

Robert Dockery Covington
Annotated bibliography
Secondary source list on Robert Covington

Alder, Douglas D. and Karl F. Brooks. *A History of Washington County: From Isolation to Destination*. Salt Lake City, Utah. Utah State Historical Society and Washington County Commission, 1996.

ibid., p. 28-29, Mormon church leaders in Salt Lake City acted on advice of John D. Lee to send people south to raise semi tropical crops in open fields beside the Virgin River. One group led by Robert Covington from Salt Lake City left in early April. Their new home was called Washington. It also describes the floods and malaria afflicting the settlers.

ibid., p. 123-124, describes the Bishop Court called by Bishop Covington regarding a non-Mormon male from Silver Reef who got a Mormon girl pregnant.

ibid., p. 152, St. George resident Charles Walker describes in a journal entry that describes "Br. Covington represented Washington Branch. Bore his testimony to the truth." (See Charles Walker diary p. 271-272.)

Alder, Douglas D. and Karl Brooks. *A History of Washington County: From Isolation to Destination*. Salt Lake City, Utah. Zion Natural History Association, 2nd Ed. 2007.

ibid., p. 47. James Bleak in his "Annals of the Southern Utah Mission, lists the heads of families which included Robert D. Covington and many others.

ibid., p. 409 in Appendix A, Robert D. Covington is listed as serving as a Washington County Commissioner from June 1861 to August 1864 and again from Sept. 1872 to Aug. 1875.

Brooks, Juanita. *John Doyle Lee; Zealot - Pioneer Builder - Scapegoat*. Glendale, California, The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1973.

ibid., p. 283. In the spring of 1869, Brigham Young and company traveling in eight wagons or carriages set out for a regular visit to the southern settlements.

Understanding that Young did not intend to visit Harmony, Lee rode to Parowan. The next morning, Young told Lee he intended to visit Washington on Friday and he asked Lee to make necessary preparations. Lee said he would and arranged for a 20-man mounted escort. By dusk, they decided Young had stopped at Harrisburg because the road was bad. About a half hour after they disbanded, the Young company arrived. So Lee hurried to Bishop Covington's home to apologize.

“Where is your escort?” President Young asked sharply. He later agreed to eat his supper - he ordered only a bowl of mush and milk with Bishop Covington, but said he would sleep at the home of John D. Lee and take breakfast with him.

Brooks, Juanita. Ed. *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout, 1844-1861*. Salt Lake City, University of Utah Press and Utah State Historical Society, 1964,

ibid., p. 714. It states that “On June 12, 1862, officials of the church from St. George visited [Harrisburg] and organized a branch to be under the direction of Bishop Robert D. Covington of Washington Ward. The local officers named were James Lewis, presiding elder; Moses Harris and Hosea Stout, counselors.

Cahoon, Harold P. and Priscilla J. *Locations of Early Pioneer Sites; Pinpointed on a Washington City Map*, 1st Ed. 1993.

Ibid., p. 12-13. “Robert D. Covington (181 E. 200 N) This two-story home was built in 1859 by Robert D. Covington. He was also the first bishop of the Washington Ward. He was the leader of the second group of Cotton Missionaries to arrive in Washington, arriving May 6, 1857, approximately three weeks behind the Sam Adair Company. This is the oldest standing building in Washington City. It was used also as a place for social events and meetings. It was restored by Andrew and Kathy Earle. Thank goodness, we have people who want to restore and save our precious heritage.

Robert D. Covington was from North Carolina. The other Cotton Missionaries were from the South. Most of them used tobacco, even Bishop Covington smoked a pipe. It is said that Brigham Young chided them for using the weed but he also said that if they had to have it, there was no sense in buying it from the gentiles, when they could raise it themselves. The crop report of 1864 reveals that two acres of tobacco was being raised in Washington City.

From the “Memoirs of Martha” quote, “I remember the story my parents told me about Robert Covington, Washington’s first LDS Bishop. He was very good and kind and so sincere, but easily upset, so some men loved to tease him. One time they told him Johnson’s Army was coming and they could hear the hoof beats of the horses on the East Black Ridge. Naturally, Bishop thought he would be the first one they would be after, so he put on his clothes wrong side out and hid in the fields all night. He returned early next morning past the home of Susan Crawford, who was out for a bucket of water. She called “Good morning, Bishop Covington.” “Sister Crawford”, he answered, “did you really recognize me in this strange attire.” “I’d know you anywhere,” she said.

Cahoon, Harold P. and Priscilla. *Utah’s ‘Dixie’ Birthplace: Locations of Early Pioneer Sites in Washington City, Utah, Pinpointed on a Washington City Map*

and Stories About the People Who Lived There. Place of publication unknown, Washington City Historical Society, 2nd Ed. 1996

ibid., p. xi and xvi. Background information provided on Covington home.

ibid., p. 23. A brief history of the Washington City area is referenced here, and details the arrival in Washington City of the second group, the Robert D. Covington Company, consisting of 28 families on May 5 or 6, 1857. Both groups were from the Southern States, and had experience growing cotton. "They came mainly from the states of Mississippi, Alabama, Virginia, Texas, and Tennessee. Robert Covington had worked as an overseer on a cotton plantation where he directed slaves in the growing of cotton. These settlers brought tobacco with them, as well as the habit of using it.

The book also tells how the area became known as "Dixie." "It was these early Southern missionaries who first called the Washington City area "Dixie. It just came naturally to them to call the land Dixie. The name later spread to include all of the Southern Utah area, but mainly St. George, Washington and Santa Clara. These early settlers formed the mission which was called both the "Cotton Mission" and the "Southern Mission."

ibid., p. 27, sketch picture of Robert D. Covington.

ibid., p. 30, sketch picture of Covington home.

ibid., p. 40, Discusses "Bishop Covington's Oddities."

ibid., p. 95-97, describes the Covington home at 181 E 200 North in Washington City and provides background about Robert Covington.

Gregerson, Gary L. Compiler. *Utah Roadside History: Monuments, Markers, and Sites*. Provo, Utah, Griffin Associates.

Ibid., 91. In his listing of markers, the Covington Mansion, Monument, DUP #430, 181 East 200 North, Washington (Utah) is described as Historic Site No. 130 (in the text). It provides the exact wording of the historic marker: "In 1857 Robert D. Covington led 28 families to establish Washington as the Cotton Mission. In 1859 a large house was built as a meeting house and way station. It was used as a community social center for parties, dances and plays. It was built of native sandstone and is the oldest remaining building in Utah's Dixie."

International Society Daughters of Utah Pioneers, *Pioneer Pathways*, compiled by Lesson Committee, Vol. 5, Salt Lake City, DUP, 2002,

ibid., p. 358-359, This article relates how Brigham Young decided to establish a new settlement to expand cotton production in Southern Utah based on John D. Lee's earlier report that the area's land was flat and there was abundant water and a mild climate. Samuel Adair led the first group of 10 families from Payson, Utah, on March 3, 1857, and arrived in the area on April 15 and camped at Adair Spring. At the April conference of the LDS Church in 1857, 28 families under the direction of Robert Dockery Covington were called to join the Adair Company. They arrived in the region in May. Both groups of "Cotton Missionaries" were from the southern states, and many had experience growing cotton. "Robert D. Covington had worked as an overseer on a cotton plantation. Isaac C. Haight, president of the Parowan Stake, organized the new settlement as a branch of the Harmony Ward with Robert D. Covington as presiding elder. In 1868, Washington Ward was formed with Robert. D. Covington as bishop."

Larson, Andrew Karl. *I Was Called to Dixie: The Virgin River Basin: Unique Experiences in Mormon Pioneering*. No publication place listed. The Desert News Press, 1961.

ibid., p. 67-68, where it states that during April 1857 General Conference, 28 families were placed in charge of Robert Dockery Covington. They were called to join the Adair company. Also describes him as a native of North Carolina and became an overseer on a cotton plantation and an owner of Negro slaves. were called to join the Adair company. Converted to Mormonism in 1842 and moved to Nauvoo, before moving to Utah in fall 1847. Covington Company organized as branch of Harmony Ward.

ibid., p. 70-71, George A. Smith reported in 1861 that Bishop Covington kept cotton specimens from each crop, which showed improvement that indicated the specimens were adaptable to soil and climate.

ibid., p. 187, same information as on p. 70-71.

ibid., p. 236, "herd ground of 8 miles square in Dameron Valley (Diamond Valley) granted March 7, 1859 to Robert D. Covington of Washington."

ibid., p. 253, a "Circular to the Citizens of Utah," regarding the LDS Church setting prices of grain, shows a footnote listing "the names of 73 residents of Washington with Bishop R.D. Covington heading the list."

ibid., p. 457, notes that the more commodious homes of Bishop Robert D. Covington and John D. Lee were used for parties and dances.

ibid., p. 458, describes the Bishop Covington home where dances were held.

ibid., p. 461 references a wedding party on “Friday, 20th” in which “Bp. R.D. Covington, of the 7 Presidents of the Seventies,” is in attendance.

ibid., p. 498, President Brigham Young following his arrival in Washington on April 29, 1869 takes a “bowl of mush and milk with Bishop Robert D. Covington....”

ibid., p. 516, describes a contract for improving a road route between Washington and the California Road which would intersect near Beaver Dams, was let to Robert D. Covington, James D. McCullough, James Pearce and Walter E. Dodge.

ibid., p. 536, describes Mrs. LaPrele Pace Snow’s great grandfather, Bishop Robert D. Covington acquiring an Indian child two or three years old in exchange for a horse, and raising the child until she died at age 15 from a children’s disease.

Larson, Andrew Karl. *Erastus Snow: The Life of a Missionary and Pioneer for the Early Mormon Church*. Salt Lake City, Utah. The University of Utah Press.

Ibid., 95. The author mentions that “Robert D. Covington, who had grown old in the service of the church, reminisced about these days of outlawry in Hancock County. Bearing his testimony in a meeting of the High Priests’ Quorum of St. George Stake, Bishop Covington was reported as saying “ ‘he did not think the Lord would let the outside world take our possessions from us as long as we . . . live our religion [it was the time of the polygamy crusade] . There were 115 houses burned in Hancock County, Illinois, by the mob. Our children and others who were not there cannot realize it. People in 1881 were still reliving the disaster of 1845-46 and wondering if again they would have to give up their homes.”

ibid., p. 315

Larson states that it was at Santa Clara where the cotton culture had its birth in Utah’s Dixie. “Augustus P. Hardy secured a quart of cottonseed early in 1855 from a Sister Nancy Anderson at Parowan, Iron County. The seed was planted, and the cotton plants grew and flourished, producing sufficient lint to make thirty yards of cloth. Plantings in 1856 were successful. As a result about fifty families were called to settle Washington in 1857. These were mainly converts from the Southern States who had an acquaintance with cotton production; they were under the direction of Robert Dockery Covington, formerly an overseer on a cotton plantation in Noxubee County, Mississippi. In spite of the alkali soil and some unfamiliarity with irrigation, these Southerners succeeded in growing a fair crop of cotton the first season.”

ibid., p. 361

In Washington,, Peter Neilson traveled to Sanpete County at the request of President Erastus Snow and Bishop Covington to exchange his cargo for flour. As he passed through Harrisburg, nine miles northeast of Washington, he found a large crowd of men and women standing there hoping to get some flour from him. He ended up measuring out 800 pounds in amounts varying from eight to 20 pounds.

ibid., p. 328

Larson tells about a group of Scandinavian Saints who reached the original site of Harmony, and selected a committee to explore the Virgin Valley to determine the best place to locate. They visited Virgin, Grafton and Rockville. Because of limited amount of farmland along the river in those areas, they believed there would be greater opportunities further downriver.

“They were impressed at Washington by the larger acreage of arable land along the stream, and also by the Southern hospitality they received at Bishop Covington’s big rock house and the earnestness with which his flock invited them to join their depleted ranks. So they, with a number of others, cast their lot with the people at Washington, thus giving the malaria-infested and flood-ridden community some valuable help in bearing the burdens that were about to overpower its few remaining inhabitants.”

ibid., p. 357

At a conference of the Southern Mission in St. George, Oct. 31 and Nov. 1, Bishop Covington made a report about the cotton crop:

“There has been much difficulty in maintaining a dam in the Reo Virgen. This, however, is no new thing. Two dams were lost in 1857, in 1858 three dams were carried off by the angry waters. Each year has had its loss of this lind. The cotton crop is this year better than usual. The corn crop is short, but taking all crops into consideration, enough, the Bishop thought, has been produced to purchase sufficient bread till another harvest. He spoke quite encouragingly, saying, that the cotton produced in this region is better than that produced in Tennessee and equal to that produced in the Carolinas.”

Larson noted that “Bishop Covington was never one to gripe and was perhaps a bit inclined toward over-optimism when in the pulpit. At any rate Erastus Snow could not fail to grasp the condition the good bishop and his colleagues saw in evaluating their circumstances; that sufficient food would depend on the sale of their cotton. The opportunity to sell it, Erastus conceded, was not promising.”

ibid., p. 406

In connection with President Brigham Young’s request that Erastus Snow accompany him on some visits in September to Cache and Bear Lake Valleys, “*a postscript urged*

Erastus to get Bishop Covington at Washington to turn all water that could be spared from irrigation to use in turning the machinery of the new factory, but he cautioned him against letting the new storage pond break, lest the factory be damaged.

Erastus Snow replied, saying that "Bishop Covington was meeting resistance from those who were using the water (needed by the factory) to irrigate their gardens. He promised Brother Brigham, however, that he would himself undertake to persuade them that they could profitably use the water farther down, after it had served its purpose at the factory."

ibid., p. 556-558

Larson tells of a matter concerning a "Brother W.L. of the Harrisburg Branch of Washington Ward based on a report made by Historian [James G.] Bleak in 1869 in which "W.L." took issue with the course and policy of President Erastus Snow, Robert D. Covington of Washington Ward and . . . Elder James D. Lewis of Harrisburg Branch. "Brother L.'s course finally led the bishop (Covington) and the presiding elder (Lewis) to prefer charges before the High Council against Brother L., "to wit: 1st, Wicked and malicious conduct. 2nd, Slander. 3rd, Lying and false representation."

The charges were sustained, and the Council decided that L. should be severed from the church. Reacting to this bitter discipline, the accused filed notice of appeal and wrote to President Young, contending he had not been given opportunity to present evidence supporting his actions against Bishop Covington and Elder Lewis. Brother Brigham promptly referred the case back to Erastus Snow for a rehearing. L. asked that either Jacob Gates or Henry W. Harriman, both members of the First Seven Presidents of Seventy, or some other suitable individual be appointed to preside at the rehearing "as he considered that Brother Snow had expressed an opinion in the case." Erastus complied, appointing Jacob Gates, and the accused "expressed himself as satisfied." After additional testimony was heard, . . . "On mature reflection he [W.L.] decided to retract all he had said and written against the bishop and Brother Lewis except the items he had laid before the Council."

Eventually, W.L. "asked forgiveness of all whom he had wronged and then signed his name" to a letter addressed to President Brigham Young in which he stated that ". . . I wickedly and maliciously traduced the characters of Bp. R.D. Covington of Washington and James Lewis of Harrisburg and to some extent that of Bp. R. Gardner of St. George for all of which I feel heartily sorry, and feel by the help of the Lord, to build up instead of taking a course to pull down."

He then asked forgiveness of President Young, for forgiveness of Brothers Covington, Lewis and Gardner. The High Council then "unanimously voted to forgive Brother L. and to give him their faith and prayers. . .

ibid., p. 562-563

Larson relates the story of a young non-Mormon male who attended dances held in the John D. Lee and Robert Covington mansions, and eventually got a Mormon girl pregnant. She was willing “to marry her lover, but he would not listen. She made her amends by appearing before the ward bishopric, where she freely confessed her sin,” and later asked forgiveness. But the gentile showed no intent to marry the girl. “Bishop Covington, in his kindly manner, talked to him and explained that he must either marry her or leave town. He did neither.”

So Covington asked Erastus Snow for advice. Snow told him to hold a new bishop’s court (trial). Covington did, but the young man refused to commit as to whether he intended to marry the girl.

At that point, Erastus Snow said, “Young man, if one of these men doesn’t kill you. I guess I’ll have to do it myself.”

Snow then told Covington to court be adjourned. The young man then went to his residence, saddled his horse and “quietly sneaked out of town. . . .”

Larson, Andrew Karl. *The Red Hills of November; A Pioneer Biography of Utah’s Cotton Town*. No place of publication. The Deseret News Press. 1957.

Ibid., p. 2. Adair and Covington companies found their way through Grapevine Pass between the lava ridges.

ibid., p. 4, Bishop Covington company pass by where Covington would later build his rock house. It also describes how after shortly making camp at Adair Spring, the Covington family was approached by Chief Tutsegabit to receive a handout. Bishop Covington killed a beef for them.

ibid., p. 9, The Adair and Covington Companies were people from the Southern States, mainly from Mississippi, Alabama, Virginia, Texas, and Tennessee, sent to the Virgin Valley to raise cotton where the season was long and warm enough for cotton to mature.

ibid., p. 14, The names of 38 heads of families listed in the Manuscript History of St. George Stake and in Bleak’s Annals of the Southern Utah Mission, Book A, as having come to Washington in the first companies, included Robert Dockery Covington and others.

ibid., p. 121, The latest survey for changing the route for Highway 91 between Washington and Leeds generally follows the course followed by Adair and Covington Companies when they came to Washington in 1857.

ibid., p. 16, Isaac Haight, presiding at Cedar City appointed Robert D. Covington, branch president on the Rio Virgin. Haight also appointed Harrison Pierce (Pearce) to be first counselor and Johnathan R. Region (James B. Reagan) to be second counselor to Covington, which was unanimously sustained.

At 4:00 conference, President Haight gave up the charge to R.D. Covington.

ibid., p. 21, Robert D. Covington, who was appointed Bishop of this place (Washington) has cultivated cotton every year since and he has preserved specimens from each year's crop up to 1860....

ibid., p. 25-26, Bishop Covington home is one of the first permanent rock houses built (in Washington) that is still standing. P. 26 shows a picture of the Covington home.

ibid., p. 30, "Bishop Covington who arrived from Salt Lake City on the 17th with a number of new settlers and their families."

ibid., p. 31-34, Describes Bishop Covington sitting at the base of a lava flow opposite Shinob-kiab and dealing with problems of flooding. He also reviews his experiences in his native North Carolina where he was born Aug. 20, 1815, and how he and his wife, Elizabeth, move to Noxubee County, Mississippi "where he was an owner of Negro slaves and the manager of a slave plantation."

It also describes his acceptance of Mormonism and selling his property and moving to Nauvoo in 1845. He remembers the death of his wife, Elizabeth in 1847 a few weeks after arriving in Salt Lake Valley, and the birth of their son, Robert Laborius Covington in 1847. The story is also told how the law books he was bringing to Utah, were taken by the captain of the wagon company, and how the same captain tried to get a stove belonging to Covington.

It also mentions Bishop Covington's first winter at Salt Lake in the Old Fort, then moving to Mill Creek in 1848 and his appointment as counselor to Bishop Ezekiel Lee of Big Cottonwood (Holladay) settlement where he accumulated land and livestock, then receiving the call to the Rio Virgin and having to deal with Indians, floods, alkali, the Mountain Meadows Massacre and desertion of settlers from Washington.

ibid., p. 36, General Authority Amasa M. Lyman takes dinner with Br. Robert D. Covington.

ibid., p. 37, Bishop R. D. Covington engaged John D. Lee "to work up Bro. A. Lyman's cane on the halves."

ibid., p. 44. Bishop Covington supported a proposal John D. Lee made on Dec. 30, 1860 that Lee would give a dinner and party to those who would help him quarry and haul stone for a mill on New Year's Day.

ibid., p. 48, Bishop Covington asked for President Jacob Hamblin's counsel on resolving a dispute in which Santa Clara residents refused to let Washington residents pick up wood in the Santa Clara river area.

ibid., p. 54, Most of the settlers from the South used tobacco, including Bishop Robert D. Covington who smoked a pipe.

ibid., p. 74, Peter Neilson returned from a trip to Sanpete to obtain flour at the request of President Snow and Bishop Covington.

ibid., p. 124, Robert D. Covington along with committee members Harrison Pearce and Thomas Adair were appointed by the Washington County Court to locate a road from Ft. Harmony by way of Washington and Santa Clara that would intersect the Salt Lake and California Road.

ibid., p. 125. The contract for working the road, which was to intersect the California Road near Beaver Dam, was let to Robert D. Covington, James D. McCullough, James pearce, and Walter E. Dodge.

ibid., p. 130-131, Records from the Washington Ward Tithing Ledger show Robert D. Covington was paid tithing credit of \$14.50 for setting telegraph poles for the Deseret Telegraph Company.

ibid., p. 141-142. Bishop Covington acquired an Indian girl from the local tribe in exchange for a horse. She was two or three years old when the Covingtons took her into their home. She was baptized into the LDS Church on May 28, 1865 and named Alice. She died at age 15 from a children's disease.

ibid., p. 147, Woodruff Alexander was married to Martha Alexander by Bishop Covington.

ibid., p. 153-154. Bishop Covington sent word by letter to Col. D.D. McArthur asking for instructions how to deal with Navaho Indian raids in Harrisburg.

ibid., p. 158. "Bishop Covington tried always to be humane in his treatment of the Indians, and urged the people in Dixie to furnish them with labor and then to pay them food and clothing in order to encourage them to be industrious."

A story is told by James Cameron of how Bishop Covington, after baptizing an older Indian, Covington took off his flannel shirt and put it on the indian because of the ice cold water. Other Indians, after hearing the story, came to Covington asking to be baptized.

ibid., p. 173, Bishop Covington of Washington Ward, along with other LDS authorities, "had preached the theme of cooperation in merchandising and the cessation of such trade with the gentiles."

ibid., p. 176, a large rock corral was built to house livestock east of Allen Taylor residence and southeast of Robert D. Covington home.

ibid., p. 224-226. "Administration of Robert D. Covington." This section references Covington's 12.5 year service as branch head and bishop in Washington. It mentions his first counselors Harrison Pearce who moved away, and Jonathan B. Reagan who left the church "for reasons unknown to me," and were replaced by Albert W. Collins and Robert L. Lloyd as first and second counselors.

Bishop Covington was later called to serve a short term mission to the Southern States on Oct. 7, 1869. After leaving Mississippi, the Deseret News reported that there was a feeling of insecurity in Mississippi because of the Ku Klux Klan "and no man's life is considered safe whose course is offensive to them."

Covington continued to live at Washington until his death on June 2, 1902 at the age of 87.

ibid., p. 230-235, References "Bishops' Trials" and specifically one case where three young men were brought before a group selected by Bishop Covington to answer charges of "unchristian conduct." It also included how the Bishop's Court dealt with non members.

ibid., p. 235, "Bishop Covington presided over the ward, his home was the lodging place for Church visitors." When Bishop Covington invited President Young to stay at his place, the President replied he would have a bowl of milk and mush.

ibid., p. 239, The United Order was organized with President Adolphus R. Whitehead and Robert D. Covington.

ibid., p. 243, Robert D. Covington received \$21 in tithing for herding church cattle.

ibid., p. 254-255, Robert D. Covington represented Washington County in the Territorial Legislature in 1858-59.

ibid., p. 257, Bishop Covington is said to have done some teaching in Salt Lake Valley before he came to Dixie, but there is no evidence to suggest he taught at Washington unless he taught his own children.

ibid., p. 278, When John D. Lee and Robert D. Covington built their commodious mansions these homes became the center of recreational activities such as the dance and the drama.

ibid., p. 279, When President Young's party drove up to Bishop Covington's residence and asked John D. Lee why Young was not given an escort into town.

ibid., p. 281-282, the Covington mansion was the scene of many dancing parties and other entertainments, including theatricals, and continued to be the main gathering place for socials until the chapel-schoolhouse was built in 1877.

ibid., p. 297, "Bishop Covington's Oddities," referred to Bishop Covington unique ways of speaking from the pulpit, and vocalizing that the "Latter-day Saints were the Superior, the Chosen, of all God's children."

Lyman, Edward Leo. *Amasa Mason Lyman; Mormon Apostle and Apostate, A Study in Dedication*. Salt Lake City, The University of Utah Press, 2009,

ibid., p. 246. The author references how Amasa Lyman, after leaving Santa Clara, traveled 5 miles eastward to where the cotton missionaries were locating their first fields. The author then references the 50 families who recently arrived under the leadership of Robert Covington and Samuel Adair who had been selected to lead the two pioneer contingents. Many of the missionaries were among the southern converts to whom Lyman had become so attached. . . .

ibid., p. 341-342

The author discusses on a trip Amasa Lyman made with Orson Pratt and Erastus Snow to, among other things, check on property John D. Lee had helped him acquire in Washington. "Bishop Robert Covington had assumed responsibility for the land, then planted into cotton. Lyman and the bishop agreed to plant other portions of the farm to peaches and apples with the local caretaker retaining the produce for a certain time."

Edward Lyman cites Lyman Diary for Nov 14, 1862.

Mariger, Marietta M. *Saga of Three Towns; Harrisburg, Leeds, Silver Reef*. Edited, annotated and indexed by Elaine Young, Silver Reef Foundation historian. Printed by the Silver Reef Foundation, 2016, p. 3.

“In the spring of 1861 they [the sons of Moses Harris] moved a little farther up on Quail Creek with the approval of Bishop Robert D. Covington of Washington. . . .

ibid., p. 7

“In 1866, a meeting was held, attended by Bishop Covington of Washington. The organization was changed. Instead of Presiding Elder and Counselors, three teachers were chosen to manage ecclesiastical affairs. James Lewis, Mosiah L. Hancock and Thos. Adair were the ones selected. In November. . . .

ibid., p. 21

“In May 1869, a meeting was held in the school house. Erastus Snow, Jacob Gates (who early settled Bellevue, now known as Pintura), and Bishop Robert Covington of Washington, were present. James Lewis of Harrisburg and Adam Seegmiller of Bennington were sustained counselors to Bishop Stringham. . . .

Maxwell, John Gary. *The Civil War Years in Utah; The Kingdom of God and the Territory That Did Not Fight*. Norman, Oklahoma, University of Oklahoma Press, 2016, p. 171.

The author references George Hick’s description of three cotton mission men - Robert Dockery Covington, Albert Washington Collins, and Robert Lewis Lloyd “for their support of the Southern cause and their reprehensible conduct before joining the Mormons. Covington, a North Carolinian by birth, moved to Mississippi, where his family owned a large cotton plantation with many slaves. Although he was ‘a strong Mormon’ and appointed as the local LDS bishop, ‘he could scarcely read or write. . . and was a strong Rebel sympathizer and rejoiced whenever he heard of a Southern victory.’ “

. . . .

Maxwell cites Aird, Nichols and Bagley, *Playing with Shadows*, 172-174.

Mortensen, A.R. Editor, *Utah’s Dixie; the Cotton Mission*. Reprinted from *Utah Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 3, July 1961. Salt Lake City, Utah. Utah State Historical Society. 1961, p. 12.

“In April, 1857, twenty-eight families and a number of young men under Robert D. Covington were called to settle on the Washington flat, east of the present St. George to experiment with cotton culture. Since most of these people were from the Southern

States, they came with high hopes, but the nature of the land itself was such as to crush their spirits. Barren flats stretched to black lava formations or red sandstone, and on the lower levels alkali encrusted the surface in white ridges. The first season they did not get a third of the crop -- much seed did not germinate, and alkali killed most of the plants that did come up.”

- 1) *The full story of this settlement is graphically told in A. Karl Larson, The Red Hills of November (Salt Lake City, 1957).*

Phoenix, Mary (text) and Bowcut, Jon (Sketches). *Historical Buildings of Washington County, St. George, Utah, Washington County Historical Society, 1992*, p. 7, The Covington House provides a brief description of Robert Covington and his house, along with a pencil sketch of the Covington house.

Powell, Allan Kent. *Utah History Encyclopedia*. Salt Lake City, University of Utah Press, 1994, p. 118.

Under the heading, “The Cotton Mission,” written by Georgene Cahoon Evans, it recalls how church members were called to go to Washington County to colonize, with the specific assignment to ‘grow cotton.’ *They were told that the Cotton Mission should be considered as important to them as if they were called to preach the gospel among the nations.*

The article states that 28 families were called at April 1857 conference and came under the direction of Robert Covington. . . . The Covington company arrived in May 1857. Isaac C. Haight, who was presiding over the Parowan Stake, organized the new settlement as a branch of the Harmony Ward. It was at this time that the name Washington was chosen for the new town.

The article stated that “Most of the early colonists were converts from the South and were familiar with cotton but were not familiar with irrigation. They had to cope with the alkali in the sandy soil. They had an unending battle with the Virgin River.”

Reid, H. Lorenzo, *Brigham Young’s Dixie of the Desert; Exploration and Settlement*. Zion National Park, Zion Natural History Association, p. 91-92.

During April 1857 LDS conference held in Salt Lake City, 28 families were selected to settle in the Rio Virgin Valley to produce cotton. These families were called because they had experience growing cotton. Under the leadership of Bishop Robert D. Covington, they arrived May 5 at site of Washington, Utah and were to build a “Dixie of the Desert” that included growing cotton and other semi-tropical products to help build up Stakes of Zion. They obtained more cotton seed from Santa Clara settlers, but they had never produced cotton by irrigation, and the soil was alkaline.

ibid., p. 121, Bishop Robert D. Covington of Washington reported crops were light, and that through bartering his people would be able to secure sufficient breadstuff to last until another harvest.

ibid., p.185. Brother Thomas Childs presents through Bishop Robert D. Covington (his agent) a case in appeal from Bishop Covington, February 1862, against Wilson Mousley for unchristianlike conduct in refusing to pay certain sums of money.

ibid., p. 189, a Church Court case involving a non-Mormon boy who got a Mormon girl pregnant. Case went to Bishop Robert D. Covington in the Washington Ward.

Stott, Clifford L. *Search for Sanctuary: Brigham Young and the White Mountain Expedition*. Salt Lake City, University of Utah Press, 1984, p. 90.

During the Utah War, the author mentions that LDS leaders sent a White Mountain Expedition to find a fertile valley as a resettlement place for Mormons fleeing from the U.S. Army that had been sent to Utah territory by President Buchanan.

On April 24, “[John D.] Lee and [William] Dame rode to Harmony, where they assigned Bishop Covington, of Washington, to raise seven teams from Harmony and have them at the rendezvous.”

Under the Dixie Sun; A History of Washington County By Those Who Loved Their Forebears, Panguitch, Utah, Garfield County News, 1950, p. 234, references Robert Dockery Covington, who had been an overseer on a cotton plantation in North Carolina when he became a convert to the Mormon faith, becoming the first bishop of Washington.

ibid., p. 235, Robert D. Covington was included in a list showing the names of the original companies who settled in Washington in 1857.

ibid., p. 244-245 describes the Bishop Robert Covington home.

ibid., p. 251, Robert D. Covington is described as the leader of original settlers serving as bishop until 1869.

Yorgason, Blaine M., Richard A. Schmutz, and Douglas A. Alder. *All That was Promised: The St. George Temple and the Unfolding of the Restoration*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 2013, p. 38. Robert Gardner describes that after passing Harrisburg and continuing into Washington they found some of their old neighbors “who received us and were very kind to us....Robert D. Covington” and others. He noted their

appearance was discouraging and nearly all of them had the fever and largo or chills (malaria).