

Along the Old Utah Highway 91

Jeannette Morrell*

Well, now, there's Ogden, a railroad town
Where the smoke smears everything rusty brown.
Ogden's Hole it was, 'way back when,
And the hunters and trappers, them lonely men,
They cached their furs there and sometimes their food
Where Peter Skene Ogden he told 'em they should.
It couldn't 'a' looked like much of a place
With the sand and the sagebrush, and only a trace
Of old Salt Lake shinin' 'way out west
Like a piece o' shirt through a dirty vest,
But the railroads come and it built up fast;
There was plenty o' folks when they counted 'em last,
And that wouldn't set well with old Peter Skene
Who liked enough space to spit between.
And the furs ain't cached in the Hole no more:
They're cached in the windows of some big store.
Brigham City? Oh, that's the place
That was named for the Prophet Joseph.
That's a Mormon joke—not a likely joke
For the outside folks I knows of,
But President Smith and President Young
Has both had a plenty o' praises sung,
And it ain't very likely they'd quarrel up yonder
Where they got the eternal progression to ponder,
Leastways not about Brigham, a little space
That's a Canada Honker's resting place

And not much else. There's another story
That's been told hereabouts till it's kinda hoary,
But outside of Utah not one percentile
Knows that in Utah, a Jew's a Gentile.
From Brigham you take the mountain road
Up over the Sardine pass—
A narrow ledge with a nasty drop,
And you daresn't hurry, you daresn't stop,
Till you come on through and over the top
Out onto the valley grass.
And there's Hyrum and Mendon and Wellsville there
And a town called Paradise—
A little hump in the valley floor
That nobody'd look at twice.
All I can make out is, they named it to set there
'Cause they figgered they'd crossed over hell to get there.
Then Logan all peaceful and quiet and still
With a temple set high on a grassy hill,
And a college nested where mountains comes
And a neat little river jest bumbles and hums.
Brother Brigham, he sent folks from Salt Lake City
To settle the place, and it seems right pretty
How it's still today pretty near how they made it
With Lombardy poplars and aspens to shade it.
Well, that's near as fur as this highway can go
'Cause a piece down the road ya hit Idaho.

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