

SPRING CITY

Summary from Spring City historic link www.onlineutah.com/springcityhistory.shtml

Mormon colonists founded Springtown along Canal Creek in 1852. About forty Danish families joined the settlement giving it another name, Little Denmark. A fort was built, and settlers moved in from nearby Fort Hambleton (later Mount Pleasant) for protection from hostile Indians. Eventually, people left and moved to Manti. After the village was abandoned, the fort was burned.

Eventually several original founders of Springtown or Spring City returned to create a permanent town. Difficulties with local Indians continued until a resolution was reached in 1867. Spring City then grew, reaching a population of 850 in 1880. By 1900, Spring City reached its largest population of 1,230 people. This was roughly twice its present size.

Since its settlement, Spring City depended primarily on farming and raising livestock. Early settlers distributed land, dug irrigation ditches, farmed, harvested lumber, and raised cattle and sheep. With the arrival of the Rio Grande Western Railroad, Spring City's economy grew. It exported local products including native oolite stone, which was shipped to larger northern cities for use in the construction of fine buildings.

Spring City was settled by Mormons but was also home to Presbyterians, Methodists, and other religions. As the town grew, its residents built meetinghouses, schools, an amusement hall, a small group of business buildings along Main Street, and more than 200 residences in both Scandinavian and various American architectural styles.

Spring City has many historic buildings that still stand today. Since the population of Spring City decreased from 1900 to 1970, there was little reason to destroy older structures. Spring City's LDS meetinghouse, or tabernacle, city halls, Victorian elementary school, and bishop's storehouse are among its most important public buildings. Many public buildings and homes are examples of early log, adobe, and frame structures. Historic "urban" barns and other agricultural and livestock outbuildings sit within a few hundred feet of Main Street.

The town of Spring City was listed as a historic district in the National Register of Historic Places. In the mid-1970s, many buildings were restored both by local residents and by interested newcomers. Renovation has continued, and vacant buildings have now become business offices, stores, cultural centers, family homes, and artist studios. The restoration of historic buildings in Spring City has attracted many visitors and new residents resulting in a growth in population. Like all Utah cities, Spring City must balance the needs of all citizens as it continues to grow while preserving the historical character of the community.

Questions:

Why did the original settlers of Spring City move to Manti?

How did the early residents of Spring City make a living?

In what ways has historic restoration helped Spring City?

Not all people like to save old buildings. Why might some residents of Spring City disagree with historic preservation?