

Blizzard Lumber in Kamas

The valley's elevation made farming difficult, but the towns soon found a cash crop in timber. Great forest of pine covered the mountains and canyons above the towns. Timber camps were erected near the headwaters of Beaver Creek, the Provo and Weber Rivers.



The Myrick House

**Marion.** In the wide Kamas Valley, on S.R. 32, between Oakley and Kamas lies the town of Marion. One of the town's most imposing structures is a large, elaborately decorated home on the west side of the road. The Myrick House was built in 1901-02. Once owned by Marion Myrick Sorensen. Her name became the namesake of the town.



Francis DUP

**Francis.** Before settlements, Indians summer camped here to feed cattle, sheep, and horses. Their carvings in caves can be seen nearby. In 1870 Nathan Neibour homesteaded land here and built a cabin. He received a patent to the land in 1882 and a warranty deed in 1885. These were the first documents filed in this part of the Utah Territory. The LDS Ward was organized in 1889. This land was given to local Daughters of Utah Pioneers in 1940.



Woodland Cash store

**Woodland.** was settled in 1867 along the valley of the Provo River. The Woodland Cash store was built in the 1930s.

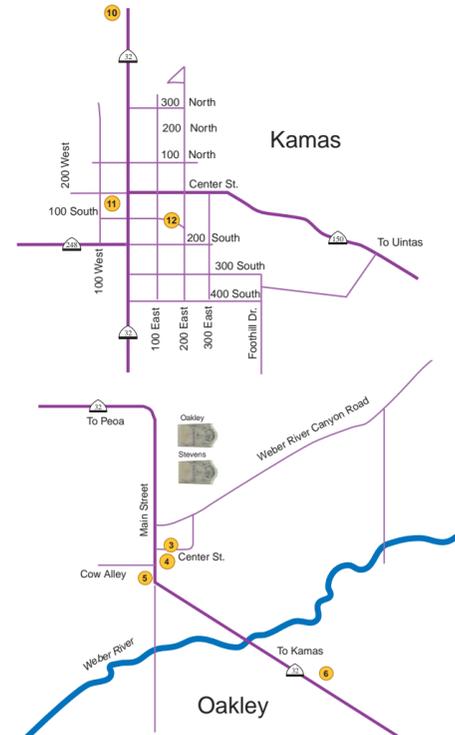
This area is teeming with wildlife such as sandhill cranes, moose and deer.



Cover photo: Janet Thimmes "Traffic on Main Street in Kamas"



=Cemetery  
 Nat. Reg. = National Register of Historic Places



**Peoa**

1. Fort Sage Bottom Monument. Bell hung atop the school for 60 years. Milepost 212, Hwy 32.
2. Peoa School House. Built 1927-1930. Peoa Cemetery.



**Oakley**

3. Oakley Church. Built in 1903, now City Hall. The bell hung on top of the old Oakley school from 1904-1938 Mile 18, Hwy 32.
4. Indian Trail Monument. Across from Oakley City Hall.
5. W. H Stevens Home. Built in 1884 of handmade brick. Corner Hwy 32 & Cow Alley.
6. Oakley Recreation Complex. 3400 N. SR 32



**Upper Weber**

7. Smith and Morehouse Reservoir. Campground, boat ramp, picnic area, mountain access. 12 miles from Oakley. Hwy 213.
8. Holiday Park. The Headwaters of the Weber River.

**Marion**

9. Original LDS Church. Built 1910-1914. Now Kamas Valley Co-op. Note the arched windows. Milepost 15.9, Hwy 32.
10. William and Martha Myrick House. (Nat. Reg.) Built 1902. Mile 14.4, Hwy 32.



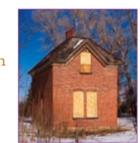
**Kamas**

11. Rhodes Valley Fort Monument and Daughters of Utah Pioneers Cabin. Site of fort built 1866 to protect 49 Families during Indian wars. Center & 1st West.
12. John Lambert home Monument. One of the first original settlers. 165 East 100 South.



**Francis**

13. Francis Settlement Daughters of the Utah Pioneers Cabin and Monument. One house west of flashing light at intersection Hwy 32 and Hwy 35.
14. Byron T. Mitchell House. (Nat. Reg.) Built 1897. West corner of intersection Hwy 32 and Hwy 35.



**Woodland**

15. Woodland Cash Store. Built 1930. 2734 E. Hwy 35.

**Uinta Mountains**

16. Samak (Kamas spelled backwards) Country Store. Best known for beef and turkey jerky Milepost 2.5, Hwy 150.
17. Kamas Fish Hatchery. Open to visitors. Self-guided tours. Hwy 150.
18. Beaver Creek Natural Arboretum. Natural area from Milepost 6 to 15, Hwy 150.

19. Duchesne Tunnel. Built 1940 - 1952. This 6 mile tunnel brings water from the Duchesne River to the Provo River. Milepost 18, Hwy 150. Closed in winter.
20. Uinta Falls. Milepost 12.6, Hwy 150. Closed in winter.
21. Trial Lake High Mountain Dams, & John Grix Cabin. Lakes built with pack animals and 2-wheeled carts between 1910 & 1940. Cabin built 1922 - 1925 during expansion of Trial Lake. Closed in winter.
22. Bald Mountain Pass. High point (10,678 ft). Views into the Uinta Wilderness and of Bald Mt. (11,947) Hayden Peak (12,473), Mt Agassiz (12,429). Milepost 29\*B, Hwy 150. Closed in winter.
23. Highline Trail. East west hiking trail the length of the Uinta Mountains. Milepost 31\*4 Hwy 150. Closed in winter.
24. Black's Fork Commissary. Log cabins from late 1870's. 16.5 north of Mirror Lake, right on north slope Rd. USFS 058 (4 wheel drive recommended), to Black's Fort (18.8 mi), then 0.6 miles north. Closed in winter.

**Picnic Area**

25. Beaver Creek. 15 picnic tables Milepost 8, Hwy 150.
26. Shingle Creek. Located just east of the camping area. 3 large picnic units. Will accommodate around 100 people. Milepost 9, Hwy 150.
27. Upper Provo Bridge. 6 picnic tables, accommodating up to 30 people. No water at site Milepost 23, Hwy 150.
28. Bald Mountain. 3 picnic tables, No water at this site. Milepost 28, Hwy 150.
29. Mirror Lake. 18 picnic tables. Milepost 32, Hwy 150.
30. Sulfur. One large picnic unit accommodating 60 people. Milepost 39, Hwy 150.
31. Beaver View. One large picnic unit accommodating 30 people. Milepost 41, Hwy 150.
32. Stillwater. 3 large picnic unit accommodating 100 people. Milepost 45, Hwy 150.

"Unless history lives in our present it has no future."

Please visit our  
**HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM**  
 60 NORTH MAIN  
 COALVILLE, UTAH  
[www.summitcounty.org/history](http://www.summitcounty.org/history)  
 Funded through Summit County Restaurant Tax  
 Utah State Historical Society

# The Kamas Valley and Uinta Mountains



Driving Guide

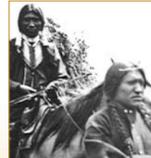
**Kamas Valley History** The land we call the Kamas Valley has a long and colorful history. Ours is just the latest chapter in a rich story that makes this land its home.

Scientists believe that the Kamas Valley was once covered with water. The land on which we now live was once at the bottom of a large inland lake. Fossils of aquatic animals have been found to prove this. The water slowly evaporated, leaving rich soil. The valley soon became covered with willow, cottonwood, alder, and river birch. Maple, oak, chokecherry, service berry, and hawthorn grew on the hills and through the valley. Sage brush was also very common.

With the abundance of plant life, animals were found in the valley in great numbers. The streams were filled with fish as well as fur-bearing animals such as the beaver and muskrat. Deer, elk, bighorn sheep, buffalo, rabbit and fox could be found in great number as well as bear, cougars, wolves, and coyotes.

It was no wonder that people found the Kamas Valley an inviting place. Indians were the first to come here. They did not build permanent homes, but stayed only for short periods of time, usually during the summer months. These Indians belonged to the Ute, Shoshone, and Snake tribes.

The Indians came to hunt and harvest wild animals, fish, gather seeds, berries, bulbs, and herbs. There seems to have been two large Indian camps in our valley, where the Indians would dry their meat and grind their seeds and berries. The larger of the two camps was located where Kamas Town now stands. A well beaten Indian trail came up the Provo River, across Kamas Valley, then northeasterly along the north side of the Uinta Mountains. To the Ute Indians, Kamas Valley was known as "Yambow" which means the valley of the herbs.



Thomas Rhodes

Thomas Rhodes was the first settler to come to Kamas Valley. He was sent in 1858 by Brigham Young. He came to build a home, raise livestock, hunt, trap, and look for gold. At first he brought 25 men with him. They built a stockade to protect themselves from the Indians. The stockade stood empty for two years; Thomas Rhodes and George W. Brown returned in 1860. They were the first people to spend a whole winter in Kamas Valley and were followed in the spring of 1861 by more pioneers. In time the valley became known as Rhodes Valley.

By 1866, relations with the Indians had become tense and the settlers built a fort for protection. The fort, built of logs, was 30 rods square with walls 16 feet high and gates on the east and west walls. Upwards of 47 families have been reported to have lived inside the fort. Sarah Ellen Neibaur

Next to come to our valley were the fur traders or trappers, sometimes called the Mountain Men. They came in the early 1820s for the purpose of collecting furs from the wild animals to sell in eastern markets. After snaring for many months, the fur trappers would all meet together at some rendezvous where they would talk, have contests and tell tall tales. One such gathering was held in 1825 on what was then known as the Kamas Prairie.

Some of the fur traders who attended were: J. W. Ashley, Jim Bridger, Jedediah Smith, William Sublett, John Weber and Entienne Provost. The Weber River was named after John Weber, and the Provo River was named after Entienne Provost. Jim Bridger also discovered the Great Salt Lake.



Jim Bridger

Although the fur traders practically cleared the streams of fur-bearing animals, they did do much to help the valley. They left trails that were followed by settlers that came later and built trading posts that grew into settlements.

O'Driscoll remembered twenty-seven families living there when she and her husband John arrived in June 1869.

The Indians made a raid on the settlers' horses and an Indian boy was captured, taken to the fort and chained. When the chains were removed the next morning, the boy escaped but was shot in the hand by one of the settlers. He was able, however, to rejoin his tribe on the Weber River. After several days, a large group of Indians returned to the fort and demanded food in payment for the injury. After receiving beef and other supplies and feasting with the settlers, they returned to their tribe.

There seems to be some disagreement as to how Kamas, the largest town in the valley, received its name. Some say the name came from a species of wild duck, the Camas ducks that nested there. Others say it came from the camas plants that grew in the meadows, the bulbs of which the Indians gathered for food. This plant belongs to the lily family and has narrow grass-like leaves and blue-star shaped flowers. Some people say the name "Kamas" came from the Mootka Indian word "Chanas," which means a small grassy meadow surrounded on all sides by hills. Still others claim that a man by the name of Kamas passed through the valley in the 1830s, before the coming of Thomas Rhodes.

William Ashley wrote in 1825, "[Kamas] is in many places fertile and closely timbered with pine, cedar, quaking-aspen, and a dwarfish growth of oak; a great number of beautiful streams issue from them on each side, running through fertile valleys richly clothed with grass." The thickly timbered Uintas provided tens of thousands of railroad ties.



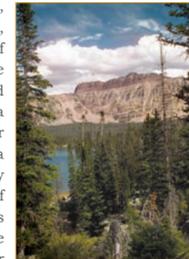
63 years after the original fort was deserted the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers built this hall on the same site which housed a museum. That same year 1933, they held a gathering of pioneer descendants.

Easy access to the nearby mountains made lumbering a natural local industry. Settlers cut and hauled logs to Salt Lake City to trade for provisions; the trip usually took at least four days.

In addition to the livestock, dairy, and lumber industries, Kamas has been, for a number of years, the headquarters of the Wasatch National Forest and plays an important role as a supply station for those hiking or camping in the nearby Uinta Mountains and the Granddaddy Lake region. Thousands of visitors travel through Kamas each year en route to the mountains. Another popular attraction is Kamas's annual Twenty-Fourth of July rodeo, an event which gives local cowboys a chance to show their skill before enthusiastic crowds.

The Scenic Byway area and other parts has been the backdrop for movies, commercials and TV shows such as Touched by an Angel, Walker Texas Ranger, Grizzly Adams and Jeremiah Johnson.

**Peoa.** This part of the valley was occupied by a tribe of Ute Native Americans called the Timpanohoges. In 1857 settlers came to where Peoa now stands. William W. Phelps drove stakes into the ground, and named the place Peoha, because he and his party had found a log with the letters PEOHA carved on it. It may have been the name of some tribe or trapper. In 1860, the first settlers came to Peoa under the direction of Brigham Young.



Ruth Lake

In 1861 a fort was built on a nearby creek, moved in 1866 to Sage Bottom, sometimes called Woodenshoe, one mile south of Peoa. Houses of split logs and clay were placed close together with a church in the center. The bell atop this monument was used for nearly 60 years in the schoolhouse. Drinking water was obtained from a well. Settlers from both Kamas and Peoa lived here during the Black Hawk War.



Stevens House

**Oakley.** In 1868 William Stevens became the first permanent settler in what was called Oak Creek, then renamed Oakley. In 1903 the Oakley City Hall served as the place of worship for the local Latter-day Saints. An original bell from the Oakley School was donated to the city and now hangs in the tower. Oakley is home to the annual Rodeo and the 4th of July celebration, rated as one of the best professional rodeos in the country.

**The Upper Weber Canyon** was a main route for Indians from Wyoming, across the Kamas valley and on to Utah Lake. Loggers cut wood for ties, lumber, and cord wood.



Smith & Morehouse Reservoir



Schoolhouse bell