

THE DOMÍNGUEZ-ESCALANTE EXPEDITION ENCOUNTERS A BAND OF UTES

The Domínguez-Escalante expedition began in July 1776 and was led by two Spanish padres, Francisco Atanasio Domínguez and Silvestre Veléz de Escalante, who wanted to establish a trade route from the Spanish colony at Santa Fe to the newly founded colony on the west coast at Monterey. Spanish officials were also interested in finding potential converts to Christianity, exploring Spain's northern frontier, and learning of its peoples, plants, and animals. Spanish accounts of this expedition provided the earliest historical record of many of Utah's Native Americans.

“On the 29th, about ten in the morning, five Sabuagana Yutas, yelling loudly, let themselves be seen on top of some hills on the other side. We figured them to be those whom we had sent to be sought out, but as soon as they arrived where we were we realized that they were not from among those summoned. We gave them wherewith to eat and smoke, but after a long parley—its subject being the quarrels they had been having this summer with the Yamparica Comanches [possibly Comanche, Eastern Shoshone, or a different band of Ute Indians]—we could not draw out of them anything useful for our plan, because theirs was to fill us with fear by exaggerating the danger to which we were exposing ourselves of being killed by the Comanches if we continued our course. We refuted the validity of these pretenses, by which they were trying to stop us from going ahead, by telling them that our God, who is everyone's, would defend us if we should happen to run into these foes.”

Fray Angelico Chavez, trans., *The Domínguez-Escalante Journal: Their Expedition through Colorado, Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico in 1776*, ed. Ted J. Warner (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1976), 27.

HEINRICH LIENHARD DESCRIBES THE SALT LAKE VALLEY

Heinrich Lienhard, a young Swiss immigrant, traveled through the Salt Lake Valley with an emigrant train in 1846. He wrote in his journal of the impressive natural resources that the Salt Lake Valley seemed to offer.

On the 7th [of August 1846] we reached the flat shore of the magnificent Salt Lake, the waters of which were clear as crystal, but as salty as the strongest salt brine. It is an immense expanse of water and presents to the eye in a northeasterly [northwesterly] direction nothing but sky and water. In it there are a few barren islands which have the appearance of having been wholly burnt over. The land extends from the mountains down to the lake in a splendid inclined plane broken only by the fresh water running down from ever-flowing springs above. The soil is a rich, deep black sand composition [loam] doubtless capable of producing good crops. The clear, sky-blue surface of the lake, the warm sunny air, the nearby high mountains, with the beautiful country at their foot, through which we on a fine road were passing, made on my spirits an extraordinarily charming impression. The whole day long I felt like singing and whistling; had there been a single family of white men to be found living here, I believe that I would have remained. Oh, how unfortunate that this beautiful country was uninhabited!

Heinrich Lienhard's journal, as quoted in William Mulder and A. Russell Mortensen, eds., *Among the Mormons: Historic Accounts by Contemporary Observers* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1973), 224.