Precinct Government in Salt Lake County, Utah 1852-1904

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Abstract
This thesis traces the origin, development, and decline, from 1852 to 1904, of Salt Lake County's judicial precincts. A precinct functioned as the basic subdivision of county government. Its boundaries were generally coterminous with those of local communities. It was established to allow for a degree of local control by the people.

Chapter two reveals that precinct justices experienced over time a marked decline in socio-political prominence. This is largely due to legislative statutes that decreased their jurisdictional powers. Chapter three examines the evolution of precinct boundaries. It is demonstrated that geographic distribution of individuals played a major role in the growth and eventual consolidation of community precincts. The relative availability of government services also fostered the development of county districts. Chapter four studies the role of the minor precinct officials in local government--constables, estray poundkeepers, and fenceviewers. The last chapter devotes attention to the factors that influenced the institution. The appendix lists the county's justices of the peace from 1852 to 1904.

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