

Brigham Jarvis, Ideas and Innovations

Quotations about Brigham Jarvis

from I Was Called to Dixie, by Andrew Karl Larson

Cottonwood Water

John G. McQuarrie, a member of the St. George City Council during the period when the water was finally brought to St. George, said of Jarvis, "He saw the possibility of turning this priceless stream of water over a canyon wall a thousand feet high, thus changing a course from the southwest where it is now. Like the rock that Moses smote in Horeb's burning sand, it sent forth its healing waters to gladden all the land. For 20 years Brig continued to talk Cottonwood water. Others joined in the chorus."

There seems to be a general agreement of opinion that it was Brigham Jarvis, Sr., who kept alive the agitation for bringing the Cottonwood water to St. George. It was his idea that it could be brought over the present route when the deceptive topography of the country argued it would make the ditch so expensive that it would be impractical.

The Spillway Innovation (Washington Fields Dam)

Brigham Jarvis introduced an innovation in dam building on the Virgin when he conceived the idea of a spillway to control the excess water which came down the river. Jarvis pioneered this device in Utah and was perhaps the first to use it in the West.. . At any rate, Jarvis' idea was put to practical use on the Virgin River at a later date when the present St. George and Washington Field Canal Company built its dam during the early 1890s. The device was used later in the construction of storage reservoirs in Utah and in projects all over the West, some of them gigantic in size. The idea was original with him.

Labor for Water Right Shares

The editor of *The Union* writes, "Progress of work on the ditch to bring the Cottonwood water to St. George, I am informed that about one-fourth of the labor to bring the water to Washington Hollow is already done, and about thirty men are still at work. If our young men who want homes are not wide awake, the time to insure some of this water will soon pass by as men of means are not slow to see a good opportunity in which to invest their money. I would say, 'Boys round up your shoulders and grasp the opportunity to get some water rights, as water means homes where you can have the comforts of life, and this can now be obtained with the poor man's capital--that is, labor--so I say, don't wait till it is too late.'" *Report by the Editor of The Union, April 2, 1896*

Cottonwood Canal Route

This newspaper gives Brigham Jarvis credit for discovering the feasible canal. It said, "After thoroughly examining both of the old routes, they made a preliminary examination of Mr. Jarvis's route and unanimously decided that it was by far the best route for the canal. In fact it proved to be much better than Mr. Jarvis himself had expected to find it." *Taken from a bound copy of The Union, November, 13, 1896 (Newspaper) for the year 1896, now in possession of Archie D. Wallis, St. George, Utah. (1967) He has the County News from the earliest times to the present in bound volumes.*