

## Richmond Tyree Gillespie

Richmond Tyree Gillespie (known as R T or Dick) was born about 1834 in Tennessee. He was the oldest of six children of David Gillespie and Mary Lewis Tyree. In 1850 the family was living in Lafayette, Missouri.<sup>1</sup>

In 1855, R T shows on the voter registration lists in Doniphan County, Kansas.<sup>2</sup> Originally this area was part of the Missouri Territory until 1854, when the Kansas and Nebraska Act was passed. He is also listed as an incorporator of Marysville<sup>3</sup>, a ferry town established at a Pawnee trading post on the Big Blue River. It lay on the Oregon Trail and the route of the Pony Express. It is now a part of Marshall County, Kansas. The next year R T was an incorporator of the Kansas Mining Company<sup>4</sup> and served as an election judge in Doniphan Precinct in the Territory of Kansas.<sup>5</sup>

R T moved to the Utah Territory where he is listed in the Camp Floyd Mining District (near Tooele) account book for purchasing items at the sutler store in 1858 and 1859.<sup>6</sup> He had moved to Montana by 1866, when the newspaper records that he brought peaches and plums from Utah.<sup>7</sup> The telegraph was completed between Salt Lake City and Virginia City, Montana, that year. Richmond and others signed a letter of invitation for entertainment.<sup>8</sup>

In 1867, the newspaper identifies R T Gillespie as a Wells Fargo agent in Helena, Montana. He often traveled to and from Virginia City, Montana.<sup>9</sup> He was referred to as “one of our favorite agents” and “a prince of good fellows”.<sup>10</sup> He was described as an “efficient and universally popular representative of Wells Fargo”.<sup>11</sup> Wells Fargo named three new sleighs after their three most efficient agents, and R T was one of them.<sup>12</sup> He often shared the latest news with the local newspaper in Helena, such as Indian troubles, disasters, or coach accidents.<sup>13</sup> When there was a backlog of letters or packages waiting at the Wells Fargo office, he printed the receivers’ names in the newspaper.<sup>14</sup> He posted the cost of stage fares in the newspaper – for example, the fare from Virginia City to Salt Lake City was \$120.<sup>15</sup>

There is a record of R T being involved in supplementary proceedings and filing a defendant affidavit in the case of John M Clarkson vs. Wells Fargo & Co in 1869.<sup>16</sup> In 1870, in Territory vs. R T Gillespie, he was charged and paid a bail of \$5,000.<sup>17</sup> In 1871 he is Wells Fargo agent at Corinne, Utah<sup>18</sup>, the

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<sup>1</sup> United States Census, 1850.

<sup>2</sup> Kansas Voter Registration Lists, 1854-1856; Congressional Series of United States Public Documents, Vol 869, 1856, p. 488.

<sup>3</sup> History of Marshall County, Kansas: Its People, Industries, and Institutions, by Emma Elizabeth Calderhead Foster, 1917, p. 116; Laws of the Territory of Kansas, p. 676.

<sup>4</sup> Senate Documents, Otherwise Published as Public Documents and Executive Documents, 1856, p. 733.

<sup>5</sup> Report of the Special Committee Appointed to Investigate the Troubles in Kansas, 1856, p. 486.

<sup>6</sup> [Camp Floyd Mining District Book A.](#)

<sup>7</sup> *The Montana Post*, 8 September 1866, p. 5.

<sup>8</sup> *The Montana Post*, 3 November 1866, p. 4.

<sup>9</sup> *The Montana Post*, 20 April 1867, p. 8; 9 May 1868, p. 8; 9 May 1868, p. 8.

<sup>10</sup> *The Montana Post*, 25 May 1867, p. 8; 1 June 1867, p. 8; 15 June 1867, p. 8; 26 September 1867, p. 8; 26 October 1867, p. 8.

<sup>11</sup> *The Montana Post*, 8 January 1869, p. 6.

<sup>12</sup> *The Montana Post*, 21 December 1867, p. 7.

<sup>13</sup> *The Montana Post*, 20 July 1867, p. 1; 7 September 1867 p. 7; 22 February 1868, p. 8; 5 March 1869, p. 8; 5 March 1869, p. 8.

<sup>14</sup> *The Montana Post*, 4 September 1868, p. 5; 12 March 1869, p. 8; 9 April 1869, p. 6; 11 June 1869, p. 2.

<sup>15</sup> *The Montana Post*, 12 May 1866, p. 2; 9 March 1867, p. 7.

<sup>16</sup> *The Montana Post*, 12 March 1869, p. 6.

<sup>17</sup> *Helena Weekly Herald*, 27 October 1870, p. 5.

<sup>18</sup> *The New North-West*, 10 February 1871, p. 3.

headquarters for fitting out ox and mule trains with freight for Idaho and Montana. He visits Corinne Utah, Deer Lodge Montana, and Helena Montana over the next few years.<sup>19</sup>

In 1874, R T is appointed the Wells Fargo agent in Pioche, Nevada.<sup>20</sup> The Montana newspaper wrote, “Dick Gillespie was arguably the best stage agent ever to work in Montana, he didn’t have the charm of Nat Stein at Virginia City, but he was reliable and paid attention to every passengers’ personal needs. The citizens of Helena loved him”<sup>21</sup> and he has “earned the confidence of his employers by faithful service.”<sup>22</sup>

In 1875 R T was assigned to the Wells Fargo office in Salt Lake City, Utah. The newspaper noted that he had “grown gray and popular in the service of that corporation.”<sup>23</sup> However, in 1878, R T, his brother David W, and his mother Mary L “widow of David” were all living on Pine Street in St Louis, Missouri.<sup>24</sup> In 1879 he is referred to in a Montana newspaper as a “former agent and now assistant superintendent”, reporting the value of bullion shipped from Pioche, Nevada, to be \$1,645,252 for the year.<sup>25</sup> On the 1880 census, he is living with his mother in St Louis, Missouri.<sup>26</sup>

By 1881, R T Gillespie, Esquire, is living in Silver Reef, Utah, where he was appointed as superintendent of the Barbee and Walker Mining Company.<sup>27</sup> “Dick” is an old-time mining man, in every way qualified to fill the office... under his management the property will be worked – at the reduced rate of wages, of course, for all it is worth.”<sup>28</sup>

R T continued his business workings in Silver Reef when the Liddle Brothers & Company was sold to the Woolley, Lund & Judd Company, continuing business under the name Gillespie, Lund & Company.<sup>29</sup> They were wholesale/retail grocers and dry goods merchants.<sup>30</sup> A fine new wagon of superior workmanship was made in Salt Lake City for this merchant and mining business.<sup>31</sup> To round off a busy year, R T served on the committee to arrange for a public school in Silver Reef.<sup>32</sup>

Gillespie, Lund & Company is dissolved in October 1883, with R T retiring and bought out by his partners who formed the Woolley, Lund & Judd Company.<sup>33</sup> With this change, the new firm has “closed up the mine and mill, throwing about 40 men out of work and giving almost a death blow to the fast-failing camp.”<sup>34</sup> R T then becomes a banker<sup>35</sup> and superintendent of the Barbee & Walker Mining Company.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> *The New North-West*, 5 May 1871, p. 3; 10 February 1871, p. 3; *Helena Weekly Herald*, 29 August 1872, p. 8; 31 October 1872, p. 8; 29 January 1874, p. 4.

<sup>20</sup> *Helena Weekly Herald*, 30 April 1874, p. 8.

<sup>21</sup> *Big Medicine: Visions of Early Montana*, by Charlie Nicks, 2005.

<sup>22</sup> *The Independent Record*, 23 April 1874, p. 3.

<sup>23</sup> *Helena Weekly Herald*, 18 March 1875, p. 8.

<sup>24</sup> US City Directories 1822-1995.

<sup>25</sup> *Independent Record*, 19 January 1879, p. 3.

<sup>26</sup> United States Census, 1880.

<sup>27</sup> *The Resources and Attractions of Utah*, by Ovando James Hollister, p. 40.

<sup>28</sup> *Salt Lake Herald*, 10 April 1881, p. 3; [List of Mines of Utah](#), Robert Ernest Cowan, p. 21.

<sup>29</sup> *Salt Lake Herald*, 25 August 1881, p. 7; 26 August 1881, p. 6; 28 August 1881, p. 2; 30 August 1881, p. 7.

<sup>30</sup> *Silver Reef Miner*, various dates.

<sup>31</sup> *Salt Lake Herald*, 28 September 1881, p. 8; *Salt Lake Herald*, 18 March 1883, p. 11.

<sup>32</sup> Minutes of Silver Reef School Board.

<sup>33</sup> *Salt Lake Herald*, 26 October 1883, p. 4.

<sup>34</sup> *Salt Lake Herald*, 26 October 1883, p. 8; 29 October 1883, p. 8.

<sup>35</sup> *Utah Gazatteer and Directory of Logan, Ogden, Provo and Salt Lake Cities, for 1884*, Robert W Sloan, p. 312; *Salt Lake City Directory, 1884*.

<sup>36</sup> *McKinney’s Pacific Coast Directory*.

R T served as a school board trustee for Silver Reef from 1884-1887<sup>37</sup> and as superintendent of the Christy Silver Mining Company. In 1885, Christy mining company paid a June dividend of 10 cents per share and were described as in "splendid condition."<sup>38</sup> The mining companies at Silver Reef had 450 men working as miners, mill hands, woodchoppers, hauler, etc., with 150 of them working at the Christy mine under Dick Gillespie.<sup>39</sup> He continued as banker at Silver Reef until 1889<sup>40</sup> when he left Utah Territory<sup>41</sup> and is a miner age 59, living in Pierce, Washington, with wife "S" age 36.<sup>42</sup>

From 1890-1892, Richmond T Gillespie was living in Tacoma, Washington, involved in real estate and mining. On the 1892 territorial census, Richmond T Gillespie was a miner age 55 with a wife Elizabeth age 40.<sup>43</sup> He died intestate 25 May 1894 in Pierce, Washington<sup>44</sup>, and was buried in the Tacoma Cemetery.<sup>45</sup> His probate papers list his widow Isabella Gillespie (no children); brother Thomas P of Salt Lake City; sister Anna M Davidson of Tacoma; and sister Josephine V Ely of Spokane. Isabella continues living in Tacoma until her death in 1901. She was also buried in the Tacoma Cemetery.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Minutes of Silver Reef School Board.

<sup>38</sup> *Salt Lake Evening Democrat*, 30 July 1885, p. 4.

<sup>39</sup> *Salt Lake Herald*, 18 Jan 1885, p. 2.

<sup>40</sup> The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft: History of Utah, 1889, p. 763; History of the Pacific States of North America: Utah, by A L Bancroft, 1889, p. 766.

<sup>41</sup> *Salt Lake Herald*, 14 August 1889, p. 5; Minutes of Silver Reef School Board.

<sup>42</sup> Washington Territorial Census, 1889.

<sup>43</sup> Washington Territorial Census 1892.

<sup>44</sup> [Probate file](#) for Richmond T Gillespie, Pierce, Washington.

<sup>45</sup> Find-a-grave; Buckley-King Mortuary records.

<sup>46</sup> Find-a-grave.