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The Historical North End of Winter Quarters

Recent research, to show at the new Mormon Trail Center in

northeast Omaha, makes the north end of historic 1846-1848 Winter

Quarters even more interesting. Principal sites (locations only,

with the exception of the mill) include: 1) Winter Quarters Mill,

2) Brigham Young home, 3) Council House, 4) North Mormon Ferry,

used by upwards of 25,000 LDS pioneers and, perhaps as many as

five times that number of California Gold Rushers, Oregon emi-

grants, and Great Plains settlers, 5) starting point of the 1847

Pioneer trek to the Salt Lake Valley, 6) elevated Mormon artil-

lery positions to protect Winter Quarters, 7) protective picket

fence hemming Winter Quarters to the Missouri River.

All of these sites are within a quarter-mile radius of Exit

13, Interstate Highway 680, just west of the Missouri River. They

are adjacent to a graceful arc of about five acres of unused,

undeveloped grassland, bordered by good, well-traveled streets,

owned by Metropolitan Utilities District.

This north end of Winter Quarters, very close to the North

Mormon Ferry, includes sites of the Brigham Young home, of the

Council House, and of the surviving mill, was where most of the

traffic, decision-making and contact with Native Americans took

place from September 1846 to May 1848.

The Council House was center for church, civic, social, and

educational activities. Very near here, yet undetermined, was the

north end of the picket fence which securely

hemmed Winter Quar-

ters to the Missouri River. Here is where critically wounded Omaha

Indians came to Brigham Young's home after a midnight attack upon

them by Ioway Indians northwest of Winter Quarters.

Jenny Lund of the Museum of Church History and Art, in search

of data on Winter Quarters locations to display at Mormon Trail

Center, discovered record of LDS artillery positions on the loess

hills north of Winter Quarters. She also believes the old report

of Winter Quarters streets running 22½° west of north was a plan

another site before the historic Winter Quarters site was

chosen. Armed with this information, Sister Lund finds the roads,

river landings, and other historic knowns of Winter Quarters now

match our known topography of the area.

This was headquarters site of The Church of Jesus Christ of

Latter-day Saints from late September 1846 until May 1848. This

was where the Quorum of the Twelve sat in coun-

cil as the Saints

developed about 90 communities on both sides of the Missouri

River, and where Church leaders counseled far flung missionaries

and Mormon Battalion volunteers. This location, conveniently now

available, holds great promise to portray our heritage!