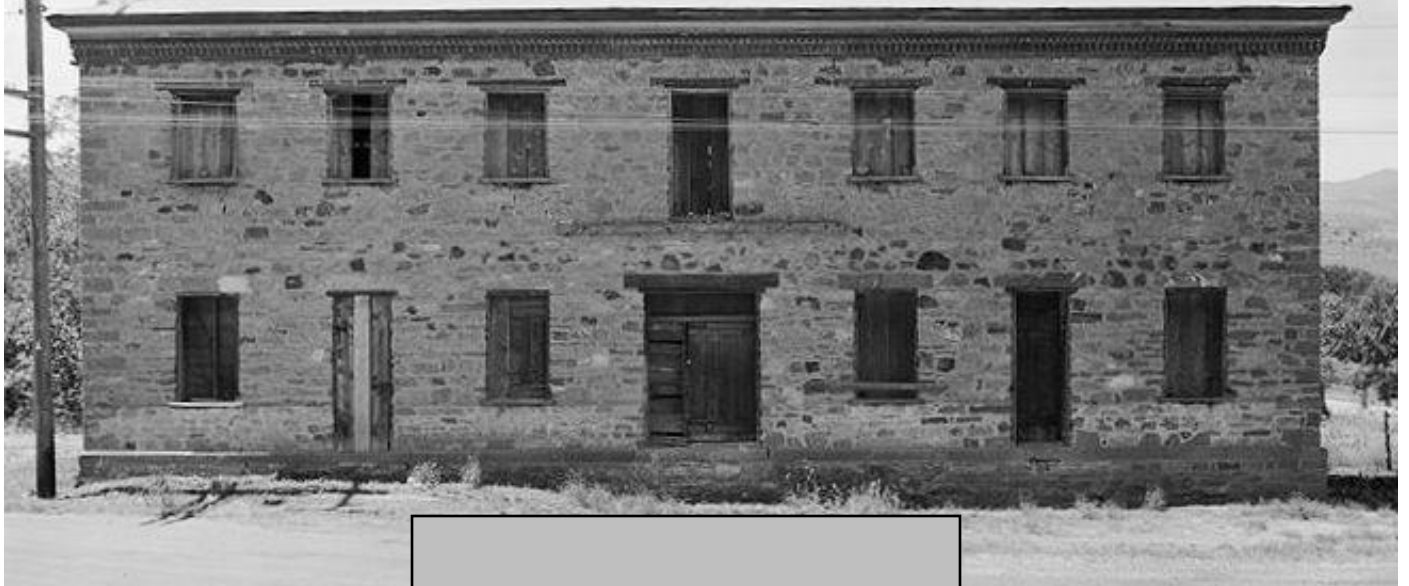


Tour Tip: Tour #4 will drive by the building still called “The Winery” in Toquerville

Toquerville

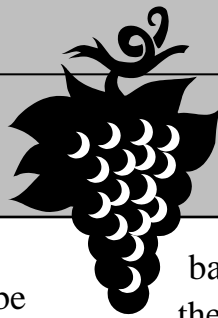
and Dixie’s Wine Industry



Adapted From Toquerville, Oasis in the Desert by Cherrie Gubler Naegle

Brigham Young advised the early settlers to plant grapes where they could and in May 1869 at the Saint George Stake Conference told them to make all the wine they could. He also however cautioned them against improper use and that it was to be used for the sacrament. Several areas in Dixie became known for their wine-making including Santa Clara, where the Swiss were considered some of the best winemakers.

The basement of John C. Naegle’s “Big House” was used to store big 500-gallon barrels of wine which were shipped in 40-gallon barrels by the wagonload.



But in Toquerville John C. Naegle, from Bavaria and a former member of the Mormon Battalion, became known as the greatest wine producer in southern Utah. He would press the grapes in the adjacent yard and store the finished product in the cool basement of his “Big House” in 500 gallon barrels. His “Nail’s Best” was said to be the best wine in the territory. Eventually the LDS Church ceased to use wine, the railroad brought in better quality wines, and the wine industry became part of history. 🍷

Tour Tip: Tour #4 will learn about the Indians who inhabited this area prior to the white man

Indian Inhabitants Before the White Man

In 1776 Fathers Dominguez and Escalante wrote encouragingly of their first encounter with Native Americans in the Toquerville area. They recorded finding crude but well-built arbors “with plenty of ears and shocks of maize which had been placed on top.” According to their report the Indians who called themselves “Parussis” used irrigation ditches to water several small fields of maize and squash.

In 1844

Captain John C. Fremont passed through the area and recorded corn, beans, squash, and melons being grown along the streambeds. He called the Native Americans “Digger Indians” because they used long sticks as farming tools and to spear lizards and other small creatures in the rocks.

John D. Lee led a scouting party through the southern area in 1855 and was received favorably by the local tribe of Toquerats led by Chief Toquer. Later they encouraged him to settle among them and teach them to work.

Indians helped build dams on the Santa Clara Creek and they assisted in building Fort Clara.

In 1888

Toquerville was established and the settlers generally lived peaceably with the local tribe. They followed Brigham’s Young’s advice to feed the Indians and not fight them and many journals record instances of giving food to the Indians.

There were about two or three-hundred Paiute Indians living in the area at the time. In addition to the Toquer-ville camp there were a

couple more up on the Virgin River near Rockville. 🌿

In 1852 Paiute Chief Toquer met a scouting party and indicated he would welcome the settlers to come and live among them. The resulting settlement was named Toquerville.



A Guide for Nephi Johnson

In 1858 a Paiute Indian guided Nephi Johnson into what is now Zion Canyon. He said that Wai-no-pits (the Devil) lived there and would not enter the canyon. The Indian guide was persuaded to stay and wait where Springdale is today, provided he didn’t have to wait until after dark. Today Nephi Johnson is credited with being the first white man to actually explore Zion Canyon. 🌿