

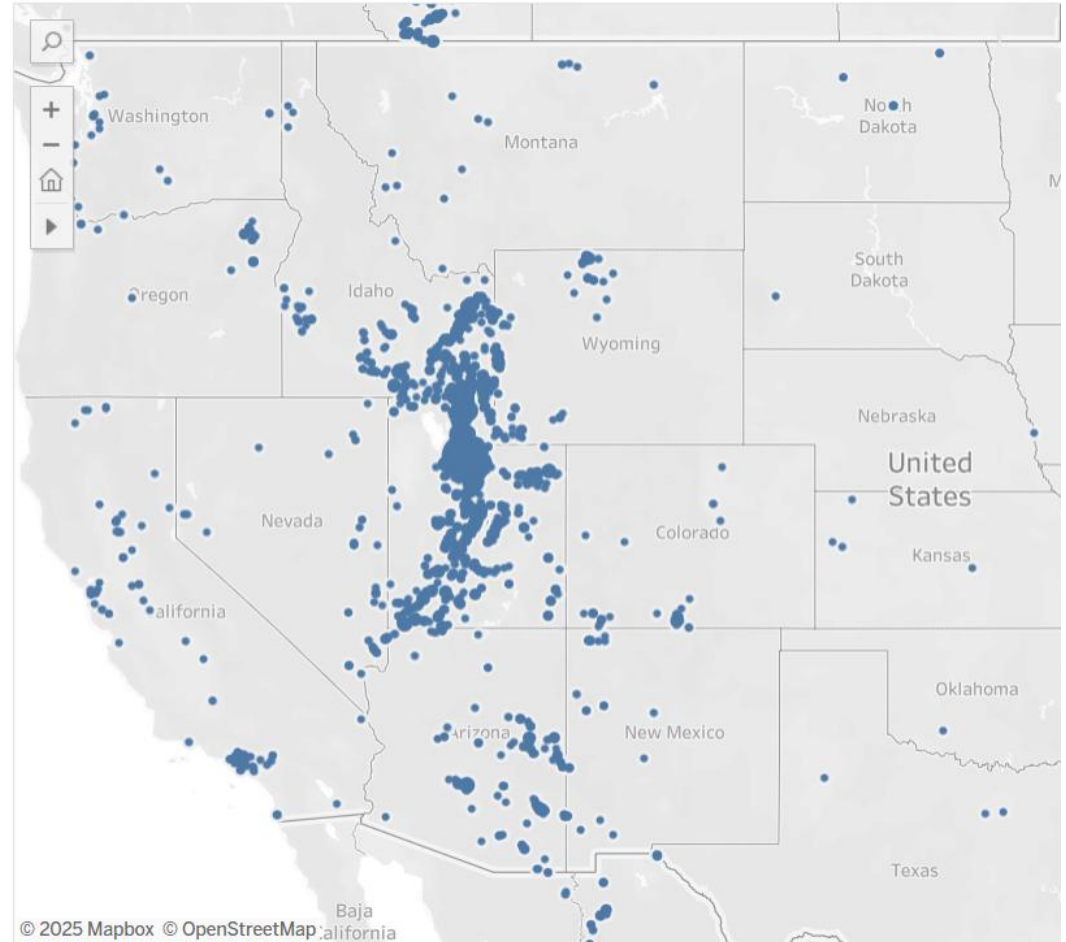
Mormon Missionary Communities

Visualizing missionary
departure cities, 1850 to **1940**

Dr. Nathan Cordner

Utah Valley University

Missionary Residence by City




https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/nathan.cordner/viz/mha_missionary_maps/MissionaryResidenceCityMap

Project Overview

- “Missionaries [in the mid-19th century]... were often called to serve missions in their homeland or the homeland of their parents.”
 - <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/history/topics/early-missionaries?lang=eng>
- Are there also patterns between where missionaries lived at the time of their call and the missions they were called to serve in?
 - Looking for **junctions** between LDS communities and mission locations
- Project: create data visualizations and online tools to analyze and explore these potential connections

Data Collection



Church History Biographical Database


[Show My Ancestors >](#)

Results For

☐ Search All Fields

☐ Sounds Like

☐ Show Only My Ancestors

Powered By  FamilySearch

Gender

No Selection

Birth Date

YYYY

→

YYYY

Death Date

YYYY

→

YYYY

Mission

Mission

Sort By: Relevance Items per Page: 25 Showing 1–25 of 46942

People

Organizations


Sources

All 101803


Pioneers 58623

Missionaries 46942


Mormon Battalion 615



Aage Lauritz Larsen
1894 November 25 – 1982 October 5
Southern States Mission (1915-1916)



Aaron Adelbert Farr
1880 November 25 – 1939 September 9
Northwestern States (Pacific) Mission



Aaron Allred
1888 October 3 – 1962 March 16
California Mission (1919-1921)
California Mission (1925-1926)

Feedback

Data Collection



Aage Lauritz Larsen

Birth Date

On 1894 November 25 (Born)


Death Date

On 1982 October 5 (Died)

Gender

Male

 [View in FamilySearch](#)

 [Attach Source to FamilyTree](#)
FamilySearch login required

Born in Trestrief, Holbock, Denmark

1894 November 25

Mother

Sidee M Nielsen

Baptized by John L Nebeker

1903 October 31 (Age 8)

Served in [Southern States Mission](#)

1915 January 5 – 1916 September 3 (Age 20) [See Missionaries](#)

Mission Type

Proselytizing

Priesthood Office

Elder

Residence When Called

Tooele, Tooele, Utah, United States

Set Apart By

Orson F Whitney

Location Served

Southern States

Date Details

Started On 1915 January 5

Set Apart

On 1915 January 6

Departed from Home

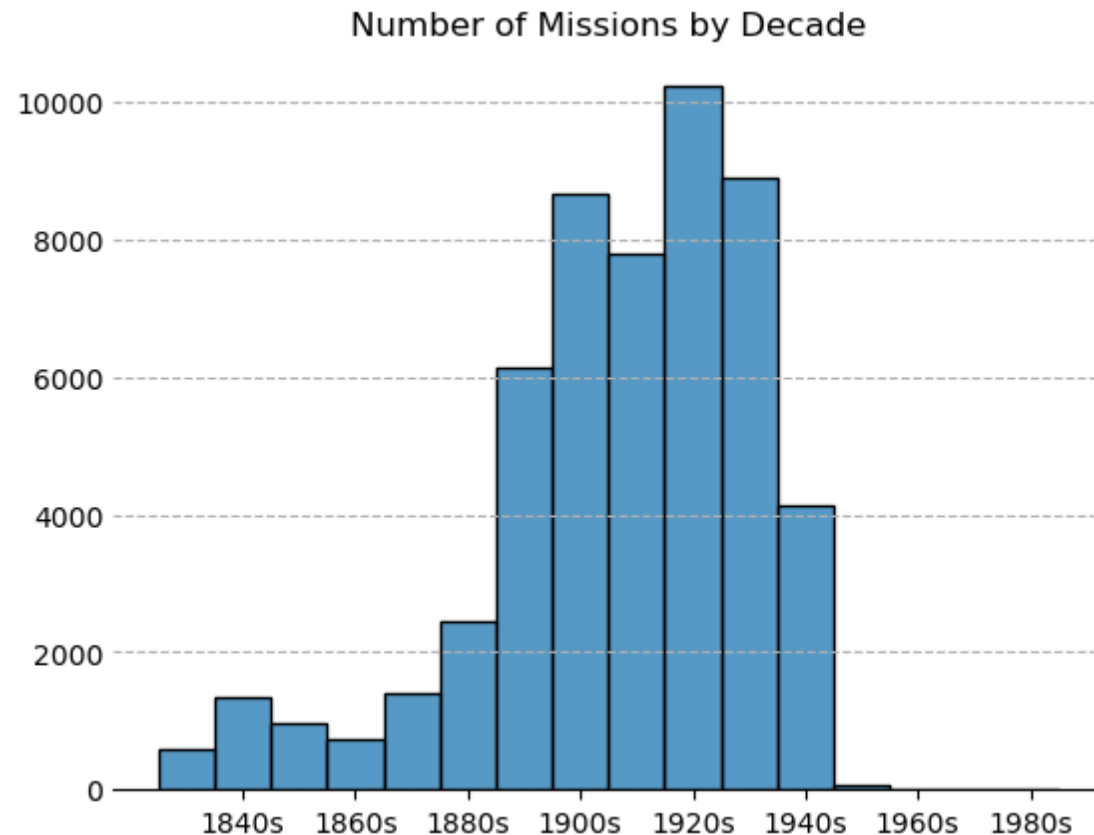
Ended On 1916 September 3

Released

One entry created
per mission

Data Cleaning

- Collected **53,411** unique missions, ranging from 1830 to 1994
 - **48,349** missions are in the range **1850 – 1940** (90.5% of the data)



Data Cleaning

Missionary Residence

- Grouped together similar names that referred to the same city
 - **Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah, United States**
 - Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah Territory, United States
 - Great Salt Lake City, Great Salt Lake, Utah Territory, United States
 - Great Salt Lake City, Great Salt Lake, Utah Territroy, United States
 - Great Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah Territory, United States
 - Salt Lake City
 - Salt Lake City, UT
 - Salt Lake City, Utah
 - S L City, Utah, United States

Data Cleaning

Missionary Residence

- Identified residence cities when ward / stake provided instead
 - **Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah, United States**
 - 20th Ensign
 - 20th Ensign Stake
 - 20th ward, Ensign
 - Ensign Ensign
 - Ensign Stake, Utah
 - Ensign Ward, Ensign Stake, Utah
 - Liberty 2nd Ward, Liberty Stake, Utah
 - Salt Lake 9th Ward, Liberty Stake, Utah
 - Liberty 10th Ward, Liberty Stake, Utah
 - Liberty, Liberty
 - Liberty Liberty
 - Liberty Liberty Stake
 - Liberty Stake, Utah
 - Liberty Stake, Utah, United States
 - Liberty Ward, Liberty Stake

Data Cleaning

Missionary Residence

- Updated previous names for places to current locations
 - **Mesa, Maricopa, Arizona, United States**
 - Zenos, Maricopa, Arizona, United States
 - Alma, Maricopa, Arizona, United States
 - Alma, Maricopa, Arizona
 - Nephi, Maricopa, Arizona, United States
 - Nephi, Maricopa, Arizona Territory, United States

Data Cleaning

Missionary Residence

- Set missionary residence as the original departure city for transfers

— Served in [Southern States Mission](#)
1927 January 25 – 1929 January 1 (Age 30)

Mission Type
Proselytizing

Marital Status
Single

Missionary Activity Notes
Transferred to East Central States Mission

Priesthood Office
Elder

Residence When Called
Oak City, Millard, Utah, United States

Set Apart By
George F Richards

Location Served
North Carolina Conference

— Served in [East Central States Mission](#)
1929 January 1 – March 8 (Age 32) [See Missionaries](#)

Mission Type
Proselytizing

Marital Status
Single

Priesthood Office
Elder

Residence When Called
Southern States Mission

Set Apart By
George F Richards

Location Served
East Central States

<https://history.churchofjesuschrist.org/chd/individual/clifton-isaac-allred-1896?lang=eng&timelineTabs=allTabs>

Data Cleaning

Missionary Residence

- City or county?
 - Beaver, Utah, United States
 - Beaver, Utah Territory, United States
- **Preferred the larger region when ambiguous**
- Additional conundrums
 - **4,187** residences listed just as “United States”
 - **1,303** residence fields missing

Data Cleaning

Missionary Residence

- City or county?
 - Beaver, Utah, United States
 - Beaver, Utah Territory, United States
- **Preferred the larger region when ambiguous**
- Additional conundrums



Blaine Leslie Hunter

Birth Date

On 1920 May 22 (Born)

Death Date

On 2008 October 10 (Died)

Gender

Male

— Served in [Central Pacific Mission](#)

1940 September 19 – 1942 October 13 (Age 20) [See Missionaries](#)

Mission Type

Proselytizing

Marital Status

Single

Residence When Called

Blaine Leslie Hunter

Set Apart By

[Joseph Francis Merrill](#)

Location Served

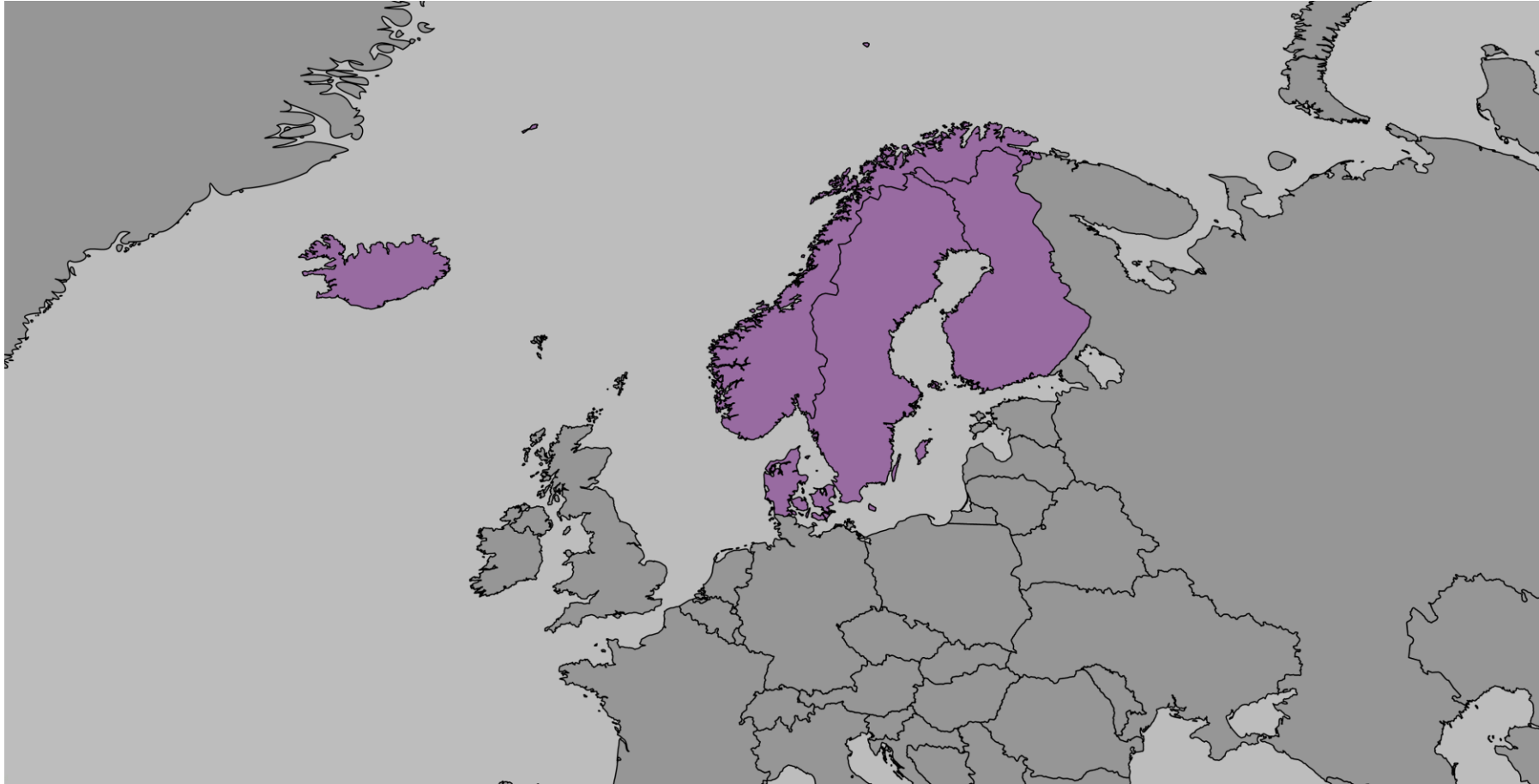
Japanese

Data Visualization

- Public visuals hosted at https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/nathan.cordner/viz/mha_missionary_maps/MissionaryResidenceCityMap
- Can modify visuals based on year range, mission, and missionary residence city / region
 - Regions: county (Utah, Idaho), state (US), country
- View patterns of where missionaries served based on **residence**
- View patterns of where missionaries were living based on **mission**



Patterns: Scandinavian Mission



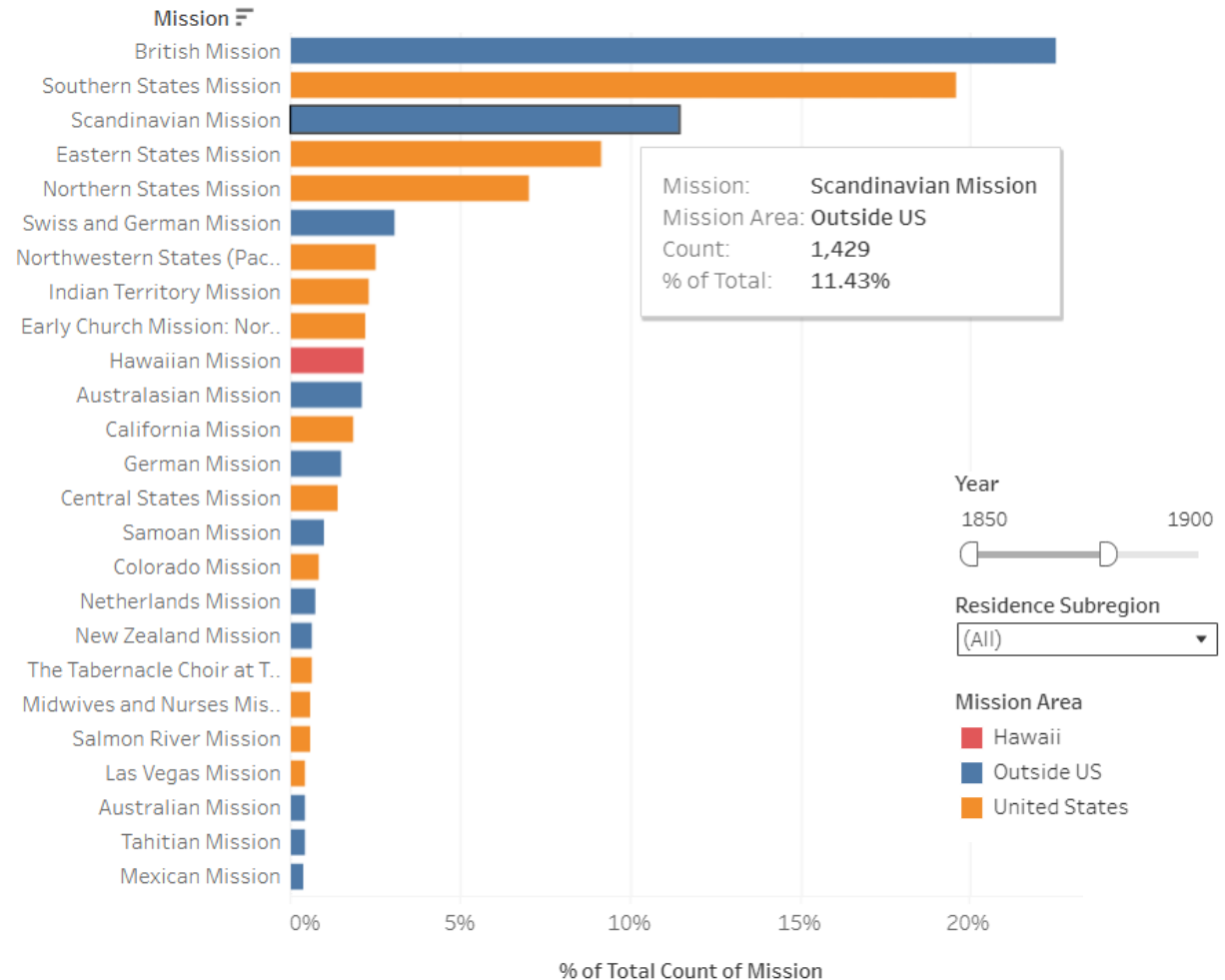
<https://history.churchofjesuschrist.org/chd/organization/mission/scandinavian-1850?lang=eng>

Patterns: Scandinavian Mission

1850 – 1900

- Largest **non-English speaking** mission

Mission Calls by Residence (Bar)

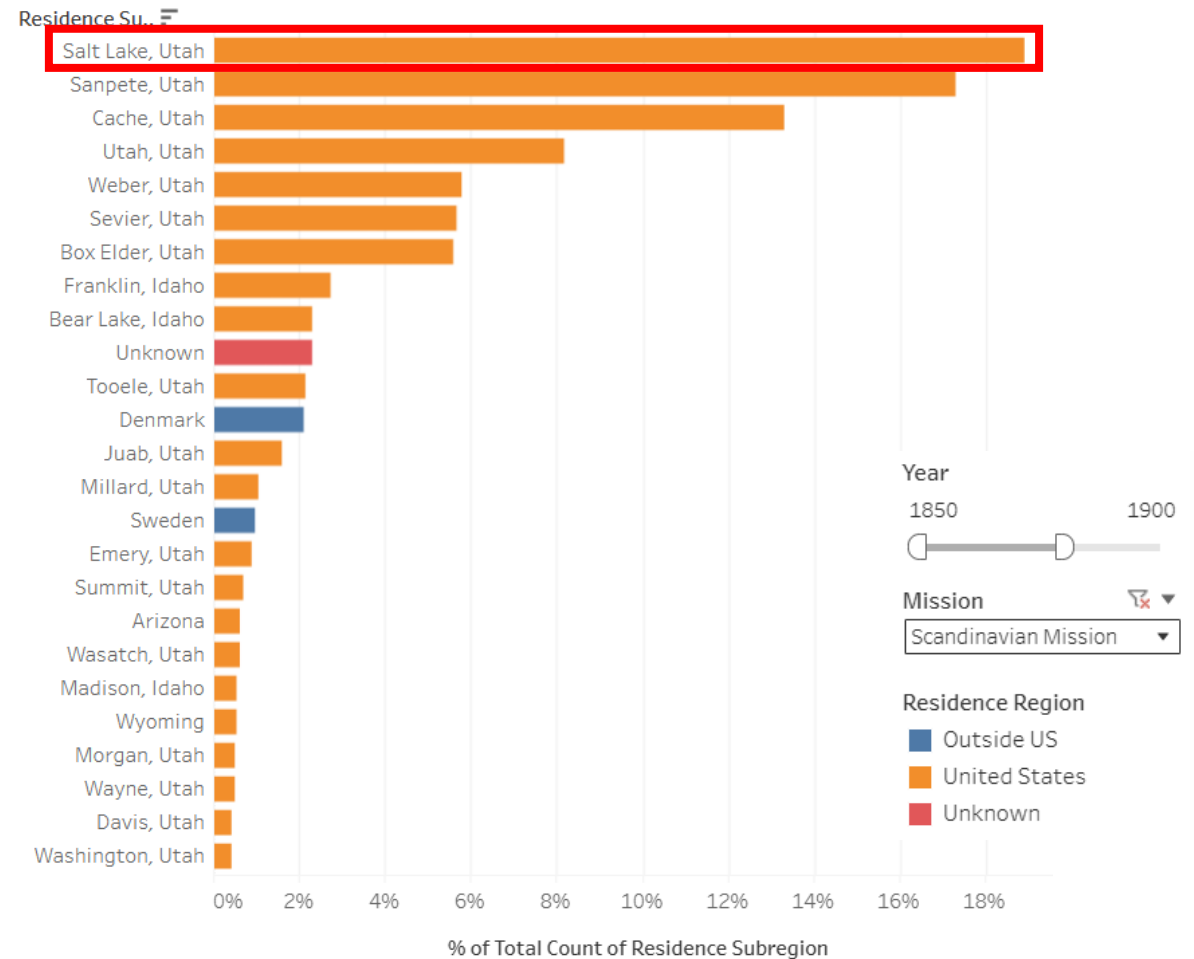


Patterns: Scandinavian Mission

1850 – 1900

- Largest **non-English speaking** mission
- Most missionaries come from **Salt Lake**

Residence Count by Mission (Bar)

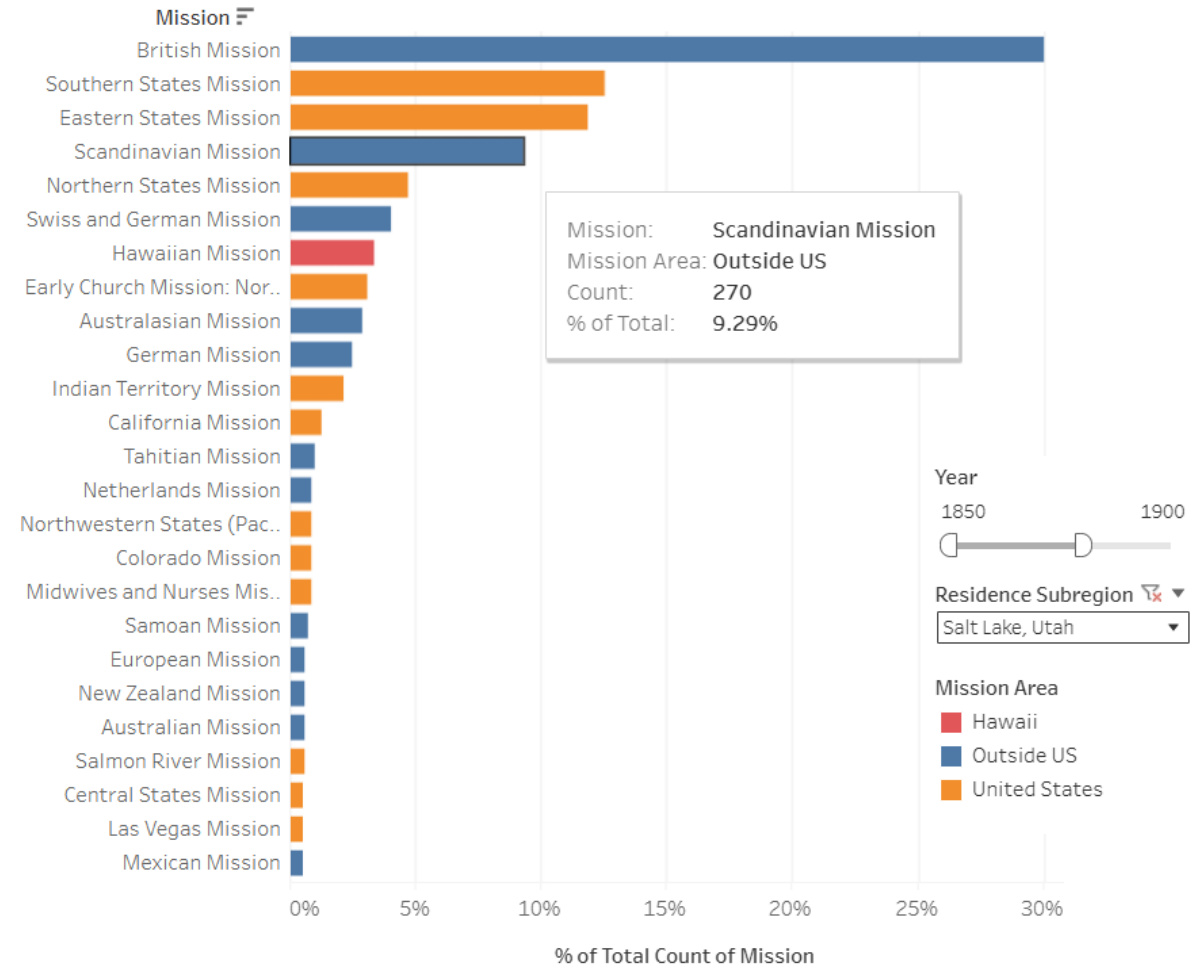


Patterns: Scandinavian Mission

1850 – 1900

- Largest **non-English speaking** mission
- Most missionaries come from **Salt Lake**
- About **9%** of missionaries from Salt Lake sent to Scandinavia

Mission Calls by Residence (Bar)

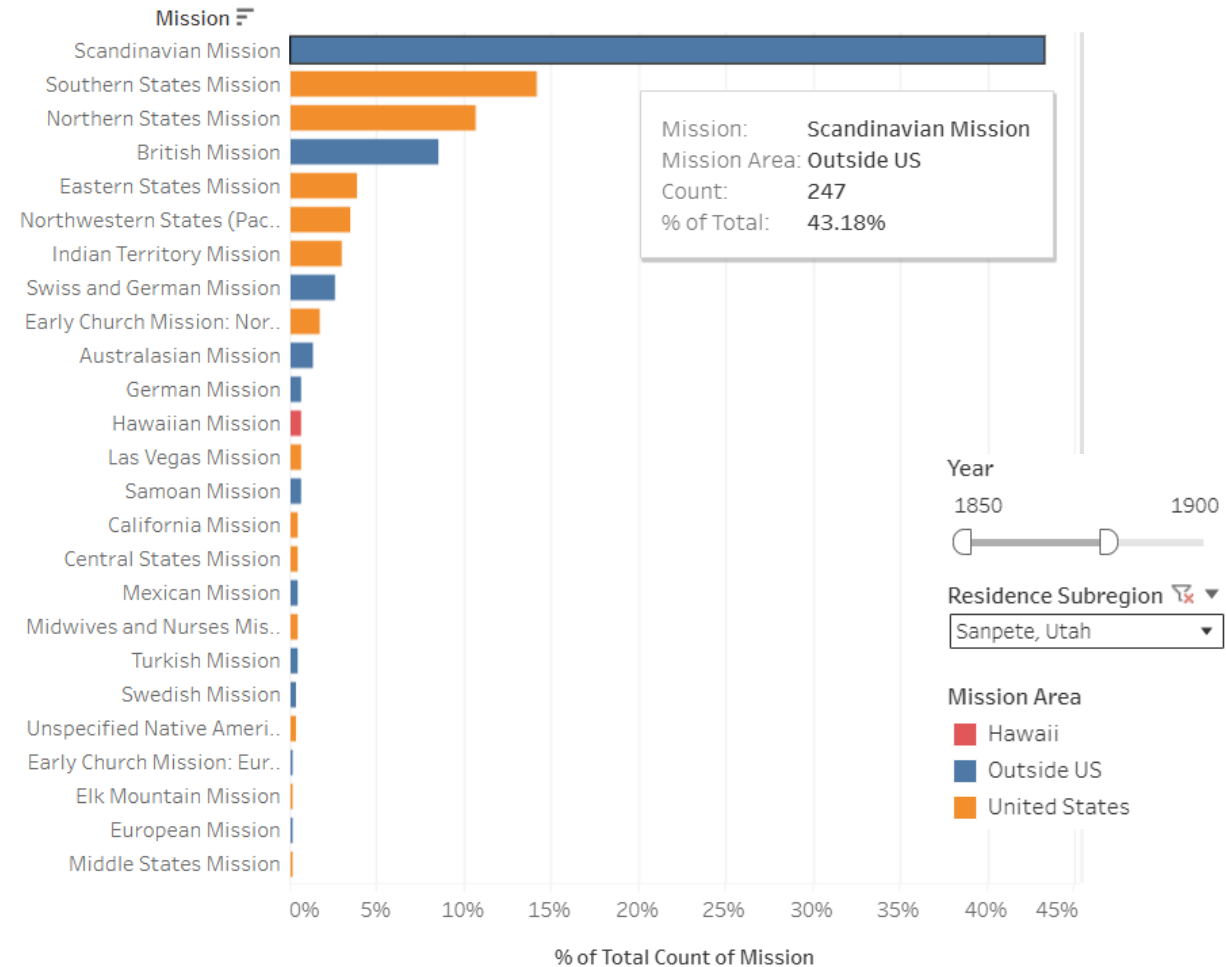


Patterns: Scandinavian Mission

1850 – 1900

- Largest **non-English speaking** mission
- Most missionaries come from **Salt Lake**
- About **9%** of missionaries from Salt Lake sent to Scandinavia
- Compared to **43%** of missionaries from Sanpete

Mission Calls by Residence (Bar)

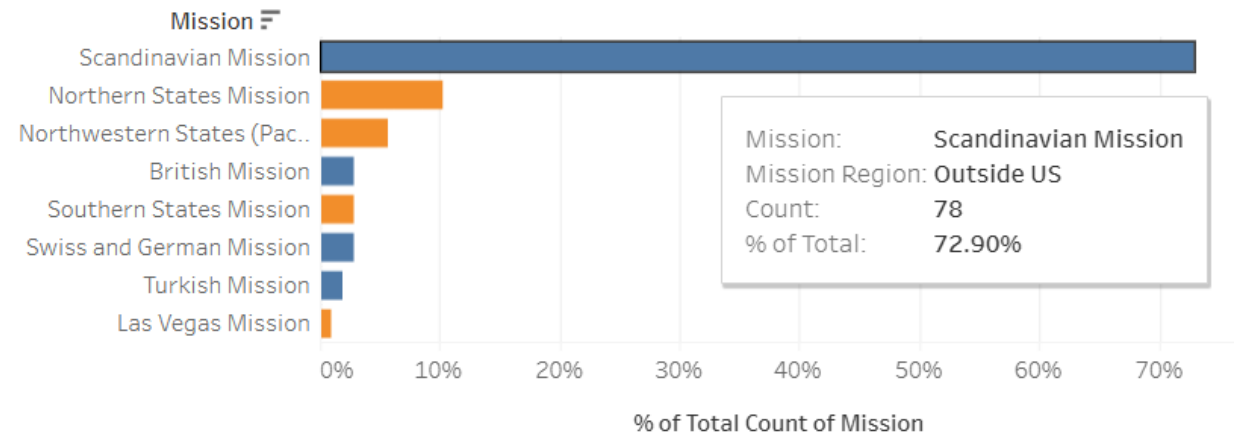


Patterns: Scandinavian Mission

1850 – 1900

- Largest **non-English speaking** mission
- Most missionaries come from **Salt Lake**
- About **9%** of missionaries from Salt Lake sent to Scandinavia
- Compared to **73%** of missionaries from Ephraim!

Mission Calls by City (Bar)



Although important concentrations of Scandinavians developed in Brigham City, Salt Lake City, and Cache Valley, nowhere in Utah did the Scandinavians concentrate more significantly than in Sanpete and Sevier counties. By 1870 the Scandinavians comprised approximately 94 percent of the population of Ephraim and 80 percent of the population of the county as a whole.⁹ The national origin of the Sanpete County Scandinavians accurately reflected the uneven success of the Scandinavian mission: in 1890 Sanpete County had 2,101 Danes, 587 Swedes, and 209 Norwegians.⁹

Patterns: Scandinavian Mission

1850 – 1900: **Proportion of missionaries to Scandinavia by city**

- Showing locations that sent at least 10 missionaries

Proportion (%)	Sent	Total	Residence
100.00	14	14	Sweden
96.88	31	32	Denmark
87.50	14	16	Mantua, Box Elder, Utah, United States
75.00	9	12	Redmond, Sevier, Utah, United States
72.90	78	107	Ephraim, Sanpete, Utah, United States
66.67	10	15	Ovid, Bear Lake, Idaho, United States
63.64	14	22	Mayfield, Sanpete, Utah, United States
63.64	14	22	Bear River City, Box Elder, Utah, United States
62.16	23	37	Gunnison, Sanpete, Utah, United States

Patterns: Scandinavian Mission

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Patterns: Scandin

1850 – 1900: **Proportion o**

- Showing locations that se

Proportion (%)	Sent	Total	R
100.00	14	14	S
96.88	31	32	D
87.50	14	16	Mantua, Box Elder, Utah, United States
75.00	9	12	Redmond, Sevier, Utah, United States
72.90	78	107	Ephraim, Sanpete, Utah, United States
66.67	10	15	Ovid, Bear Lake, Idaho, United States
63.64	14	22	Mayfield, Sanpete, Utah, United States
63.64	14	22	Bear River City, Box Elder, Utah, United States
62.16	23	37	Gunnison, Sanpete, Utah, United States

History [\[edit\]](#)



Spring in the foothills on the west side of Mantua, May 2015

Mantua was settled in the mid-19th century when members of [the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#) were sent by [Lorenzo Snow](#) to the valley to grow flax. The first group arrived in Mantua in 1863 (although a sign at the main entry route states "Founded 1864"),^[5] and **were all émigrés from Denmark** led by Hans Jens Jensen.

Patterns: Scandinavian Mission

1850 – 1900: Proportion of missionaries to Scandinavia by city

- Showing locations that sent at least 10 missionaries

Proportion (%)	Sent	Total	Residence
100.00	14	14	Sweden

covering the countryside for settling spots. By March of 1864, a choice of the present site of Ovid had been made and the three families settled the town of Ovid four and one half miles north of Paris. Immediately others followed. Among them were [Thomas C Peterson](#), Niels Christian Edlefsen, [Peter Jensen](#), Rasmus Jorgensen, Jens Hansen and Henry Peterson. Most of this early group came from Denmark, Norway and Sweden and were among the first companies of Mormon pioneers who crossed the plains.

66.67	10	15	Ovid, Bear Lake, Idaho, United States
63.64	14	22	Mayfield, Sanpete, Utah, United States
63.64	14	22	Bear River City, Box Elder, Utah, United States
62.16	23	37	Gunnison, Sanpete, Utah, United States

Patterns: Scandinavian Mission

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In 1866 Scandinavian Mormon converts were assigned by Brigham Young to live by the Bear River north and west of Corinne. Michael Bourdon, a French Canadian trapper, named the river because of the numerous black, brown and grizzly bears found in the region at the time. The town was named after the river, BEAR RIVER CITY.

Patterns: Scandinavian Mission

1850 – 1900: **Proportion of missionaries to Scandinavia by city**

- Comparing Ephraim, Utah to cities sending the most missionaries

Proportion (%)	Sent	Total	Residence
72.90	78	107	Ephraim, Sanpete, Utah, United States
22.46	84	374	Logan, Cache, Utah, United States
9.97	31	311	Provo, Utah, Utah, United States
8.76	34	388	Ogden, Weber, Utah, United States
8.16	184	2,256	Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah, United States

Patterns: Scandinavian Mission

Moving into the 20th century

- Scandinavian mission splits into various parts
- **No single city or region** sending at least 10 missionaries between 1900 and 1940 has over 50% going to any parts of Scandinavia

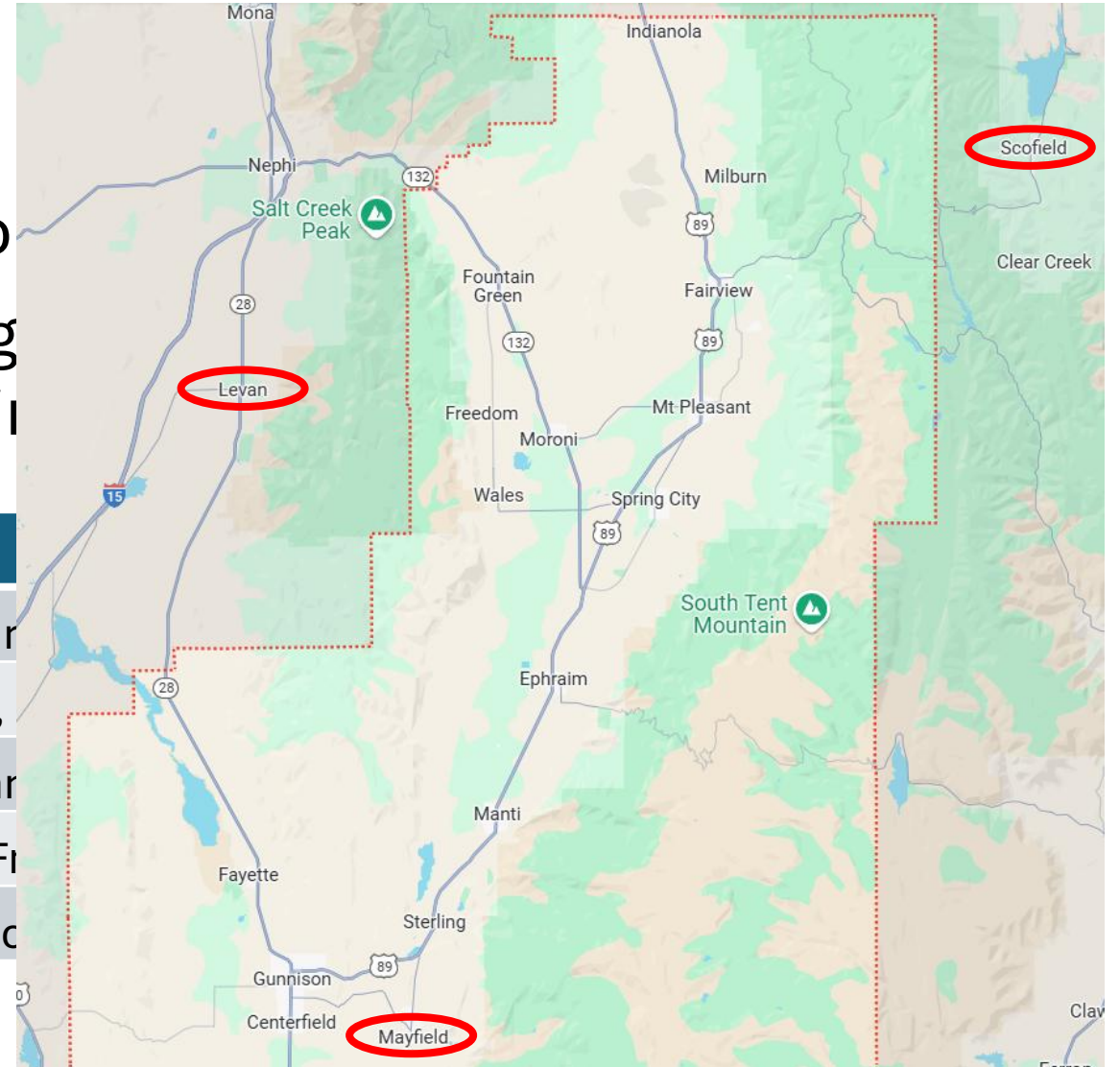
Proportion (%)	Sent	Total	Residence
45.45	5	11	Scofield, Carbon, Utah, United States
42.86	18	42	Levan, Juab, Utah, United States
40.74	11	27	Mayfield, Sanpete, Utah, United States
40.54	30	74	Mink Creek, Franklin, Idaho, United States
40.00	4	10	Independence, Madison, Idaho, United States

Patterns: Scandinavian Mission

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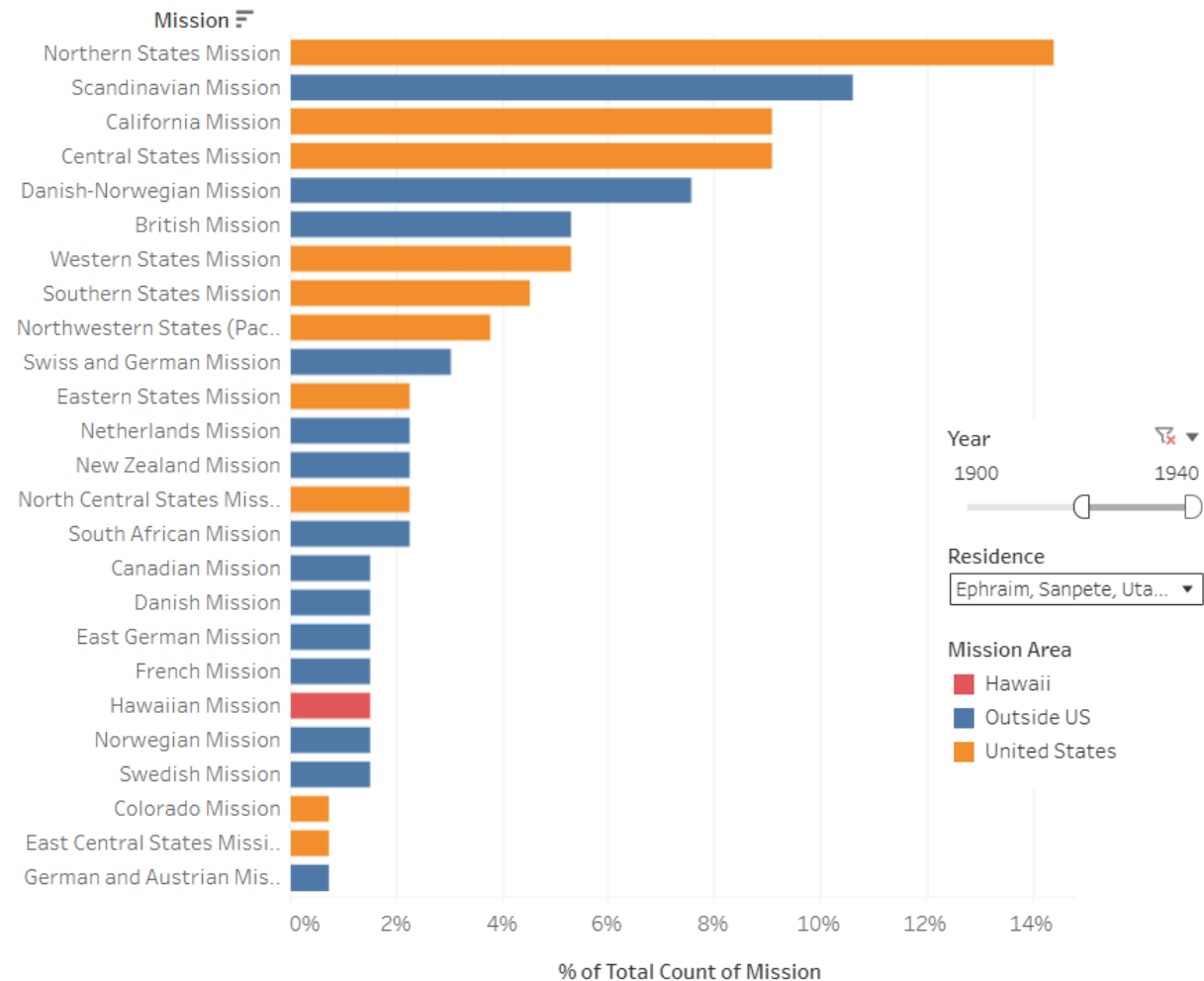


Patterns: Scandinavian Mission

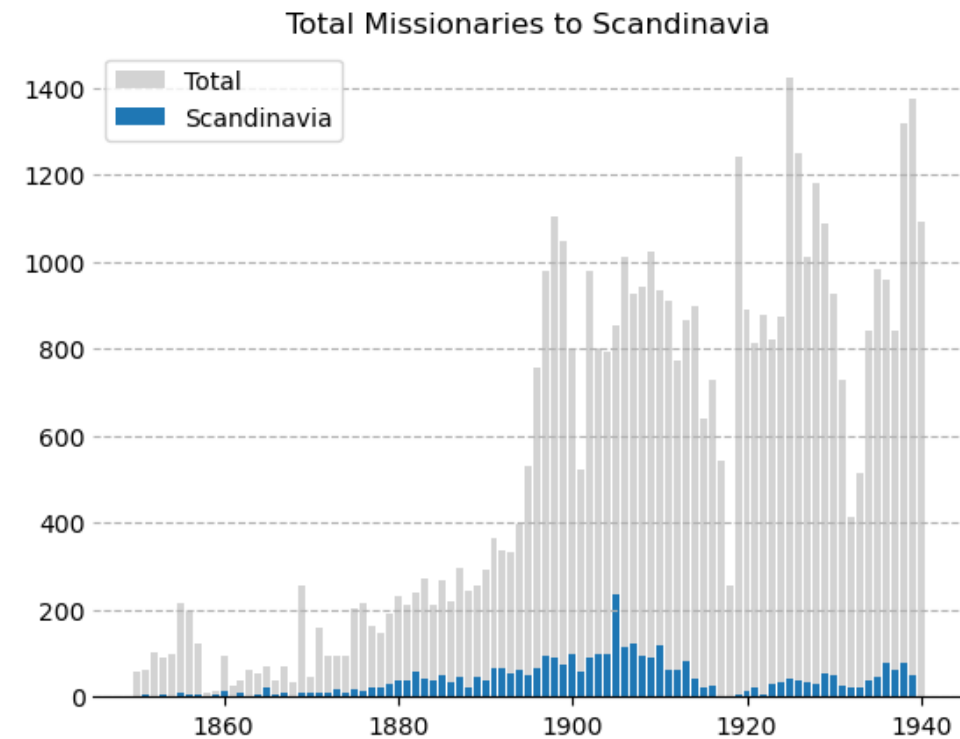
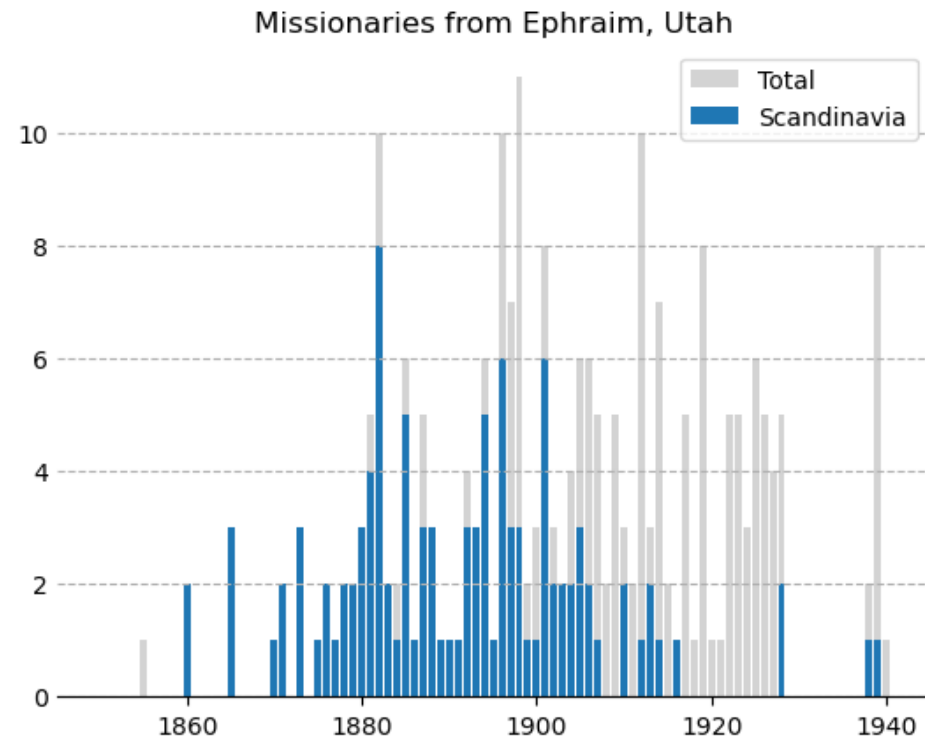
Moving into the 20th century

- Scandinavian mission splits into various parts
- **Ephraim** slumps to just 23% (30 out of 132) called to Scandinavia from 1900 to 1940

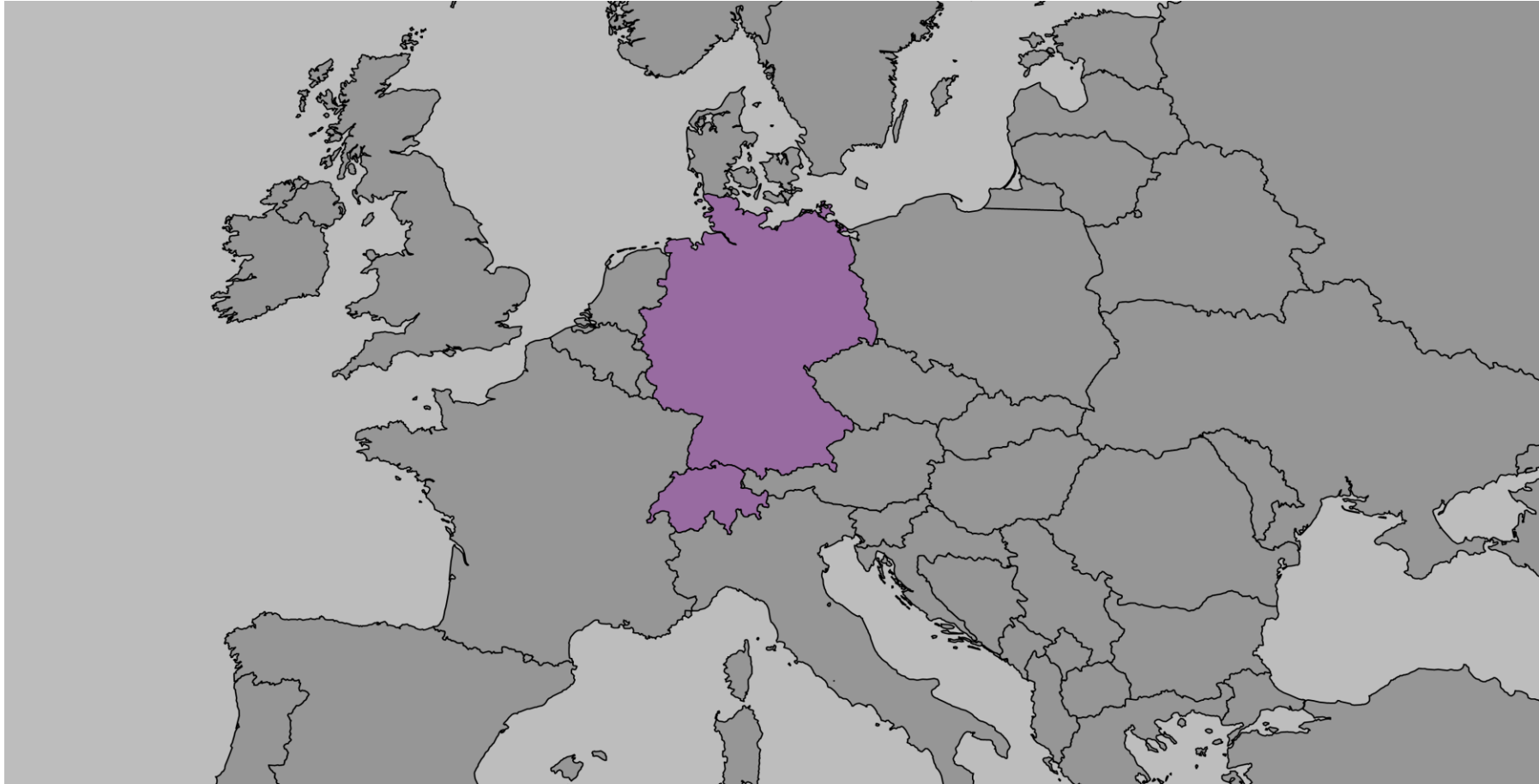
Mission Calls by City (Bar)



Patterns: Scandinavian Mission



Patterns: Swiss and German Mission



<https://history.churchofjesuschrist.org/chd/organization/mission/swiss-and-german-1868>

Patterns: Swiss and German Mission

- A priori:

Once Mormons had established a foothold in Utah, they began sending missionaries to Germany and Switzerland in the mid-1850s. The greatest number of converts initially came from Switzerland. Coming to Utah, some as handcart pioneers, most **Swiss immigrants** scattered throughout the state, especially to the communities of **Santa Clara**, **Midway**, and **Providence**. At the

https://www.uen.org/utah_history_encyclopedia/g/GERMANS_IN_UTAH.shtml

Patterns: Swiss and German Mission

1850 – 1900: **Proportion of missionaries to Germany, Switzerland**

- Showing locations that sent at least 10 missionaries

Proportion (%)	Sent	Total	Residence
73.08	19	26	Santa Clara, Washington, Utah, United States
57.69	15	26	Midway, Wasatch, Utah, United States
54.35	25	46	Providence, Cache, Utah, United States
20.00	7	35	Toquerville, Washington, Utah, United States
17.20	16	93	Paris, Bear Lake, Idaho, United States
15.38	2	13	Soda Springs, Caribou, Idaho, United States
15.38	2	13	Ferron, Emery, Utah, United States

Patterns: Swiss and German Mission

1850 – 1900: **Proportion of missionaries to Germany, Switzerland**

- Comparing neighboring cities

Proportion (%)	Sent	Total	Residence
73.08	19	26	Santa Clara, Washington, Utah, United States
57.69	15	26	Midway, Wasatch, Utah, United States
54.35	25	46	Providence, Cache, Utah, United States
10.70	40	374	Logan, Cache, Utah, United States
8.82	12	136	St George, Washington, Utah, United States
5.56	3	54	Heber, Wasatch, Utah, United States

Patterns: Swiss and German Mission

1900 – 1940: Proportion of missionaries to Germany, Switzerland

- Showing locations that sent at least 10 missionaries

Proportion (%)	Sent	Total	Residence
47.62	10	21	Geneva, Bear Lake, Idaho, United States
38.75	31	80	Midway, Wasatch, Utah, United States
38.10	8	21	Santa Clara, Washington, Utah, United States
32.47	25	77	Providence, Cache, Utah, United States
28.57	6	21	Bern, Bear Lake, Idaho, United States
27.38	207	756	Unknown
25.00	3	12	Pine Valley, Washington, Utah, United States

Patterns: Swiss and German Mission

1900 – 1940: Proportion

- Showing locations that
- A post office called Geneva has been in operation since 1898.^[5] The community was named after Geneva, in Switzerland, the native land of a large share of the first settlers.^[6] The Geneva Cemetery is located in the community.

Proportion (%)	Sent	Total	
47.62	10	21	Geneva, Bear Lake, Idaho, United States
38.75	31	80	Midway, Wasatch, Utah, United States
38.10	8	21	Santa Clara, Washington, Utah, United States
32.47	25	77	Providence, Cache, Utah, United States
28.57	6	21	Bern, Bear Lake, Idaho, United States
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Patterns: Swiss and German Mission

1900 – 1940: Proportion of missionaries to Germany, Switzerland

- Showing locations that sent at least 10 missionaries

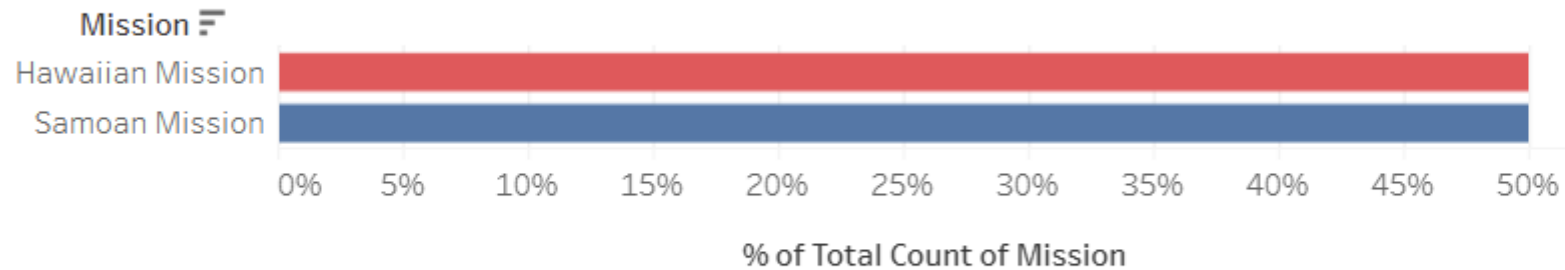
Proportion (%)	Sent	Total	History
47.62	10		[edit]
38.75	31		The first settlement at Bern was made in 1873. ^[3] A post office called Bern was established in 1901, and remained in operation until 1988. ^[4] The community was
38.10	8		named after Bern, in Switzerland, the native land of a large share of the first
32.47	25		settlers. ^[3]
28.57	6	21	Bern, Bear Lake, Idaho, United States
27.38	207	756	Unknown
25.00	3	12	Pine Valley, Washington, Utah, United States

Additional Patterns

Missionaries from Iosepa, Utah

- Total of 2 missionaries

Mission Calls by City (Bar)



Year

1850

1940

Residence

Iosepa, Tooele, Utah, U... ▼

Mission Area

Hawaii

Outside US

Additional Patterns

Missionaries to Iceland (filtering by **mission** and **location served**)

- From 1870 to 1910, 10 out of 15 missionaries to Iceland left from **Spanish Fork, Utah** (66.67%)

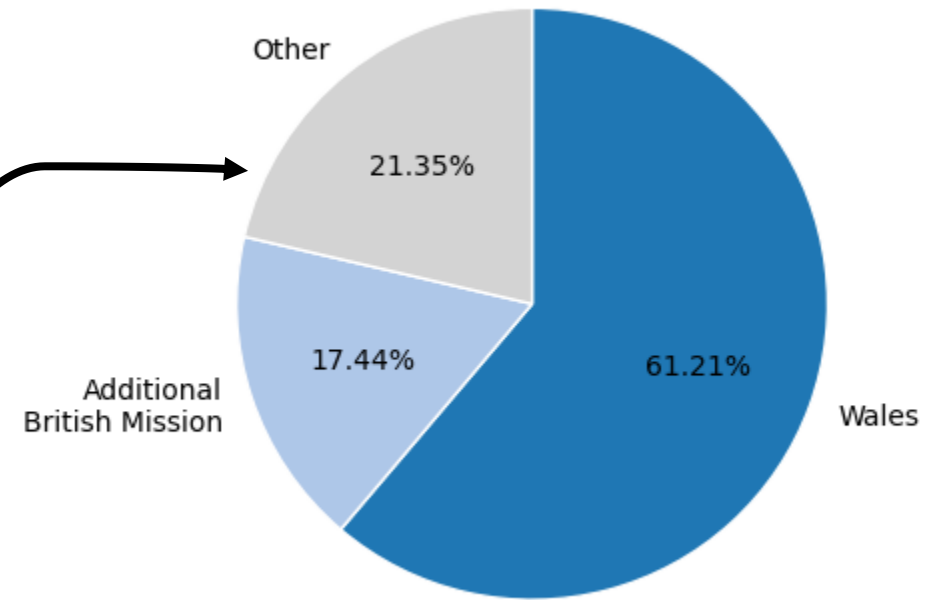


Additional Patterns

Filtering by **birth place**

- From 1850 to 1900, 172 out of 281 (61.21%) missions from missionaries **born in Wales** were to **Wales**
- Increases to 221 out of 281 (78.65%) when including the British Mission

Missionaries born in Wales, 1850 - 1900



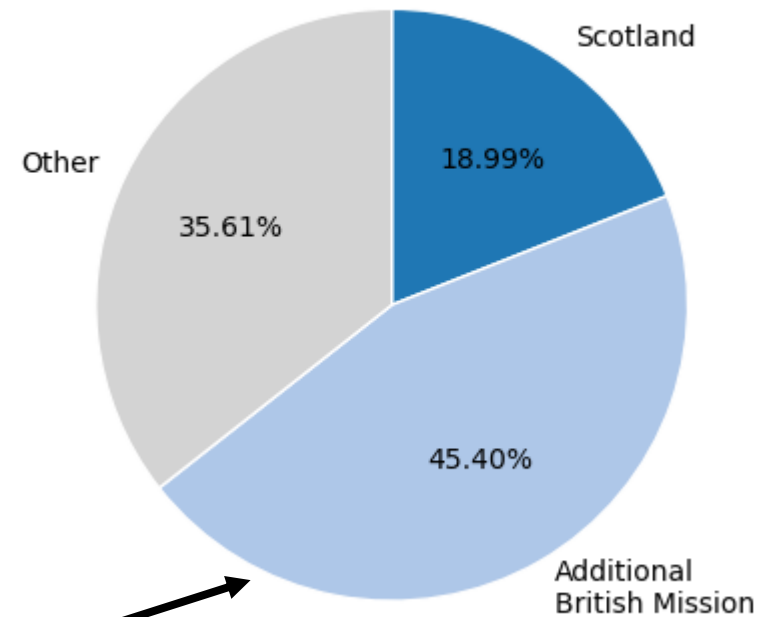
Some Welsh missionaries who served missions in Wales also served missions in additional areas

Additional Patterns

Filtering by **birth place**

- From 1850 to 1900, 64 out of 337 (18.99%) missions from missionaries **born in Scotland** were to **Scotland**
- Increases to 217 out of 337 (64.39%) when including the British Mission

Missionaries born in Scotland, 1850 - 1900



Many Scottish missionaries to the British Mission have “Location Served” simply listed as “Great Britain” (including my ancestor, Andrew Ferguson)

Conclusion

- Even with known data problems, we can find many interesting patterns in the missionary data
 - We can identify several immigrant communities in Utah and Idaho
 - We can also confirm theories that early missionaries were often called on missions to their (non-US) homelands or nearby
- Python tools and Tableau visualizations available at <https://github.com/nathan-cordner/mha2025>
- Contact: Nathan Cordner -- ncordner@uvu.edu