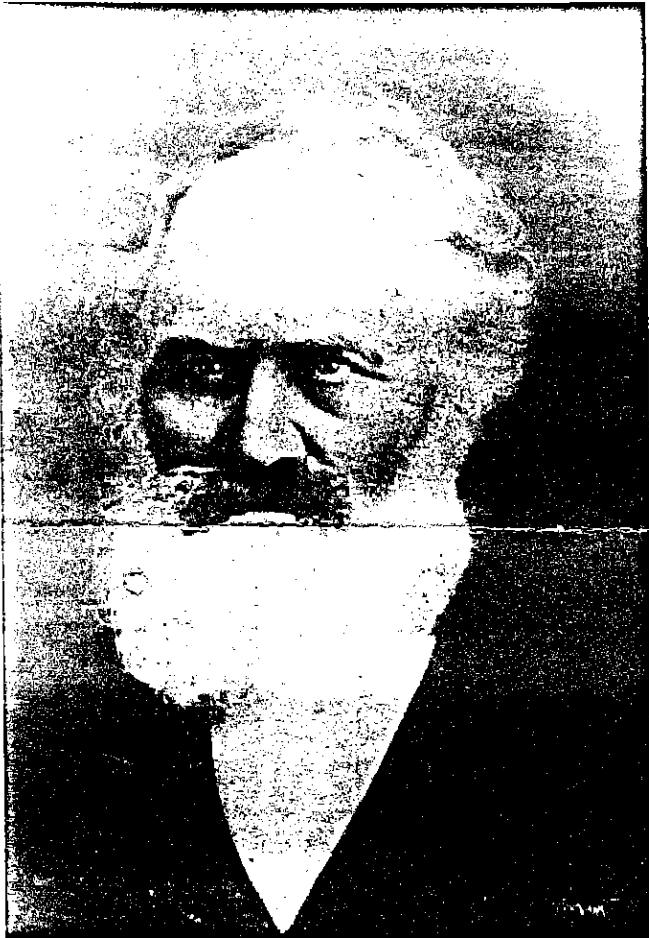


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## Salmon River settlers met with disaster in No. Idaho

By QUIG NIELSEN

A brave effort to establish a Mormon settlement in the Salmon River country in northern Idaho met with disaster and the settlers returned to Utah.

In 1855, Brigham Young called 27 young men, led by Thomas S. Smith of Utah's Davis County, to the Salmon River country, then a part of the Oregon territory but now in Idaho, to teach the Indians and to settle the country. Upon their arrival in June, they built a fort, which they named Fort Limhi after a Book of Mormon character. They gave the river in the area the same name.

The settlers immediately prepared the ground for the planting of crops. In September a frost killed the growing crops and later with the settlers running short of supplies, seven men were sent back to Utah, a distance of over 360 miles, to get food.

The hungry and frostbitten seven arrived in Ogden the day after Christmas and didn't return to Fort Limhi until March. After another summer of crop problems, another party had to be sent back to Utah for food and supplies.

Brigham Young with a large company of men, women and children made the long trip to visit Fort Limhi in 1857. He told the settlers they had come too far, but he was pleased with what they had accomplished. He promised to send more settlers and they arrived in October of 1857.

In February 1858 a band of Indians swooped down on the settlers' cattle and tried to steal them. The herders tried to stop the Indians and were fired upon. Others heard the shots and came to their aid. Two of the settlers were killed and five wounded.

Immediately after the attack and under cover of darkness, two men left on horseback to ride to Salt Lake to report what had happened and to get help. Brigham Young responded by sending at once 11 men and a little later 150 men with 15 wagons and some spare horses to move the settlers back to Utah. The settlement was abandoned, but the old fort still stands in the little town of Tendoy.

Source: Roberts, "A Comprehensive History of the LDS Church"; Exploring Idaho's Past.

(Quig Nielsen is an information officer for the Museum of Church History and Art in Salt Lake City.)