

Armed Woman Guards Trees in Rockville

Salt Lake Tribune

May 15, 1940

Rockville, Washington County — A Rockville housewife with a rifle in her hands and a love for trees in her heart is causing a great deal of excitement here.

Eight mulberry trees front Mrs. Warren Hirschi's property. Current road improvement from the mouth of Zion canyon to

Friday morning the men returned. All other intervening trees on the right of way had been leveled. The men started to climb aloft when Mrs. Hirschi appeared. Rifle in hand she quietly — but firmly — ordered them down. The men shinnied down the mulberries in a hurry.



Rockville's Main Street c. 1940

Rockville by the state road commission calls for their removal.

Rockville's voting population of 120 almost unanimously voted for the end of the mulberries fronting the community's principal street. But not so Mrs. Hirschi, who, despite engineers, W P A workers and local authorities, has stood her ground — with a gun in hand.

About a month ago, when crews started tree-removal operations Mrs. Hirschi climbed into the tree in question, defied workers to lower or any of the others providing shade to the Hirschi home. The workers left, continuing operations elsewhere in Rockville.

Workmen Return

Sheriff Antone B. Prince in St. George Tuesday said he had talked to the Washington County attorney about the trees and agreed it was up to the state road commission to take any further action. If they obtained an injunction ordering Mrs. Hirschi to desist, he indicated he would cooperate.

State road officials in Salt Lake City said they had heard "indirectly" about Mrs. Hirschi's objections, but pointed out that the work in Rockville only was begun after Rockville's citizens petitioned for the program and a "go ahead" order for tree-removal reached them from the Washington county commission.

State Right Upheld

The attorney general's office has advised the road officials they have a legal right to remove the trees which are on the public right of way.

The Rockville street improvement program is part of a more than \$125,000 project begun by the state road commission this spring with the aid of the federal public roads administration and the W P A, designed to beautify and improve the roadway from Rockville through Springdale to the Zion canyon mouth for more than five miles.

Termed a "very unusual" type of project by road officials, it includes laying of bituminous sidewalks, curb and gutter, tree removals and new plantings through Rockville and Springdale, programs fostered by local committees in the two communities.



*Rockville Women playing Stickball (n.d.)
William Louis Crawford photographer*

Additional Observations (Richard Kohler, 2010)

Rockville locals recall that the stone ditches lining Main Street, which are visible in the photo above, were built with the help of the W P A. The Salt Lake Tribune story ends with a description that includes "sidewalks", which are also visible in the photo. The road pavement in the photo appears to be new, complete with double-centerline painted striping.

I think we can conclude that the mulberry trees survived the improvement project of 1940. It is possible that the ditches and the sidewalks were located within the public right of way, while the mature mulberry trees were not.

Rockville Women 1, State Road Commission 0

1861.
Above Grafton, about two and a half miles, on the north bank of the river, lies Rockville, which the late President Brigham Young called the finest location for a town on the Rio Virgen. It was first settled in 1861,

O ye mountains high, where the clear blue sky
Arches over the vales of the free,
Where the pure breezes blow and the clear streamlets flow,
How I've longed to your bosom to flee!
O Zion! dear Zion! land of the free,
Now my own mountain home, unto thee I have come—
All my fond hopes are centered in thee.

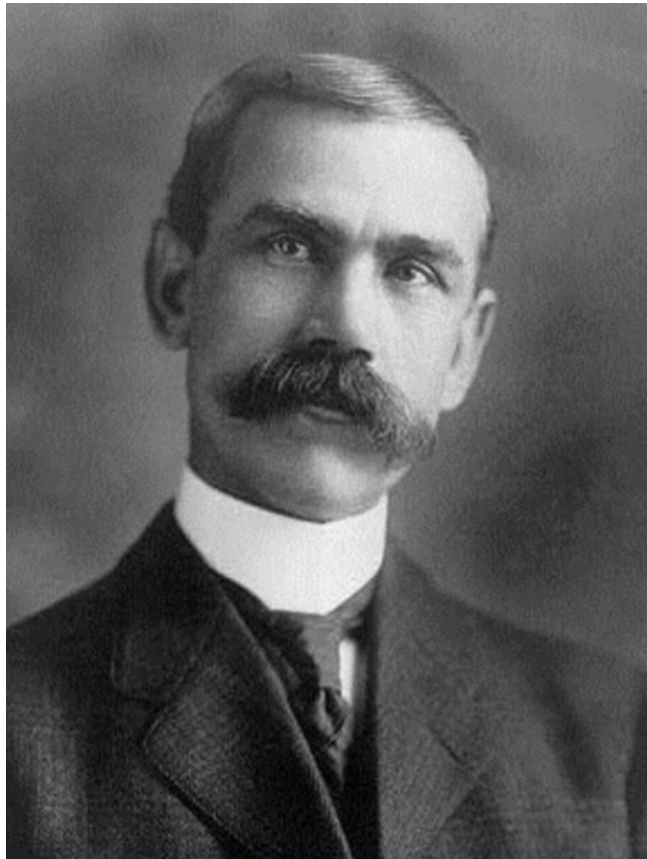
Reed Smoot

1900, Age 38

LDS Apostle

1903, Age 41

United States Senate



In 1916, Mormon Apostle Reed Smoot was the Senate sponsor of legislation to establish the **National Park Service**.

**DEDICATORY SERVICES
HELD FOR THE NEW
ROCKVILLE CHAPEL**

ROCKVILLE, May 13—The Rockville Chapel was dedicated on Saturday, May 11th at the first session of the Zion Park Quarterly conference. President Claude Hirschi presided and conducted the services.

Dedicatory services were opened by the congregation singing, "Oh Ye Mountains High." Bishop David Hirschi gave the opening prayer. This was followed by appropriate singing by a double mixed quartet from Rockville and a ladies quartet. The Springdale Ward furnished a double mixed quartet number also. Talks were made by President Hirschi, Bishop Waldon Ballard, Bishop Philitus Jones, under whose leadership the new chapel was built; Heber Hirschi, Marvin Terry and Leonard Dalton. Apostle Reed Smoot gave the dedicatorial prayer after which he gave a fine talk.

May 13, 1935 Washington County News



Rockville was the Kane County seat in 1866 during Indian troubles. In 1867 the county seat was moved to Toquerville. In 1882, the western part of Kane County was annexed into Washington County, and Kanab became the Kane County seat.



1928 Zion and Grand Canyon Official Bird's Eye Map

Work to Start on Rockville Bridge

Governor Charles R. Mabey is advised by the National Park service that it is now ready to construct the bridge across the Virgin river at Rockville, just as soon as matters affecting title to the ground on which the bridge will stand are cleared up. The letter of advice is from Superintendent Mather of the National Park service and is for the purpose of informing the state government in advance, so that as little delay as possible may occur when proper papers have been made out. Work must start in the near future if the appropriation is not to lapse, he points out.

Through the efforts of Senator Reed Smoot, \$123,000 was obtained for the construction of the bridge and of roads in the Zion national park from the last congress. The road work is already nearing completion. The bridge is outside the park, and hence the necessity for obtaining title to the ground. The national laws require a formal quitclaim to the property from the state. It is explained by the solicitor for the park service.



Rockville Bridge 2008

February 14, 1924 Salt Lake Telegram

When the Rooster Crows

Red Rock Rondo

with Rockville Watermaster Leon Lewis

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T9PtIV9r9Mc>

"I milked my first cow when I was five..." Leon Lewis was teacher and principal at the two-room Springdale (Utah) Elementary School for more than 30 years. He is also a lover of poetry, which he commits to memory and often recites. When he retired to his farming Rockville, the county named its local library after him. This song is based on things Leon told Red Rock Rondo composer Phillip Bimstein while taking him on a tour of his farm.

Hay Colored Leaves

Red Rock Rondo

with Springdale Resident Louise Excell

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z21hgJQm2oE>

When Louise Excell was growing up in Springdale, Utah, there were fruit-bearing mulberry trees lining both sides of the street all the way through town. They were full of fruit—white mulberries, black mulberries, red mulberries—which attracted huge flocks of birds. The children's hands would turn purple with the juice from those mulberries. But one by one, the trees were cut down for development. Louise said that, sadly, there's no place for mulberry trees in Springdale anymore.

Rocks on Fire

Red Rock Rondo

Zion-Mt. Carmel Tunnel (1928)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kGZwlcpiQ6o>

Rocks on Fire tells the story of the mile-long tunnel that was blasted through a mountain in Zion National Park in 1928. An engineering marvel, it connected the two sides of the park, and from that point on, tourism flourished—but not until after the miners could blast the uneven places or, as they said, "shoot the tights." It was hard and dangerous work; two men died, one from inhaling too much sand and dynamite fumes. Today visitors drive through the tunnel in comfort and see all the wonders of Zion, thanks to those miners who drove through that rock with shovels, sweat and dynamite.

Back & Forth (A Ghost Story)

Red Rock Rondo

at Grafton Graveyard

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=guDOdqaCThc>

In 1927, a 12-year-old girl named Vilo Demille was playing in a graveyard in Grafton, Utah (a remote town once used as a hideaway by Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid) when she saw the ghosts of two girls who had died in a terrible accident in Grafton in 1866. Hear the story told in song for Vilo by members of the musical ensemble Red Rock Rondo - Charlotte Bell, Phillip Bimstein, Hal Cannon, Harold Carr, Flavia Cerviño-Wood, and Kate MacLeod - at the Grafton cemetery in front of the grave of the two girls.

Don Falvey Waltz

Red Rock Rondo

at Grafton Graveyard

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oF6TYlfkbz8>

Thirty years ago, when he was collecting folksongs from Utah, Virgin City resident Hal Cannon recorded a Springdale harmonica player named Larkin Gifford. Larkin played a traditional tune he called "The Don Jolley Waltz," named after Zion's first chief ranger. Hal later recorded this tune with the Deseret String Band. When Phillip Bimstein served as mayor of Springdale, the town forged an award-winning partnership with Zion National Park and its superintendent, Don Falvey. Phillip adapted "The Don Jolley Waltz" and gave it words that honor this relationship and the work done by Don Falvey to preserve the nature and quiet of the park and the Virgin River (originally called the "Pa'Rus" by the Paiute Indians).

Historic Rockville, Utah

Jane Whalen, 2012

<https://wchsutah.org/documents/whalen-rockville-book.php>

Historic Ditches of Rockville

Richard Kohler, 2010

<https://wchsutah.org/towns/rockville3.pdf>