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Jeanette Morrell

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Along the Old Utah Highway 91

Jeannette Morrell*

Well, now, there's Ogden, a railroad town
 Where the smoke smears everything rusty brown.
 Ogden's Hole it was, 'way back when,
 And the hunters and trappers, them lonely men,
 They cached their furs there and sometimes their food
 Where Peter Skene Ogden he told 'em they should.
 It couldn't 'a' looked like much of a place
 With the sand and the sagebrush, and only a trace
 Of old Salt Lake shinin' 'way out west
 Like a piece o' shirt through a dirty vest,
 But the railroads come and it built up fast;
 There was plenty o' folks when they counted 'em last,
 And that wouldn't set well with old Peter Skene
 Who liked enough space to spit between.
 And the furs ain't cached in the Hole no more:
 They're cached in the windows of some big store.
 Brigham City? Oh, that's the place
 That was named for the Prophet Joseph.
 That's a Mormon joke—not a likely joke
 For the outside folks I knows of,
 But President Smith and President Young
 Has both had a plenty o' praises sung,
 And it ain't very likely they'd quarrel up yonder
 Where they got the eternal progression to ponder,
 Leastways not about Brigham, a little space
 That's a Canada Honker's resting place

And not much else. There's another story
 That's been told hereabouts till it's kinda hoary,
 But outside of Utah not one percentile
 Knows that in Utah, a Jew's a Gentile.
 From Brigham you take the mountain road
 Up over the Sardine pass—
 A narrow ledge with a nasty drop,
 And you daresn't hurry, you daresn't stop,
 Till you come on through and over the top
 Out onto the valley grass.
 And there's Hyrum and Mendon and Wellsville there
 And a town called Paradise—
 A little hump in the valley floor
 That nobody'd look at twice.
 All I can make out is, they named it to set there
 'Cause they figgered they'd crossed over hell to get there.
 Then Logan all peaceful and quiet and still
 With a temple set high on a grassy hill,
 And a college nested where mountains comes
 And a neat little river jest bumbles and hums.
 Brother Brigham, he sent folks from Salt Lake City
 To settle the place, and it seems right pretty
 How it's still today pretty near how they made it
 With Lombardy populars and aspens to shade it.
 Well, that's near as fur as this highway can go
 'Cause a piece down the road ya hit Idaho.

*Miss Morrell, assistant professor of English at Brigham Young University, has also published in the *New York Herald Tribune*.