



## History of Summit County's Boundaries

Summit County was so named because it occupies the Summit of the watershed between Green River drainage and Salt Lake Valley (Great Basin drainage). Green River County was apparently divided to form Summit County and was one of the twelve counties listed in the act of 1852 and named in following order: Weber, Davis, Deseret, Green River, Great Salt Lake, Utah, Tooele, Juab, Millard, San Pete, Iron and Washington.

The first legal recognition we have found of Summit County was an act of the Utah legislature approved Friday, January 13, 1854. The following definition was given, *"That all that section of country bounded north by Oregon, east by west line of Green River County, south by a parallel line forming the eastern boundary of Weber County is and the same shall hereafter be called Summit County and is attached to Great Salt Lake County for elections, revenue, and judicial purposes."*

Summit County remained in this dependent position until it was partially organized by William P. Vance. In March of 1861 at the settlement of Chalk Creek, (Coalville) he proceeded to organize the County by the appointment of A. B. Williams, Jacob M. Truman, and William Henefer, Selectmen, with Charles E. Griffin, County Clerk Pro Tem, and William H. Kimball, the first Sheriff of the County. (Tullige History Utah Vol 2 p. 123.)

Summit County was created **Friday, January 13, 1854**, making it the thirteenth county in the Territory. In January of 1856, Cache County was created and Summit County was apparently divided to form Cache. The next description of Summit County approved in 1866 in the State Laws of 1870 said, *"All that portion of the Territory bounded south by Wasatch County, west by Great Salt Lake County, north by summit of range of mountains forming the upper canyon, East Canyon of east canyon Creek, thence northerly along the Summit of the range of the mountains between said Creek and Weber River. Thence to and along summit of the highland between Plumber or Lost Creek and Echo Canyon Creeks, thence to and along summit next north of Yellow Creek to Bear River, thence easterly across said river to the summit of the divide between Bear River and the tributaries of the Green River and east by the summit of said range is hereby made and called Summit County, with the County Seat at Wanship."*

In the Summit County Record dated June 18, 1861, a grant was given to George N. Slager to build a bridge across Bear River at the crossing of the Old Emigrant Road. As some authorities gave Summit County a very limited area at this time, this quotation is given to prove that Summit County did still occupy part of what is now Wyoming and was taking care of road and bridges in that section.

At this time the limits of Summit County were the summit north of Yellow Creek to Bear River, to the summit of the divide between Bear River and the tributaries of the Green River, giving a bit less territory to the County but it still was quite a distance into what is Wyoming at the present time and a considerable portion of the pioneer trail that is in Wyoming was in Summit County.

The next changes in the northern boundary line were in 1863 and 1868. A portion was taken from the north eastern corner of Utah thereby reducing Utah to her present size and forming the present boundary line of Utah and of Summit County. Only part of this reduction of Utah affected Summit County.

At the present time, Summit County begins on the northern boundary of the State at longitude 110 degrees west of the southwest corner of Wyoming, then north to a point east of the point where the north side of the Union Pacific Railroad crosses the summit first west of the Bear River Valley, then to the north side of railroad, then southwesterly along the north side of said road to a point one mile east of Wasatch station, then northerly to the nearest point of the summit of range of mountains between Bear River and Weber Valleys, then southwesterly along the last mentioned summit of its intersection with summit of Highland between Echo and Lost Creeks, then south westerly down said last to and across Weber River, then southerly along the summit of the range separating East Canyon from Weber Valley to the summit of the cross range through which the upper canyon of East Canyon Creek runs, then westerly to summit of Wasatch range, then south easterly along summit of the range next south of head waters of Silver and East Canyon Creeks, then easterly along said last mentioned summit to the point where it is crossed by road between Rhodes Valley and Salt Lake City. Then southerly to the middle channel of the channel of Provo River at high bluff below Goddard's ranch, then easterly along the middle of said channel to the headwaters of the said river farther east, then east to the summit of the Uinta Range, then northeasterly the one hundred and ten meridian of West longitude, then north to point of beginning (Laws 1943 Vol.2).

The boundary lines of the counties were established by the legislature but where Green river and Summit Counties were contiguous to each other there was a question as to where one left off and the other started. This indefiniteness or elasticity caused trouble when the counties were formed.

After Morgan County was created there was a question as to the exact line where Summit County ended and Morgan County started. Summit County records state that in June 1872 there was a dispute on the line between Summit and Morgan Counties. By December 1872, Jesse W. Fox made a survey and the line was definitely established.

It was shown again that the boundaries were not well established by the trouble between Summit and Rich Counties in 1930. Here the watershed is the division line between the counties for a distance.

When the county was divided into three school districts in 1913, the South Summit District did not logically lie in the railroad section but the lines were planned to include in the South Summit District, a piece of railroad at Wasatch station which furnished considerable tax to the schools of this District. Rich County went to the legislature and asked to have the boundary lines definitely established giving Rich County this piece of railroad. Their request was granted.

The next year when the railroad received tax notices from both counties it objected to paying taxes in two counties on the same piece of ground so the problem was brought to light. The South Summit School Board at that time consisted of Joseph B. Andrus, Alonzo J. Marchant, Reed Stevens, Roy Atkinson, and Roy Lambert. County Attorney P.H. Neeley acting in legal matters filed suit against Rich County. It was taken to the State Legislature by County Commissioners Oriel Stevens, Levi Pearson and Walter Evans. They succeeded in getting a delegation of Senators to go over the ground to determine the watershed. The court decided in favor of the Rich County but the case was appealed to the Supreme Court of Utah and they decided in favor of Summit County and South Summit School District. (Echoes of Yesterday Summit County Centennial History).

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