

wintered on the Arkansas River, a few of the sick and some families left by the Mormon Battalion, being unable to proceed with them to the Pacific—numbering altogether about 150—arrived here. They then began to feel that they were quite a populous settlement, as they counted in the neighborhood of some four hundred persons. They laid out this Temple Block, and dedicated it to the Lord. It really was one of the most barren spots they ever saw. However, they asked the Lord to bless the land and make it fruitful. They built a dam and made irrigation ditches. Some of their number lacked faith under those trying circumstances, and subsequently turned away and went to other parts of the world.

That fall—the fall of 1847—there came in here 680 wagons loaded with families. They built the fort commenced by the pioneers on the land, a portion of which is now occupied by A. O. Smoot in the 6th Ward of this city, the whole only covering about thirty acres. They dwelt in this contracted space that no temptation should be presented to the Indians to commit depredations.

During the winter they prepared a systematic plan for the irrigation of the land, for they knew nothing about it previously. They were compelled to ration out their food in small allowances, for they had no way to get more until it grew, and it required a great deal of faith on the part of the people to remain here and run the risk of procuring supplies from the earth. In the winter one or two hundred of the brethren from the West arrived almost without provisions, having been discharged from the Mormon Battalion without rations or transportation to the place of their enlistment. They explored a new route from California. Some of them

passed on to their families in Winter Quarters, suffering much for the want of provisions by the way. Many of them remained here, using as food everything that possibly could be used. The Saints divided with the battalion their scanty allowance of food. During the next spring many hundred acres of land were planted. There was, however, a pest here that they had never seen anywhere else. After the nursery of twenty thousand fruit trees had come up and the fields were green and there was a good prospect of grain being raised, there came down from the mountains myriads of large black crickets, and they were awfully hungry. The nurseryman went home to dinner, and when he returned he found only three trees left; the crickets had devoured them. The brethren contended with them until they were utterly tired out, then calling on the Lord for help were ready to give up the contest, when just at that time there came over from the Salt Lake large flocks of gulls, which destroyed the crickets. They would eat them until they were perfectly gorged, and would then disgorge, vomiting them up, and again go to and eat, and so they continued until the crickets had entirely disappeared, and thus by the blessing of God the colony was saved. I believe the crickets have never been a pest in this vicinity to any serious extent since. This we regard as a special providence of the Almighty.

The early settlers did not know how to irrigate the crops properly and the result was that their wheat, the first year, was most of it very short, so short that it had to be pulled up by the roots; but singularly enough there was considerable grain in the ear, and they raised enough to encourage them to persevere in their experiments, for their labors were only experiments at that early day