

## HISTORIC PROVO BAPTISTRY FACT SHEET

- 17' x 22' frame building, plastered on the outside (and probably on the inside too). Archaeologists have found tons of plaster, most of it painted in a lovely shade of sky blue.
- Inside the frame building is a 5' x 9' font, made of wood.
- Its construction was proposed at the Stake Presidency-Bishops meeting, 16 March 1875, by Stake President Abraham O. Smoot. Prior to this the open millrace on Second West seems to have been the favorite location for baptisms.<sup>1</sup>
- Mr. [Thomas] Allman, chairman of the committee to build the font structure, estimated the cost at \$800. On 6 July 1875, the superintendent was instructed to proceed immediately with the work.” A receipt book from the Utah Stake indicates that materials for the font were purchased as late as February 1876.<sup>2</sup>
- Served the Utah Stake, which spanned from the point of the mountain all the way to Provo and beyond.
- Only three other baptismal fonts were constructed before the one built in Provo (1875-76). All three were in Salt Lake City, making this one the earliest known font in Utah County.
- The first was the baptistry added to the rear of the Endowment House, which sat in the northwest corner of Temple Square. Heber C. Kimball dedicated this font on 2 October 1856. This font suffered from defective workmanship, and a new font was built and dedicated in 1864 by Brigham Young. This font was used for baptisms for the living, for the renewal of covenants, and baptisms for health. Later it was also used for baptisms for the dead.
- The second font that we are aware of is one that was built for the Salt Lake 14<sup>th</sup> Ward (which was just south and west of Temple Square). A reference in the Historian’s Office Journal states: “present at dedication of the 14th Ward baptismal Font. March 23d 1857.”
- The third font was erected by Brigham Young “a few rods east of his school house” (now BY Park). Again the Historian’s Office Journal states: “The President has erected a wooden font 9 ½ by 12 feet a few rods east of his school house with two dressing rooms attached, made by boarding the large car or wagon used in a celebration in 1852 or 3. Said font was dedicated yesterday and President Young has placed it in the hands of the Bishops for their use Thursday, September 5, 1861.”

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, Bishop’s Meetings, Utah Stake, 1866-75, on microfilm at BYU Library.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*