

Water Projects Worked on by Brigham Jarvis

Out of the Past

by E. L. Jarvis, historian. Published in the Washington County News, September 16, 1965

A group of Piute pine-nut harvesters came to Cottonwood Creek on the south slope of Pine Valley Mountain for water. They found the water running in a four foot wide ditch. An old Indian was first to come along down the ditch, and when he found Brigham Jarvis looking through his transit, he saw his helper drive a grade stake.

The stream was running back into the creek bed nearby, and he examined the operation, then came back and exclaimed, "Nuny Kutch Sabby, water all time down hill, Jarvis water uphill." It really looked that way because of the fast receding creek bed and the towering hillside.

Jarvis was the city councilman assigned to do the job. The enclosed view along the 18 mile open ditch of most difficult terrain shows a challenging task indeed.

Mr. Jarvis was self-taught and had gained desire and incentive through working along with his father, George Jarvis, as water boy while George drove the piles in the Dixie Cotton Mission

diversion dam on the Virgin River, a little southwest of the cotton gin and factory and near Washington, five miles east of St. George Tabernacle. The piles have since decayed or eroded away.

He drove the first ox team on the newly surveyed town and helped his father pitch the first tent on lot 6 of Block 1, plat A, St. George City Survey. They had helped surveyor Angus M. Cannon lay out the new city. The lot is still owned by a member of the family.

Brigham laid out dam sites and surveyed ditches. He also organized the Jarvis Dam and Ditch Company and blasted out a spillway using sand gates. He helped build the Washington field dam and used a spillway there also. When the Jarvis field land was washed away and abandoned, he bought up the 10 second feet and filed to use it at the Hurricane Canal where he, with others from St. George, Hurricane, and LaVerkin, organized the Dixie Irrigation Project.

They filed on more water and also bought the LaVerkin hot springs. Another project was to water the desert west of Pinto and north of Enterprise. Still another, was the Green River to Dog Valley survey northwest of Cove Fort.

