



History of Morgan County



By MRS. WILLIAM CHADWICK

RICHVILLE

In the fall of 1859 David Henderson and Jonathan Hemmingway located the town of Richville. Mr. Henderson built the first house down by the creek below the present town.

Thomas Rich brought his family there in April, 1861. John H. Rich, Gillispie Waldron and Solomon Conley came the same season.

They at once set to work to plow and put their crops in. Then they made an irrigation ditch (1861), and raised a crop that year. The place became a farming and stockraising community.

Albert Dickson came in 1862 and his father and brothers came some time later. John Seamon, who was a brother-in-law of Jonathan Hemmingway, came very early also, and was one of the first school teachers. Nearly all the first settlers came from Centerville.

The first school house was erected in 1863. Mr. Thomas Rich was the first Presiding Elder in Richville and the town was named in his honor. His daughter, now Mrs. J. T. Waldron, was the first white child born in that locality. John Seamon was the second Presiding Elder.

Solomon Conley proposed the name of Richville for the settlement and it was incorporated as a townsite. Mrs. Conley was a nurse and she did a lot of good for the people. She was a graduate doctor from Sweden and saved many people's lives by her skill.

About 1863 George W. Taggart of Salt Lake City, and two brothers, Morgan and Henry Hinman, of Farmington, Davis Co., commenced the building of a grist mill in Richville. Owing to the difficulties in those days of obtaining the necessary materials it was not completed until 1866. The irrigation ditch, which the early settlers had made, was now enlarged into a mill race. Mr. Thomas Grover says that Brigham Young came to the valley before the mill was in operation, and after looking at it said, "Brother Taggart, it won't run. The draft is in dead water." This proved to be true and the wheel had to be enlarged and sunk deeper before it would run.

About 1867 a little child of Baltzer Peterson was drowned in this stream. The body being caught against the grates of the mill. About 29 years after this another child, that of John Wood, was drowned in the same ditch.

Before the completion of this mill the people were dependent on the lower valleys for their flour, etc. At one time the high water destroyed the road through Devil's Gate. The flour supply became exhausted and the people were reduced to extreme want. Not until the first of August was there an outlet made to other valleys. At this time the people were compelled to move, and consequently ten teams, each having from one to two yokes of oxen, made an attempt to cross the mountains in search of flour.

The teams were hitched to carts and followed Hardscrabble Canyon down to the Heber C. Kimball flour mills in Salt Lake City. They were obliged to cross over ten feet of snow but obtained some flour and returned home much to the joy of the people.

So this grist mill, the first to be built in Weber Valley, was greatly appreciated and proved a blessing to the people, as it gave them the opportunity of milling what little grain they raised and encouraged them to plant more grain.

This mill was patronized by the people of Coalville and all this upper country. They would come and camp overnight. As many as thirty teams have been there at one time. The mill remained in operation until 1890, but some years before that time the manufacture of flour was discontinued. The old mill was torn down in 1915.

Mr. Albert D. Dickson was appointed Bishop of Richville ward in July, 1877, and held the position for more than 37 years.

AMUSEMENTS IN RICHVILLE

Hunting and fishing were the main sports. Game was plentiful in those days. It was easy enough to get fish for breakfast before the sun was up; or to shoot enough chickens for dinner. There were also wild animals—bears, deers, mountain lions, lynx, bob-cats, etc. Dancing was the social amusement. They would begin to dance at sun set and continue until midnight, when supper would be served, and dancing continued until sunrise. Candles were used for light; the people were frightened of the first kerosene lamps.

Checker playing was very popular in the winter time. The Shoshone and Ute Indians made Richville their home during the summer time. In the year 1870 the taxes on 50 acres of land was \$2.50.

The first school house in Richville was erected by Billa Dickson in 1865. The first teachers boarded around at the different homes. The parents paid tuition for their children and furnished the text books. The first brick school house was erected by the people in 1872. The shingles for this building were hauled from the canyon on hand sleighs.

The reason for this being that 4 ft. of snow fell in the early fall and the people were unable to get into the canyon with bob sleighs. This school house furnished shelter for the church and school until 1913, when a modern building was erected.

The first mowing machine was brought into town in 1870, by Jonahan Hemmingway. Before this all the grain was cradled by hand. Thos. Rich bought the first threshing machine. They called this "the Old Chaf Piler."

Later on other machines were brought in, one of these being a horse power machine purchased by Jos. T. Waldron, F. W. Clark, C. W. Waldron, Thos. Spackman and W. H. Rich in 1897. The same company bought a self feeder, run by a tractor in 1919.

Mrs. Annie S. Dickson bought the first piano in Richville in 1896. Thos. Murphy was the first missionary. He left in 1875. In 1876, David Eaton, David Henderson and John Seamon went on missions. John Seamon presided over the first Sunday school. He was succeeded by Isaac Morris. Charles W. Taggart was first President of the Y. M. M. I. A.