

Indians pre-1854

Paiute Indians and their ancestors had lived in the vicinity of St. George long before the area was first visited by white men. The expedition of Spaniards Dominguez and Escalante had encountered tribes growing beans, corn and melons near the mouth of the Santa Clara on the Virgin River as recorded in surviving maps from 1776.

Indian Mission Reconnaissance

In 1854, a small group of Mormons were called on an Indian Mission by Church leaders. These men and the wives were to live among the Indian band (Tonaquints) dwelling along the banks of the Santa Clara River. Learn the Indian language, teach them better farming methods and introduce them to Mormon doctrines, most particularly, that they were descendants of Lamanites, who had originated in Jerusalem. During that period the Mormons located reliable water sources including the West Spring which emerges beneath a sandstone cliff at the eastern edge of the present Dixie Red Hills golf course.

Settlement 1861 water source West Spring

The water from West Spring (sometimes called Watercress Spring), became a principle source of drinking water for the original St. George settlers who arrived in the fall of 1861. Water was conveyed by a ditch from the spring to the lots and blocks of the original St. George town plat by way of Diagonal Street, which was oriented to allow the gentle flow of water downhill, to points where it was conveyed to each town lot on a regimented schedule. The clean, clear and reliable water from West Spring was highly preferable to the muddy, sulfurous smelling water of the Virgin River, which was originally named *El Rio Sulfureo de los Piramedes* by Dominguez and Escalante.



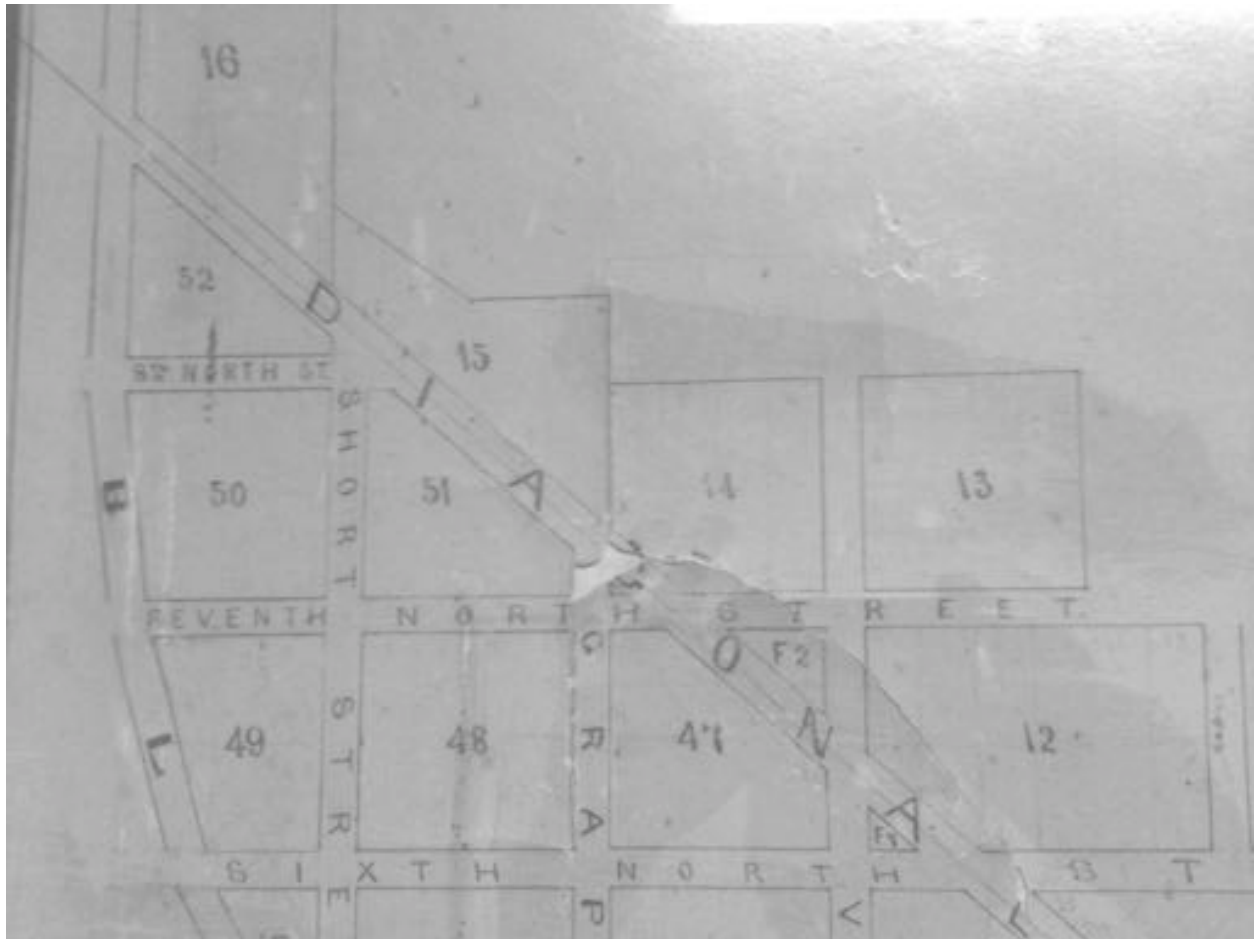
Quarry Blurbs

February, 2015

Stone quarried 1862 to 1875

The 1861 settlers, began quarrying red sandstone just to the south of West Spring as early as the spring of 1862. Stone from this quarry was used for most of the important buildings in St. George, including the Tabernacle, the Temple, the Opera House, and the (old) County Courthouse. Remnants of quarrying activities remain today.

Expanded St. George Town Plat



After the Temple was completed in 1877, County Surveyor John W. Macfarlane completed a substantially enlarged plat map of St. George. Diagonal Street was straightened out. The north south streets were given botanical and other names. Today's 700 West Street was named Short Street. This plat map anticipated a future St. George that would rival Great Salt Lake City in size.

Indian Camping pre-1890

In the years after 1862, an itinerant Paiute Indian band (the Shviwitz) , whose homeland was in the mountains north of the Grand Canyon regularly frequented St. George. When in the area, they camped near water sources including the West Spring at the head of Diagonal Street.



(1873 J. K. Hillers photograph with J. W. Powell.) In 1875, the Mormons baptized the majority of the Shivwitz band, proclaimed them brothers and gave them an area to farm along the Santa Clara River. (1875 photograph by C. R. Savage). In the photo above taken near Sandtown Park, note J. W. Powell on the left with unfilled sleeve (arm lost in Civil War), and the two Mormon trees, planted alongside the Diagonal Street ditch.

The Shivwitz had bargained with the large livestock operators that moved onto the Arizona Strip during the 1880s and received compensation for the use of their traditional watering holes by herds of sheep and cattle. By 1890, the Shivwitz were regularly stealing cattle according to both the stockmen and the Mormons. Newly elected Mayor Anthony Ivins, son of St. George's original surveyor and doctor, Israel Ivin's, undertook a campaign to remedy the quarrelsome situation. The Shivwitz tribe regularly camped near West Spring when in St. George.

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Indian Farm purchase on Santa Clara 1890

After arresting some of those tribe members who stole cattle, Anthony Ivins and the Mormons negotiated with the Shivwitz band whose leaders agreed that they would cease their thievery, if they had a good Indian farm, farming implements and supplies. In 1890, Ivins bought what was known as the McNeil farm (near present day Shem) for them, afterwards in 1891, the Federal government added the Conger farm and the Woodbury place creating the Shivwits Indian Farm. Anthony Ivins was appointed special agent to the Indians to supervise the arrangement.

An Indian School was established there in 1899, funded by State and Federal appropriations. Teachers were recruited with the aid of the Presbyterian mission to Utah. The Shivwits claim to water from the Santa Clara river was not settled until 2003.

Woolley, Lund and Judd Copper Smelter 1890

Also in 1890, the mercantile firm of Woolley, Lund and Judd wished to construct a copper smelter complete with water-jacketed blast furnaces in St. George to process ore from the Dixie Mine. This venture would create a number of paying jobs for area residents.

The City of St. George provided land for the copper smelter at the head of Diagonal Street. Water for the operations was provided from West Spring. The 25 ton smelter was operated profitably during 1891, 1892, 1893, 1894 and intermittently until 1899. In 1900, Dixie copper mine was sold to Jean F. Webb, representing eastern interests. Webb offered to pipe the Cottonwood Canal water from its source at the base of the Pine Valley mountains, in exchange for the use of West Spring to increase the power for the existing smelter. The proposition was

rejected by the Town Council.



The Utah and Eastern Copper company built a new 100 ton smelter at Shem in 1900, managed by Charles Doolittle.

Dodge's Pond

One of the partners with Woolley, Lund and Judd in the Dixie mine and smelter operation was Dodge, who may have been the smelter manager. The pond was located north of the smelter. It was built to hold water required for use in the smelter's water jacketed blast furnaces. The pond was later used for boating and swimming as you can see in the photo below.



Ice Plant and Ice Company 1907

When, Edward H. Snow, son of Erastus Snow, was called to serve as St. George stake president in 1901, he set goals to establish a high school, bring electricity to town, set up a piped water system and get an ice plant.

In 1907, the St. George Ice Company was incorporated with \$10,000 capital stock by E. H. Snow, George F. Whitehead, S. Snow and others. Since an ice plant would need a reliable source of clean, clear water, it was located near West Spring, east of the prior copper smelter on Diagonal Street. At the time, ice making was accomplished through the use of large steam driven compressors like those made by Frick Company of Pennsylvania. These "plate" plants made ice in huge sheets, weighing several tons, which required about a week to freeze. Air was bubbled through the water to agitate it and make the ice clear. Blocks of ice were delivered to customers throughout St. George and Washington County by horse drawn wagon. A block of ice placed on the lower (half-buried) level of each home's granary kept perishable foods cold throughout the long summers.

St. George Civilian Conservation Corps Camp 1930s



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Birds-eye views of the layout and buildings at the St. George CCC Camp.



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Quarry Blurbs
September, 2017



The St. George Camp of the Civilian Conservation Corps occupied the Sunstone Condominiums site in 1935 as shown in these two photos.



Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camp, 1935



Sunstone Condominiums, 2011

Dixie Red Hills First Golf Course



Heber J. Grant, President of the LDS Church, along with Mormon Apostle and St. George native Anthony Ivins, suggested building a golf course in the 1930s. County attorney and Utah State Senator, Orval Hafen, urged building a golf course to attract winter visitors, in the 1950s. But the frugal Dixie farmers had no time to play golf.

It was not until 1960 that Sid Atkin, then president of the chamber of commerce, his brother Joe and businessman Neal Lundberg worked with golf professional Ernie Schneitter to locate a nine-hole course on the City owned land near West Spring. The City needed to acquire additional water rights and sell revenue bonds to finance the course construction. The Elks Club and the Lions Club donated labor to build both the holes and the clubhouse. Gene Schneitter, Ernie's son, became the golf pro. Dixie Red Hills opened as a municipal course in the summer of 1964, to become St. George's first golf course.

Sunstone Condominiums 1974



Sunstone, St. George's first condominium project was completed in 1974 on land immediately south of the Dixie Red Hills golf course accessed from 700 West street. It is a 64-unit project with a swimming pool and clubhouse executed in a California contemporary style.

Red Cliffs National Conservation Area 2009

Through the *Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009*, Congress designated the Red Cliffs National Conservation Area in Washington County, Utah. Land owned by the City of St. George since 1875, when the first patents of federal land were made, is included within the boundaries of the NCA. The conservation boundary does not include the golf course, portions of the original sandstone quarry nor West Spring, but does embrace the cliffs overlooking town to the east of 700 West. The conservation area is sometimes called the Tortoise Preserve, due to the fact that desert tortoise are among the species found in this area.

The federal legislation that led to the creation of the conservation area was sponsored by United States Senator, Bob Bennett (R-UT) and United States Representative Jim Matheson (D-UT) in 2006. It was originally known as the *Washington County Growth and Conservation Act*.