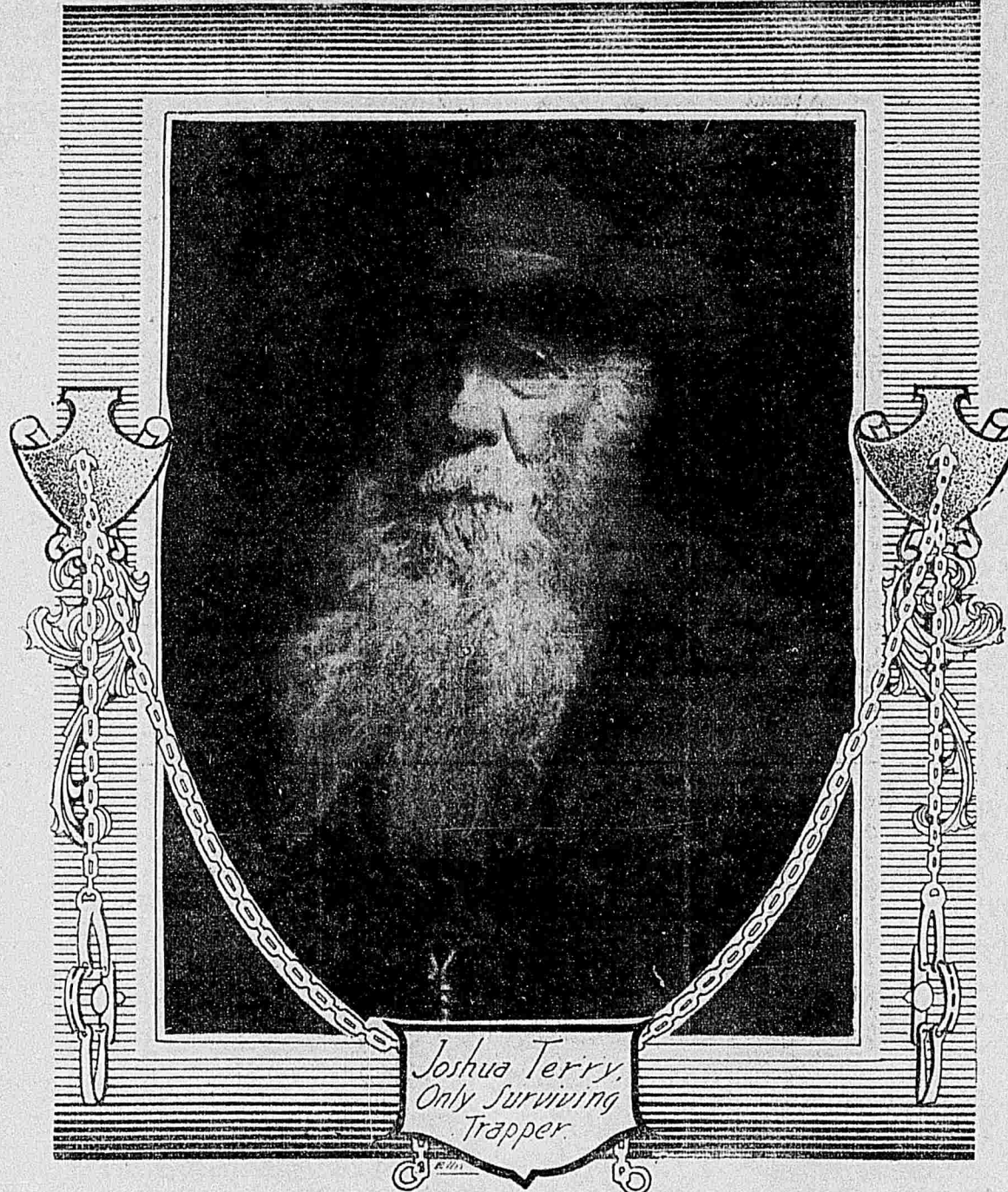
The loss of the name of the Buenaventura river from western geography is one of its most serious misfortunes. At one time the river was the most famous in intermountain geography. It was supposed, and was represented on many maps as running from Great Salt Lake west to the ocean. Many explorers, working south from the Dalles, Oregon, and the Columbia country, worked in the hope of intercepting it to get through to the coast. Not until so great an explorer as Fremont searched in vain for it and branded it as a mythical river after going down the whole length of the Sierra Nevada range, did it cease to figure in geography. Father Escalante pinned the name onto the Green river; some maps show it running into Utah lake. In California, the Sacramento, formerly bore that name, and now it has passed completely out of the geographies.

FAMOUS GREEN RIVER.

The name of the Green river is American, Fremont refers to it as the "Rio Verde of the Spaniards," but he has evidently confused the river with the Sierra Verde mountains, which meant "Sage hen," the same Yutas styling the Grand "Sage hen," from them also comes "Kanab," which is their word for willow; Toquer, meaning "black," was applied from them to Toquer-ville, because of the black volcanic lava in the country.

In naming Green river men figure who played an important part in American trapper history. Green was a Rocky Mountain Fur company man, as was Ethne Provost, from whom Provo river is named in commemoration of an Indian battle he fought there in 1823. Beckwith plateau, just north of Green river, commemorates Jim Beckwith, retaining his correct name which he utilized in all its dignity when writing a book to commemorate his actual adventures and many too fanciful ever to have been actually experienced.

The Americans came onto the river in 1825, and Ashley thought to float down it to the Rio Grande, of which it was then considered to be a tributary, and thus back to the states. He was wrecked at what are now called Disaster Falls, a name given by Major J. W. Powell when, 44 years later, he was wrecked at the same place, in attempting to float down it to the Pacific. Ashley Fork is the place where Ashley gathered his wrecked property together, and headed overland towards Utah lake. Henry's Fork, which enters just on the Utah line, is from Major Andrew Henry, from whom Henry's lake, and Henry's Fork of the Snake are named. He was Ashley's field commander, and his partner in his original mountain exploits. An employee who later became a partner in the company, was Jim Bridger, who outlasted all of his companions and left his name on Fort Bridger, as well as on Bridger Lake in the Yellowstone. In the days when the "Lost Josephine" mine was being worked by Spaniards, it ever the legend of the mine had a status in fact, the



HOW JIM BRIDGER DISCOVERED GREAT SALT LAKE.

Joshua Terry, the intimate friend of the veteran Wasatch trapper, guide and explorer, in response to a request from the "News" to tell whether Jim Bridger ever narrated to him the incident of his discovery of Great Salt Lake, replied:

"Yes, I have heard Jim Bridger tell many times of discovering the lake. He was conscious of his discovery and was proud of it as long as I knew him."

"He told me that his company of trappers came west in the summer of 1823, and wintered in 1823-1824 in the Green river valley. They moved on down to Bear river, exploring and trapping. Finding themselves on a river that seemed to flow both north and south a little distance apart, they wondered where it went to anyhow, and Bridger started off southwest to find out. He followed it down to the lake and tasted the water, finding it so salty it choked him. He went back and told the camp that he had discovered an arm of the ocean. They asked him if he saw any tides, and when he said no, that it didn't run tides, then they said it could not be the ocean, but must be a lake. Next spring it was explored in boats, and they found out it was a lake without an outlet."

Joshua Terry, whose picture is reproduced above, is one of the last of the mountaineers. Originally a Utah Pioneer, he went into the mountains after the failure of the first Utah crops, and attached himself to Bridger's forces.

Spanish traders who came from Santa Fe via the Sanpete valley, made their rendezvous for trading on Spanish Fork canyon. Ashley's men made theirs on the American Fork, it is thought, and thus the two names.

Only recently is it that "fork" has gained its restrictive meaning of a branch canyon. Ashley, when he sold out to three subordinates in 1826, dated the bill of sale, "Near the Grand Lake west of the Rocky Mountains," which was a name feeling towards the one at present applied to this water. In 1824, Jim Bridger and a party of Ashley's men had named the present Cache valley, "Willow valley." After a looting of Peter Sken Ogden's caches of British furs there in 1826, the valley was re-christened, "Cache valley," and in 1826 and 1827, it was the Rocky Mountain Fur company's rendezvous, replacing the Green river valley as the center of its operations.

How to describe Great Salt Lake was evidently a serious problem in terminology to General Ashley as illustrated by his extract from a letter he wrote in 1831. "In this way," he put it (in describing his method of traveling through the mountains) "I have marched parties of men the whole way from St. Louis to the vicinity of the Grand lake which is situated about 150 miles down the waters of the Pacific ocean, in 78 days. In the month of March, 1827, I fitted out a party of 60 men, mounted a piece of artillery, (a four pounder) on a carriage which was drawn by two mules; the party marched to or near the Grand lake beyond the Rocky mountains."

Washington Irving, a few years later (1834), wrote of Captain Bonneville that he has "pushed his enterprises into tracts before but little known and has brought considerable quantities of furs from the region between the Rocky mountains and the coasts of Monterey and Upper California, on the Buenaventura and Timpanogos rivers."

YAMPAH A ROOT.

The Yampah river, like our Yampa smelter, and the Yampah Utes all take their name from a particular kind of edible root styled by the Indians "yampah" and a favorite food both for Indians and for trappers when short of meat. Fremont at times fell back upon this root for food and has attested its value.

SOME JOKE NAMES.

Sometimes history has played facetiously with the incidents on which the names of our country are based. It has already been noted that the Americans had difficulty with some of the Spanish names. Such a difficulty with an Indian name gives us the Muddy valley and Muddy river, which a disgusted populace is just changing to the Moapa valley and Moapa river, to rid itself of its previous cognomen. The Muddy river is one of the clearest in the country. It rises from a spring and flows through hard clay banks into which no silt or dirt finds its way from causes of soil disintegration. Why then the name? The valley of the Muddy was in its wild state filled with mesquit beans. The Indian word for them was "moody." Americans picked it up by pronunciation, styled it "Muddy" and created a name, which like the "Stinking water," in Wyoming, has had its day. Walker, the Indian chief, drew his name from the same source. The writer has Joshua Terry's word for it that his name was "Ohakar," a strictly Ute word meaning, "Yellow Iron."

The Virgin river, styled "Rio Virgin," possibly has an American instead of a Spanish origin. One Virgin, and he was wounded at that river, and killed a little farther on during a trip that left its record in many geographical names from Utah to Oregon via Los Angeles. There seems to be no record of the Spanish use of the name, and the river is west of the usual trading route into Utah along which the Spanish names mostly lie. A SERIOUS JOKE.

Of all joke names, however, that of the La Salle National forest in Utah is the most extraordinary. As a case of nature making a record, it almost makes a record. Recently the forest service decided to name the forests after noted explorers. In Utah they had a La Salle forest on their hands. The words were Spanish. They belonged to a little river in southern Utah, so named because it was brackish. The name was given by explorers, not even remotely connected with the enterprises that brought La Salle the Frenchman, down the Mississippi before the French and Indian war terminated that western American development was to be in the hands of Anglo Saxons, and not the French.

And this summer somebody in Washington, let us hope it was some fourteenth assistant clerk of the bureau—transformed the Spanish "La Salle" in to the French name "La Salle," and a sober statement came forth from the forestry department stating that this Utah forest had been named in honor of the note French pioneer and explorer who came down the Mississippi and discovered some of the rivers running into it!

Before recently books on the trapping era were brought out there was a confusion of claims concerning Provo river. Stansbury notes the name of "Prova" for a horse that Fremont rode styled the river "Provaux" in his report, thinking thus to construct a perfect orthographic creation. Then came a story which Whitney's history notes, that Fremont's splendid charger died there, and the name was given in its honor. The Fremont diary shows however, that Fremont's "Prova," was abandoned in the Sierras in the fall of 1843, when he had found himself entangled in snowdrifts while hunting for the mythical Buenaventura for a passage to the coast.

PIONEER NAMES.

Of the names dating to the pioneer days, the first in importance of course is Emigration canyon, whose clear white trail of pioneer days is still visible. Then comes Salt Lake City. Along the pioneer route the first settlers had passed Independence rock, named by the same party as Ashley's trappers who discovered the south pass, and over-ran Utah's river systems. They had passed chimney rock, so styled probably by the same people, Grand Island and had traveled through the South pass, formerly styled "Southern pass," which had first in recorded history, been used by a party working their way out of Utah under General Ashley, it having been observed by Ethne Provost on coming out this way, and he in turn, having given his chief directions as to how to return east through it.

GREAT SALT LAKE CITY.

The name of Great Salt Lake City was not indigenous to the soil. It was a formal selection of the council of the twelve apostles, formally ratified in a general conference held Aug. 22, 1847.

At the same conference, and by the same ratification, the names of our canyons were given. On motion of Heber C. Kimball the name of "Western Jordan" was given to what had been the Santa Ana of Escalante, and the "Ute Outlet" of Ashley. Brigham Young selected the names of City Creek, Mill Creek, Red Butte, and Big Canyon creek. They were all descriptive in character, and only one of them has been changed. This was Big Canyon creek, which became Parley's canyon after a road had been opened leading out of it by Parley P. Pratt. The opening of the road, which carried for a time the name of "Golden Pass," was formerly celebrated on Independence day, 1850.

The names of the mountains through which these canyons pass are not yet worked out as to their origin. Neither the name Wasatch or Uintah is of long usage, as western names go. Farnham's narrative mentions the Uintah mountains as the "Anhuas" range. Uintah, a famous Indian chief of the late forties and fifties, probably gave his name to the range, while the name "Wasatch," or "Dahsatch," as it formerly was spelled without explanation except for a knowledge that it is Indian in origin, and of unknown meaning.

SOME LEGENDS.

Exploring parties began to hunt through Utah from almost the first day of the pioneer encampment in the valley. The first one was to the northern benchlands, and it gave us the name of "Ensign Peak" to the mountain about which a "Mormon legend" has always clung. The name came to this mountain, July 25, 1847, when Brigham Young remarked "a good place to raise an ensign," as he reached its summit in company with a group of his friends. The well known legend regarding this event is totally without basis in fact, as is also a legend about the "Mormon Arrowhead," from which the Salt Lake Route

takes its name. One is to the effect that Brigham Young had seen Ensign peak in a dream, and recognized this as the valley of the chosen land upon emerging from Emigration canyon; the other is that the San Bernardino Mormon colonists were lost in the Mojave desert and upon praying for water, arose from their prayers to behold the great Arrowhead of the San Bernardino mountains pointing the way to springs at its base which the Saints located upon approaching it.

"From Utah's second pioneer exploring company comes the names of 'Black Rock.' It too was led by Brigham Young, and left the City Creek, or upper Pioneer camp, July 27, at 9 a. m. heading west across the valley to noon at the spring now utilized for the Garfield smelter's water supply. The 'sombre color of the lone basaltic cap on the lake shore' suggested the name as noted by Willford Woodruff.

"Temple Square," came from the incident of Brigham Young's sticking the end of his cane into the ground on the evening of Wednesday, July 23, and declaring: "Here will be the temple of our God."

Parley P. Pratt, poet and explorer as well as hymn writer and missionary, was destined to do much wandering over Utah that its valleys might be made known to the pioneers. Starting out for Utah lake to fish in the fall of 1847, he soon left the fishing to other sportsmen and made his way west through Cedar valley into Rush valley, thence into Tooele valley and then back to Salt Lake via Black Rock. Whether he found these names, or gave them upon entering the valleys he does not state in his journal. He however expresses his surprises at "discovering" the new valleys as if each was unknown to him until his approach to it.

MARYSVALE'S RIGHT NAME.

From W. P. Vance of Lund, Nevada, an interesting letter has been received protesting against the name "Marysvalle," for the southern terminus of the Rio Grande Western road in Utah: "Quite lately in the Deseret News," he writes "I noticed a request . . . as to the causes of the naming of certain valleys, streams, etc. As I am one of the remaining 12 pioneers you speak of, I thought I might make some statements of those early times. I arrived in the valley the 22nd of July, 1847 (with the advance company sent on by President Young under Orson Pratt.) Late in the fall of 1849, I think it was President Young sent a company of men under Parley P. Pratt to explore the southern part of the country. We went down Sanpete valley. Just beyond the little settlement of Manti, then just starting, we struck the Sevier river. We followed it up, up, up. Winter and snows came on, worse and worse. One day as we traveled on up I think it snowed about all day. Just in good time for camping we drove down into a beautiful little valley and it seemed so much more pleasant than away up there in the wind where the snow blowed around us so hard that the boys just jumped and shouted around and made so much joyful noise. So Brother Parley named it Marysvalle. If I understand correctly it is the place they call Marysvalle. If this is so it ought to be altered, you bet. There was no Mary there for it to be called after."

To comply with the wish of this veteran of the first pioneer camp will someday be an honored privilege of a Utah historic society. Meanwhile all that can be done is to set down his record here, where those who care to may preserve his protest.

In this same letter Pioneer Vance throws light upon the reasons for the name of Salt Lake for this city.

"President Young said," he writes "that aspiring men,—one of whom he named in particular, a talented man,—would be very likely to come on, build a city somewhere in the west, and try, by giving it some representative name to make it appear to be the main city of the country. To circumvent such a possibility he proposed to call our settlement Great Salt Lake City, Great Basin, North America. This was agreed to, so the city for years was called Great Salt Lake City till the territorial legislature restricted it down to just Salt Lake City. Now on account of the great rush, time and space has become too limited to tell the truth and give some things their proper names, so now instead of calling it a city they call it a lake. I'd like to see that stopped."

RESURRECTION CAMP.

Of this same expedition which Pioneer Vance mentions to southern Utah a lost name given by Parley P. Pratt is that of "Resurrection camp," commemorating an incident in which a snowstorm, arising in the night so buried all the sleeping explorers that when he dug his way out in the morning and called loudly the others began to appear from the snowdrifts as from a resurrection. "Parley's Park," near Park City is another remembrance of exploring days, which perhaps had an influence upon the naming of the mining camp as well as the meadow north of it. From David Lewis, the veteran trapper, whose narrative has been printed already in this paper, the writer takes this explanation of how the park happened to be discovered.

"I was out in the mountains with Parley Pratt," he said, "and we were working up through what was then called Big canyon, and we were well past the summit. It was along in the afternoon and just before the discovery Parley and I parted. We had run across fresh deer tracks heading toward what is now East canyon, and I decided to follow them while Parley said he would climb to a summit on our right, and there would wait for me."

"I bagged my deer after half an hour's trailing, and throwing the most appetizing portions over my shoulder went back to the mountain top where Parley had said he would wait. I did not find him but found a rock on which he had rested, and saw his footprint through a fresh snowfall, leading down the other side. I started along, and well down the mountain encountered him. He told me of a beautiful mountain park he had discovered off to our right. I told him that none of the old mountain trappers had ever known of such a park, and that I was confident it was a new discovery. I therefore said we should call it Parley's park. And Parley's park it has become."

The date was during the winter of 1848. The East canyon creek, where the deer was killed, lost a trapper name when its present title replaced "Bauchman's creek." The Indian name for Parley's canyon was Obit-Koo-Kee-Chee.

PIPE SPRING'S MARKSMAN.

An interesting episode of the keen shooting days of Utah frontiersmanship resulted in the naming of Pipe Springs. The writer has the story from Ammon W. Tinney, from whom Tinney's gulch just over the Arizona line takes its name. "With a party of men bent on a missionary excursion to the Mojaves, I was camped at this spring when it was named," he said. "We had in our party Jim Davis, and two Levitt boys, one of whom was named Dudley. The Levitt boys were great gun men, and great braggarts too. They were telling at this particular camp about their prowess with the revolver, and Davis didn't like it. He made fun of their claims whereupon Dudley Levitt said: 'Jim Davis, I can take that pipe you are smoking, and stick it up in 25 paces. Then I can shoot through the open mouth of the bowl, and tear the back out without hurting the sides.' Davis's pipe was an expensive one and he hated

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