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Digital Collection: Bear Lake Monster



Explore the origins of the Bear Lake Monster legend in this digital collection featuring folklore items, newspaper articles, interviews and other materials from Utah State University's Special Collections and Archives. The Bear Lake Monster is a regional legend from the Bear Lake Valley (Utah and Idaho), home to a large, deep lake where the monster purportedly resides. Many believe the legend originated in 1896 with Joseph Rich, an early Mormon settler and developer of the area who used the legend as a marketing ploy to get visitors to Rich County, Utah (named for his family); he later said it was a joke. Joke or no, the legend persists to date and has grown to include a connection to the Loch Ness Monster in Scotland. For many locals, the legend serves as a cautionary water tale and well-known local joke.

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