

were not intended to be permanent fixtures and “lack conformity with institutionalized patterns of society, such as grid patterns” (Buckles 1983:214). The camps were, however, more often longer-term sites than those of the Union Pacific and Central Pacific construction camps. As seen in photographs, the Mormon workers constructed tent platforms for their tents in addition to modified wiki-ups and other structure types, such as dugouts and log buildings (Figures 9.18 and 9.20). This sense of permanence was due in part to the fact that the Mormon workers were confined to sections of track that they were under contract to build. Further, the nature of the work involved with the construction of tunnels and bridges required more time than that of laying rail. The rail-laying camps moved more rapidly with the end-of-line changing daily. These crews lived in tents or on the “Hell-on-Wheels” camps and train cars.

While the location of many of the Mormon camps associated with the construction of the tunnels and bridges, as well as some of the grading camps through the canyons, can be identified from the historically documentation. However, many of the Mormon grading camps outside the canyons are not so easily located and identified in the historical record. What features and artifacts can be used to separate these camps from the other laborer’s camps and the notorious Hell-on-Wheels camp?

The use of tents (without platforms) and the construction of log structures do not appear to provide enough specific differences between Mormon camps and non-Mormon camps to indicate those that were occupied by the various groups. Log structures were constructed at various locations along the route by the railroads for telegraph and depot locations. In addition, the distribution of tents and structures across a site also do not show a pattern of organization that can be used to distinguish one camp from another. However, the presence of tent platforms and wiki-ups located near tunnels, bridges, and cut and fill areas suggests longer-term occupation, which in turn suggests that the site was occupied by Mormon workers. However, after the Mormon workers abandoned the site, how many sites were later occupied by the track laying teams?

In addition to structures, artifacts are often an indication of group occupation and possible identify. Thus the presence of or lack of certain artifacts would add to the identification of camps occupied by Mormon workers where historical documentation is lacking. However, this method presents problems of its own. Unlike many religious peoples who possess personal items that easily identify them as belonging to a particular group, such as crucifixes, stars of David, Masonic pins and rings; these are not present in Mormon culture during this period. Further, Mormons did not produce pottery or other items that are exclusive to their culture. However, there are differences in the three basic groups of construction crews. Sites occupied by Chinese laborers contain artifacts that are cultural unique, but not necessarily exclusive to them, such as rice bowls, Chinese coins, opium paraphernalia, oriental style smoking pipes, and other personal items. Sites utilized by the immigrant Irish work gangs may contain a higher content of liquor bottles, European style smoking pipes, and rosary beads and crucifixes. While Mormon sites are less likely to have artifacts that are distinctive to them, they should have a lack of artifacts that can be associated with one of the other two groups. For instance, they should be less likely to contain Chinese coins, opium paraphernalia, as well as religious artifacts, such as rosaries or crucifixes. Further, since Mormons were discouraged the consumption of alcohol