

## HISTORY OF LA VERKIN

By Maud M. Judd

(1950)

LaVerkin is situated in a beautiful valley known as the LaVerkin Bench. It is surrounded by hills and a lovely view of the Pine Valley Mountain can be seen in the distance. It lies on the North side of the Rio Virgin, opposite Hurricane and five miles South of Toquerville. It is known for its beautiful location, its splendid orchards and vineyards and fine private residences.

LaVerkin is near the Cedar-Zion Canyon highway, the fields joining said road. The LaVerkin Hot Mineral Springs, a popular bathing resort, is situated in the Rio Virgin Canyon, immediately South of the town.

The town obtains water for culinary purposes from springs six miles away, a short distance North of Toquerville, from which source the water is piped to the LaVerkin town-site where it is taken into every home.

It would not be a complete history if we did not go back and give a little of the background of its founder and colonizer.

Thomas Judd was born at Birkenhead, England. At the age of eighteen was baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and three days later, as the eldest son of the family, assumed the responsibility of bringing his mother and family of small children to Utah, his father having preceded them. Arriving at St. George in October 1864, when St. George was less than three years old, he found the only home his father had for them was a dugout. He went through the pioneering experiences of those early days. While in England, he worked at a brass and silver shop. This early business experience helped him in organizing the firm of "Wooley, Lund and Judd Merc. Co.". doing business in St. George and Silver Reef, a thriving little mining town near Leeds.

In the year 1888, while making one of his trips from Silver Reef to Canaan, the headquarters of their livestock industry, he went by way of Toquerville, passed over the LaVerkin Bench, at that time used only as a grazing place for cattle owned by people of Toquerville. He, being greatly interested in agriculture and horticulture, became interested in this fertile place, and knowing that the Rio Virgin carried a surplus amount of water, wondered if by making a canal on the East side of the mountain bringing it around the Southern end if water could be put on this Flat.

On his return to St. George, he conferred with I. C. MacFarlane, an engineer, as to the feasibility of getting the water upon the Bench. In November 1888, Engineer MacFarlane made a preliminary survey and it was decided it would be shorter and much cheaper to tunnel through the mountain than make a canal all the way around it.

After the Engineer's favorable report, a survey of the tunnel and canal were made and in the early Spring of 1889, work was commenced and pushed through at a cost of over \$30,000.00. Thomas Judd decided to organize a company and in June 1889 the LaVerkin Fruit and Nursery Co. was incorporated with Thomas Judd as President, William Roe, Robert C. Lund, Thomas P. Cottam, Samuel Judd, I. C. MacFarlane, Robert G. McQuarrie and David H. Morris as Secretary.

Frank Pendleton and Andrew Winsor were the first to strike a pick into the mountain on the east side. Winsor only worked a short time when Joseph Bryner took his place. Later Charley Larson and John McNeal joined them. Another crew of men soon started on the west side. It took about two years to complete, the two parties met in the center of the mountain, one being a few inches higher than the other. This was considered a great feat of engineering in those days. The tunnel measured 840 feet when finished. Frank Pendleton and John Pierce finished up the last contract January 6, 1891. The canal starting later than the tunnel wasn't finished until about April.

During the construction of the tunnel, a large cave of crystal stalactites and stalagmites was encountered and a small portion of it extended into the tunnel causing a weak place that gave them a great deal of trouble, although it was flumed. Later the flume was taken out and the cavity was filled with rock and gravel and cemented over.

The building of the canal from the head down to the tunnel is almost a history in itself.

This part of the project was in progress while the tunnel was under construction, but was started a little later and like the tunnel, was done by days work at first, later by contract.

Thomas Isom of Virgin was among the first to commence construction work on the canal. He was joined by William and John Isom, John Spendlove, Nephi Workman, Charley Jones, Edwin Ballard, Nate Badger and others from up River Settlements; also, Andrew Winsor, John McNeil, Charley and Tut Larson, Hector McQuarrie, Henry Riding, Thomas P. Cottam and others from St. George. Hector McQuarrie Sr. did the blacksmith work.

The wages were \$1.00 a day and board, but due to the hazardous work, it was raised to \$1.50 a day and most of this was drawn in merchandise from the "Wooley, Lund and Judd" store. The men had tents and camped at the head of the ditch, moving down as the work progressed. Charley Larson assisted by Johnny Gillerbloom were the cooks for the St. George camp.

Groups of men worked at different places along the canal, but Thomas Isom worked from the head down through the plaster ledges to within sight of the tunnel. Certain sections of the canal were designated by the ones who were in charge, such as the Cottam Hedgate, Cottam Ledges, McQuarrie Duckpond, Riding Headgate (built by Henry Riding), Judd Fill and Judd Point.

The work was finished, Tunnel and Canal were completed and the great day had arrived to turn the water onto the thirsty land. Completed, but not without heartbreaking failures was this project achieved, for when the water was turned in, a section of the canal which had to pass through gypsum formation, dropped out. The water went through it like a sieve, tearing huge holes in the side of the mountain.

Many became discouraged, but Thomas Judd had too much involved, he could not quit now. So he mortgaged his home in St. George to raise the money needed to buy material and went to work and flumed the worst places and necessary repairs. The water again was turned in, this time with more success.

Engineer MacFarlane was hired to survey the land, and on August 27 to 31, 1891, it was layed off in ten-acre blocks with two rods streets around each block with the exception of the main street running North and South which was four rods. Frank Pendleton plowed the first ten acres on the Bench at the South end.

During the construction of the tunnel and canal, Thomas Judd had rented a block of land on the East side of Washington and planted a nursery; trees and vines were brought and planted on the Bench. Each year more land was plowed and more trees and vines were planted.

Samuel Isom had the contract to plow twenty acres on the Flat, and with the help of Hyrum Hastings and John Isom, plowed and planted into alfalfa and grain.

On the west side of the tunnel the canal was built south around the end of the Bench, but from the tunnel north, it was only built as far as the townsite survey. Later Riley Savage of Toquerville and James Turner of Washington, took the contract to build the canal around the North of the

Bench to bring all available land under cultivation.

There was no end of trouble with the canal, and it was thought at one time that this project would have to be abandoned. More ledges caved in, flumes gave way, great gullies washed out where the flumes were, and in order to save the orchards and crops during the summer, a crew of men were hired to work on the canal night and day. Some of these men were Riley and William Savage, the Jackson Brothers and William Theobald of Toquerville; John and Frank Riding, Charley Larson and others of St. George; Jim Turner of Washington; John and William Isom, Robert Wilson and others from Virgin.

John Riding's wife, Elizabeth Riding, offered to cook for the men for her board. Thomas Judd accepted her offer, and she came the first of June 1892 and remained until the last of September. She was the first woman to ever live on the Bench.

While the tunnel was under construction, a bunk-house was built for the men to camp in so temporary rooms, built of slabs, were added for Mrs. Riding and six-month-old baby. She used to tie her baby in a jumper and leave him alone while she carried the mens lunch, in a big tin can, up the ditch to them, pulling it as it was nearly always full of water. She had no fear then but many times since has wondered how she did it.

On her 20th birthday in July, a party was held in the bunkhouse. Friends from Toquerville were invited and some of the first grapes and melons were served to the guests.

In the Spring of 1893, a lumber house was moved from Silver Reef for the caretaker, and placed on the same lot as the bunkhouse. The first family to live here was Samuel Carpenter, wife Catherine and five children. He supervised the planting of other orchards and the care of the canal. It is not definitely known just how long they lived here. Then Allen Wakeling and family of St. George came to take their place. They remained here several years sending the children to school at Toquerville.

It was Thomas Judd's great desire to make LaVerkin a beautiful place, "The Garden Spot of Dixie". Many acres were planted into almond trees while others were planted into peaches, apricots and grapes. Almond trees were planted along both sides of the highway through the Bench, making it a beautiful sight.

He chose the Southeast block near the hill for his own beautiful private residence and had it layed off English style with driveways running from the streets to the house

which was to be built back in the block. The main driveway came in at the Northwest corner and along this was planted nut trees, roses, iris and many plants and shrubs.

Up to this time the Stockholders hadn't received any returns on their investments and in order to maintain the canal, pay off the hired men and make other improvements, it was necessary to borrow money, but the question was, where would they borrow it? B. J. Lund, a friend of the Stockholders, offered to loan them the amount needed and take a mortgage on the land.

About 1895, other houses were moved from Silver Reef and reconstructed into a five-roomed house. This was placed between the bunkhouse and Wakeling's home. Then Samuel Judd and family moved here from St. George to take charge. The Bunkhouse was then used as a grainery or storehouse while the leanto at the back was used as a blacksmith shop.

LaVerkin wasn't thought of as a thriving little town but was to be a big ranch operated by a Stock Company. Now it was necessary to change their previous plans and dispose of some of the land to pay off the indebtedness. With the sale of the land and others becoming interested here, it was essential to have a townsite. The slope along the East hill was set aside and layed off into lots to be sold. The fruit trees were commencing to bear so they had plenty for their own use and many pounds of fresh and dried fruit were sold.

Thomas Judd leased the Rio Virgin Cotton and Woolen Mill at Washington; and while the trees were young, he had cotton planted between the tree rows to be used at the Mill. About 50 acres of some of the finest cotton ever raised in this part of the country was grown here. Some melons were planted on the tree rows; this was very convenient for the cotton pickers. The Judd and Wakeling boys and the Mulne Brothers with George Judd as overseer had the job of picking it. This was a back-breaking job and they were very happy when school started so they could leave. Thomas hired Indians to finish the job.

The Panic of 1896 had its effect on the financial conditions of the Country and it was felt by the stockholders of the LaVerkin Fruit and Nursery Company. Many became discouraged and wished to dispose of their holdings, so the Company was dissolved and each drew land according to his interests in the Company. Thomas Judd, the largest stockholder, drew the greatest portion of land. A section of Company land was set aside to be sold to help pay off the indebtedness. Thomas carried this responsibility until it was all payed.

When the land was divided, Samuel Judd drew the block

containing the three buildings. Thomas drew the section West of the highway, which was all planted into almonds, with a few fruit trees scattered among them.

Allen Wakeling secured employment at the Woolen Mills so he moved his family to St. George. Samuel Judd lived here until the Fall of 1898 then moved to St. George to put his children in school.

Thomas Judd received a call from the First Presidency of the L.D.S. Church; and on February 20, 1898 met with President Woodruff and Cannon and Apostle Teasdel in the President's office. They informed him that they wanted him to go into Nevada and take charge of the White River Colonization. He accepted the call and they promised him he would be better off both spiritually and financially for this undertaking. He thought of his Ranch at LaVerkin and the heavy mortgage hanging over it.

If he could only get some good families to move here. Men who loved the soil and weren't afraid of hard work. Through James Pectol, who had worked on the ranch for a number of years, he contacted Joseph and Henry Gubler of St. George and was successful in leasing the place to them for two years.

Henry and wife, Susanna Picket, and small son, with Joseph Gubler, moved here January 1, 1899, and lived in the Wakeling home. Later Joseph's wife, Mary A. Hunt, and two children moved here, about March, and lived in part of the Samuel Judd home while James Pectol and wife, Lena Gubler, occupied the other part. James Pectol being a third party with the Gubler Brothers.

It was a beautiful day when Joseph and family left St. George, but on the way they encountered a storm and by the time they reached the Rio Virgin, the river raised so high they could not cross. So Joseph unhitched the team, tied them to the wagon for the night. Mary took her two children, walked up the hill to her new home. Here they lived for over two years. The Gubler families were the first to live here permanently.

The canal was their greatest trouble, as it had to be watched very carefully. They listened even in the night for the rippling sound as it ran over the rocks down the ditch and if ever that sound stopped, they would leap from their bed, and half dressed, run for the tunnel. Joseph Gubler said he had run up the ditch many a night bare-footed to an upper headgate to turn the water out, then come back at day-break to see his tracks where he had stepped over a large rattlesnake coiled upon the bank. LaVerkin was a regular den of rattlesnakes when the people first moved here.

When the water went out of the ditch, the wooden flumes would dry out, leaving great cracks in them. When the water was turned into the ditch again, these cracks would leak great streams of water. The water running over the hill washed the dirt away to such an extent that it was feared the flume would fall in. They had to chink up the cracks in the flume and for this purpose, Thomas Judd sent all the trimmings and waste from the cotton factory in Washington.

Thomas Judd has appointed Henry Gubler as land agent both for himself and for the company, to dispose of land on the LaVerkin Bench to pay off the company indebtedness on the land. In July, 1900, while paying a visit to the Joseph Gubler family, William Hardy and his wife were persuaded to purchase the Samuel Judd property which was then for sale. This property consisted of the Southeast block plus ten acres of field land and sold for \$1,500.00. William Hardy returned to St. George and made arrangements to dispose of his property there so that he could purchase the land on the LaVerkin Bench. In February, 1901, he loaded his family and all his earthly possessions into one covered wagon and moved them to his new homeland in LaVerkin. This made three families now living on the Bench.

By this time the lease which Joseph and Henry Gubler had on the land had expired and these two men decided to purchase land on the Bench and make it their home. They purchased the land of William Roe and R. C. Lund with a few acres from Thomas P. Cottam. They also bought a couple of lots for their homes. During the summer of 1901 they hauled rock from the hillside to be used for buildings.

Working together, the Gubler brothers built one-room rock houses with basement for each of their families, in the summer of 1901. Joseph's house was finished first, and he moved his family into it. Later, he added a lumber lean-to for a kitchen.

Ayse Ashby bought the tunnel lot, then purchased the house from William Hardy, in which Henry Gubler's family had been living and moved it onto this lot. The Gubler family moved into the Samuel Judd house until their own home could be finished. Their home, like Joseph's was a one-room rock house with cellar, and before the roof was completely shingled, Susanna hitched the team onto the wagon, loading in all their belongings alone. She even rolled their big Home Comfort stove on broom handles across the room, through the doorway and onto the wagon. How she accomplished this is still one of the town's puzzles, for when she arrived at her new home, it took two men to lift the stove from the wagon and into the house.

In 1901, Marcellus O. Wright purchased a lot from Thomas Judd through his agent, Henry Gubler, and built two rooms, into which he moved his wife, Elizabeth Isom, and their family from Virgin. Marcellus was an excellent blacksmith, as well as a good carpenter. He used to make all the barrels for the molasses produced on the Bench. Gallon cans were unknown in those days. Marcellus put heads into dandy buckets, or anything that would hold molasses. A great deal of cane was raised at that time, and molasses was the chief sweet.

George Jones came down from North Creek the summer of 1901 to help William A. Hardy on his farm. They leased the Thomas P. Cottam land and ran it in connection with the Hardy property.

About 1902, he purchased three lots, two from Thomas P. Cottam land and one from Thomas Judd, in the North-east part of the townsite. He moved his wife and infant son, Whitney, down from Virgin, November 20, 1902, renting the Northeast room of the William Hardy home, where they lived until he could build a one room adobe home on his own property, into which they moved during 1903.

In the fall of 1901, James Judd, John Oxborrow and Earl Ashworth brought some of the Judd cattle from Lund, Nevada, to winter feed at LaVerkin. After getting the cattle located, they hauled enough black rock from the nearby hills to build a four-room rock house on the Thomas Judd property. The house was completed except for plastering by late Fall, the North two rooms being used for storing dried fruits and nuts, while the hired man on the Judd farm used the South two rooms for camp rooms.

In the Spring of 1902, George Judd with his wife, Louise Miles, and two children came to LaVerkin from St. George to look after his father's interests and they rented the Northeast room of William Hardy's house. They lived there that summer and by fall the Judd home was completed and George moved his family into it. That same Fall, Thomas Judd moved his family in from Nevada, Mrs. Judd remaining in St. George with the children so as to put them in school.

In 1902 crops of fruit and nuts were the heaviest up to that time and Thomas Judd found it necessary to hire extra help to gather the crops. Among the men hired was Ben Polk, a Negro who was then in this area. And even then some of the nuts were never harvested.

Lorin Barnum, an elderly man, who had lived with the Judd's in Nevada, came with them, going right on to LaVerkin, where he made his home the rest of his life.

The people here still remember the fine black team he drove and how proud he was of them. He was very industrious and conservative and accumulated some means. He proved to be a friend in need to the people here, helping many of them out of their financial difficulties.

Mary Jane Judd, wife of Thomas Judd, moved to LaVerkin in the Spring of 1903, so George and Louisa moved back to the Hardy home for the summer, renting the two rear rooms of their home. The George Jones family was still renting there, which made three families in this one home.

Thomas Judd was deeply interested in the people of LaVerkin and did all he could to help those in need, accepting labor, ditch pay, produce or anything they had to help them in paying for their land. His wife stood by him in all of these undertakings, and was a very industrious and hard-working woman. It was a common thing to see more than a dozen men who were assisting with this great reclamation project, sit down to her table to a good meal. Thomas Judd was well known throughout the West and many of their friends and acquaintances, traveling through, stopped to partake of their hospitality. Often Thomas Judd pointed with pride to the fact that most of the food they served was produced on their own farm.

Allen J. Stout of St. George sold his land in the Washington field and moved his family onto a farm on the LaVerkin Creek. He was among the first to purchase land on the Bench. He bought 20 acres of farm land and a building lot from Thomas Judd. About 1902, he purchased the James Duffin house in which he and his family had been living on the LaVerkin Creek, and moved it onto his lot. He added more rooms to this house, making it more comfortable for his family. He served as a Counselor in the first Bishopric and was Chairman of the first School Board. Mrs. Stout was the first Relief Society President in LaVerkin.

The Stout family was prominent in town and Ward activities, LaMar serving as Secretary in various organizations. Great sorrow came to the parents when their two sons, LaMar and William, died as young men, both leaving young families.

Benjamin DeMille of Rockville had married Georgianna Sullivan, a daughter of Sarah Ann Stout by a former marriage. About 1903, he bought a lot next to the Stouts in LaVerkin, and moved a log cabin which he had bought, from Shoonesburg down to his lot. He was a very reserved man, shy and quiet in his habits, but was also humorous and enjoyed a good time among his friends. One of his delights was to dress up as Santa on Christmas Eve and go about peeking in the windows of homes to let the children

know St. Nick was waiting for them to hop into bed. He played the harmonica, with guitar accompaniment, for many Ward entertainments. They were the parents of five children, and their descendants are active in the Ward and community.

The first actual mail service in LaVerkin was voluntary contribution by Samuel and Arthur Webb, who carried the letters to and from Toquerville quite regularly until 1903 when Henry Gubler was made Postmaster.

In the early Spring of 1902 the Board of Directors of the LaVerkin Fruit and Nursery Company called a stockholders meeting for the purpose of changing the name of the organization to LaVerkin Bench Canal Company, and appointed a committee to draw up articles of Incorporation. On March 12, the LaVerkin Land and Water owners met for the purpose of receiving and adopting the Articles of Incorporation as prepared by the committee appointed at a previous meeting. Thomas Judd was Chairman and Riley C. Savage Secretary of the meeting. The Articles were read, discussed and approved one by one, and then the entire layout formally accepted. They then proceeded to elect a Board with Thomas Judd, President, Henry W. Gubler, Vice President, Riley C. Savage Secretary and Treasurer, Allen J. Stout and James Z. Nagle Directors. This was the first Board of Directors of LaVerkin Bench Canal Co.

At this same meeting, William B. Savage made the motion that the Board divide the water, pro-rate, according to acreage, which was done. Those holding shares of stock in the company were furnished by David H. Morris, who had been Secretary up to this time. The stockholders as listed were as follows: Thomas Judd, Gubler Brothers, Henry W. Miles, Thomas P. Cottam, Jesse W. Crosby, J. L. Workman, William A. Hardy, Thomas Gillispie, Savage Brothers, R. G. McQuarrie, Hyrum Duffin, Samuel Judd, Allen J. Stout, H. M. Wallace, H. E. Duffin, Hyrum Jackson, R. Higbee, James Z. Neagle, Marcellus Wright, George Jackson, George M. Spilsbury, William Duffin, D. H. Morris, George Jones, and LaVerkin Fruit and Nursery Company, totaling 600.

The Articles of Incorporation as drawn up for the LaVerkin Bench Canal Company were signed May 5, 1902 by the following stockholders: Thomas Judd, D. H. Morris, Samuel Judd, Joseph E. Gubler, Henry Gubler, William B. Savage, Riley C. Savage, Richard T. Higbee, George M. Spilsbury, William Duffin, James Z. Neagle, Allen J. Stout, Marcellus O. Wright, R. H. Duffin, William A. Hardy, H. W. Duffin, George B. Jackson, Hyrum Jackson and H. M. Wallace.

William Sanders came from North Creek and purchased the remaining lot on the Jones Block from Thomas Judd. In the Spring of 1903 he cleared part of the lot and built a one-roomed lumber house, then moved his wife, Sarah A. Wilson Sanders, and three children down from North Creek April 14, 1903.

He, like the others who came before him, was a good farmer and worked diligently to help keep the water in the canal. While William was at work, his wife and small son, Clarence, finished grubbing brush from their lot so it could be plowed and planted. While they were grubbing brush one day, Clarence accidentally struck his little sister, Amelia with his hoe, cutting a deep gash in her head. There was no doctor within 30 miles, so Mrs. Sanders took care of the wound the best she could and the girl recovered completely.

As soon as possible, the family added another room to their house for kitchen, and in this humble, two-roomed home, they raised their family. Their fourth child, Moroni, was born October 18, 1903. He was the first boy born in LaVerkin, although Rosalba Gubler, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Gubler, was the first child, having been born six days earlier than Moroni Sanders.

The Sanders children were blessed with many talents, the boys especially excelling in music and song. They have always given generously in building up the town and were among the first farmers in the County to go into the Turkey Industry, a resource which is helping to put the County on the map. They have built homes and are known for their progressiveness and thrift.

Robert P. Woodbury of St. George was teaching school in Virgin in 1903 when he became interested in the LaVerkin area and bought 14 acres of farm land and a city lot there. His wife, Nellie Thompson Woodbury, and their three children were in St. George, but he was unable to visit with them often due to poor roads and lack of transportation. And since there were still few homes in LaVerkin, and none for rent, he moved his family to Toquerville for the winter.

In the Spring he moved his family to a tent he had set up on their LaVerkin lot. He and William A. Hardy and Samuel Webb had made adobes from the white clay on the hillside for their homes. First, he built a two-room cellar of black rock, and when this was finished, he moved his wife and four children in it, as the tent was being wrecked by the heavy spring winds.

While he was laying up the adobe upper walls, a terrible storm came. Rain fell in sheets, and the water

ran down the hill, through their lot and into the cellar, flooding them out. They were taken care of by their kind neighbors, Joseph and Mary Gubler, who shared their small home with the Woodbury's, who slept on the floor until the storm was over and their cellar could be cleaned up and dried out. To their sorrow, the rain had almost washed their adobe walls away, and had to be rebuilt.

Robert filled many positions in the Ward and community. He was Secretary of the Canal Board for nine years; Secretary of the School Board, Clerk and Chorister of the Ward for a long period. He was the first Superintendent of the LaVerkin Y.M.M.I.A. He taught school in LaVerkin for many years, feeling there would be a better opportunity for his family in Hurricane about 1913. His wife also worked in the organizations of the LaVerkin Ward, serving as an officer and teacher in Relief Society, MIA and Primary. They have continued their good work in Hurricane.

After the LaVerkin Project proved successful, the inspiration came to the people of Toquerville and the settlements on up the river, who were having a hard time trying to save their farm lands from the treacherous Rio Virgin. If such a project could be undertaken, it was possible they could also put the Committee was appointed in June of 1893 to make a study and see what could be done.

Engineer Issac C. MacFarlane made the preliminary survey and work was commenced on their proposed canal, and as it progressed, a number of those interested in this enterprise, obtained lots on LaVerkin Bench, and built small houses to live in so they would be nearer their work. Thomas Isom has said that LaVerkin was a blessing to Hurricane, furnishing hay and grain for their livestock and food for their families, while they were building their canal and getting their lands under cultivation.

Among those who came here were, Thomas Reeves, Thomas Isom, Morris Wilson Jr., Atkin Hinton, John Sanders, Marcellus Wright, Robert and Frank Stratton. Atkin Hinton bought property, built a home for his family, who lived in LaVerkin nine years, from 1906 to 1915.

Morris Wilson, who became LaVerkin's first Bishop, was among those who located here temporarily, having bought land on Hurricane Bench and helped to build Hurricane Canal. He bought a lot from Thomas Judd through his agent, Henry W. Gubler, and built a single room cellar with a lumber room on top. Before the house

was completed, he moved his wife, the former Minnie Stratton, and their two children down from North Creek, on the 28th of January, 1904.

They had not counted on a cold north blizzard to welcome their coming, but the wind blew so fiercely through the cracks in the house, causing the stove to smoke so badly they were forced out of doors, and sat in the sunshine on the south side of the building until the fire in the stove went out. At night they hung sheets along the walls around their bed to keep the drafts out.

But in this humble home, the Wilsons entertained some of the high officials of the L.D.S. Church. This was all in the horse and buggy days, and the visitors' teams must be fed and cared for as well as the people. At one time, Elders Francis M. Lyman and John Henry Smith of the Council of Twelve Apostles were making a tour of this part of the State and stopped overnight with Bishop Wilson and wife.

Minnie had just filled two bed ticks with fresh cornhusks, so she put one on their bed for the visiting brethren and she and Bishop slept on the other one on the floor. They often recall these experiences. Later, they added a lean-to for a bedroom, and this one large room was used for a kitchen, living room, bathroom, or anything else you might call it. Here many visitors were entertained. At one time, a large crowd came out from St. George in the interest of Dixie Academy and put on a program. Minnie, with the help of her sister, Mary Stratton (later Ballard) cooked the meal in her cellar, and served the large crowd cafeteria style out in the yard, the visitors sitting on the woodpile or wherever else they could find a seat.

Although the Wilsons had planned to remain only temporarily in LaVerkin, when the Ward was organized and he was made Bishop, he was requested to sell out their Hurricane interests and make LaVerkin their permanent location, which they did, and he was Bishop of LaVerkin Ward for 24½ successive years. They have reared a good family, their sons being among the most energetic, thrifty and progressive in this area. Wayne Wilson is now (in 1950) the Bishop of LaVerkin. They had one daughter, Thora, Mrs. Edward Gubler, who has served many years as Ward organist, and in other capacities in the Ward.

About July 1903 a bowery was built near where the Church now stands and here the first official Sunday School was held August 2, 1903, although Mary A. Gubler had taught Sunday School children in her home from the

time the first families came to LaVerkin.

On June 23, 1904 the Presidency of the St. George Stake in company with Elder Rudger Clawson of the Council of the Twelve Apostles of the L.D.S. Church, met with the people of LaVerkin under the bowery for the purpose of organizing the Ward. Morris Wilson Jr. was sustained as Bishop; Henry W. Gubler, First and Allen J. Stout, Second Counselors, with Hyrum H. Duffin as Clerk.

William A. Hardy had been appointed by Elder George Spilsbury, of the Stake Sunday School Board to take charge of the Sunday School in LaVerkin until the Ward was organized. Brother Spilsbury met with them in the George Judd home July 19, 1904 and organized the Sunday School with George Judd as Superintendent; William A. Hardy First and Henry W. Gubler Second Counselors, and Robert L. Judd Secretary and Kate Judd Assistant. Teachers of the Primary Department were Louisa Judd and Susanna Gubler; Second Intermediate teachers were Joseph E. Gubler and Samuel Webb; and Theology Class teachers were George Jones and Allen J. Stout.

The first big Ward celebration was held in William Hardy's apricot orchard July 4, 1904. People came from all the surrounding towns. This was a great event for LaVerkin. Games were provided for both old and young and races for the children. The committee sold over 100 gallons of ice cream, all made in hand-cranked freezers. The ice was brought in by team and wagon. All the milk in town was consumed and some men even milked their cows in mid afternoon to meet the demand for more ice cream.

The Relief Society was organized in the Bowery in September 1904 with Sarah A. Stout President; Susanna Gubler First and Penelope Woodbury Second Counselors and Secretary. The first primary meeting was held in the Samuel Webb home.

The M.I.A. was organized September 4, 1904 with Robert P. Woodbury, President; William A. Hardy, First, Samuel Webb Second Counselors and LaMar Stout Secretary. Samuel Webb was released January 20, 1907 and William Sanders sustained in his place. LaMar Stout was released as Secretary and Robert Dean sustained October 22, 1905. Minnie A. Wilson was first President of the Y.W.M.I.A.; Mary Gubler First and Penelope Woodbury Second Counselors. Meetings were held in private homes until the school house was built.

There were just 13 families living in LaVerkin when the Ward was organized.

In July 1904 a board was chosen for LaVerkin School District, and on July 20, 1904, the trustees met and organized. Allen J. Stout was made Chairman, George Judd as Clerk, and William A. Hardy, Treasurer. School had been taught the previous winter for the 13 children in the William A. Hardy home, with Fae Harrison of Pinto as the first teacher.

At a meeting of the stockholders held March 20, 1903, Joseph E. Gubler moved that it be the sense of the meeting that the chair appoint a committee of five on public improvements, to secure a post office, school district, cemetery and a grade upon the Bench. A committee was appointed as follows: Walter H. Slack, Allen J. Stout, Henry W. Gubler, Morris Wilson, and William A. Hardy.

At an annual stockholders meeting February 9, 1904, President Judd suggested the closing of such streets as were not needed for public highways, and stated he had discussed the proposition with the county surveyor, who said this could be done. The group voted unanimously to accept the suggestion with a provision the adjacent land owners be allowed to purchase the streets so closed at the going price of \$35.00 per acre.

Under a motion by William Sanders, approved, a committee of nine was appointed to determine which streets should be left open. Following are the committee members selected: James Z. Naegle, George M. Spilsbury, Thomas Judd, A. J. Stout, Henry W. Gubler, H. E. Duffin, Hamilton L. Wallace, William Savage and William Sanders.

All culinary water in the early days of LaVerkin was hauled from the Rio Virgin in large barrels on horse-drawn sleds. Later cement cisterns were made and during the early spring, when the snow melted in the mountains, people filled these cisterns through the freshly cleaned and thoroughly sluiced canals and ditches. The cisterns were covered and tailed in, and the old well rope and bucket system was used to draw the water as needed.

Today LaVerkin boasts one of the finest water systems in the country, the water coming from springs above Toquerville, as previously stated.

Former city streets that were mud holes in stormy weather are now most of them well surfaced. In traveling from LaVerkin in early days, it was necessary to cross the stream bed of the LaVerkin Creek going North, or the treacherous Rio Virgin, going to Hurricane. In 1908 the State provided a sturdy steel girded bridge across the Rio Virgin, and wooden bridge across LaVerkin Creek. Today, the high arched steel cement bridge crosses the Virgin Narrows between LaVerkin and Hurricane.

On November 12, 1904 the taxpayers of LaVerkin met at the Bowery and authorized the trustees to borrow One Thousand Dollars from Lorin Barnum to complete the schoolhouse then under construction. On November 16, 1905 at a similar meeting of the taxpayers, the School Board was instructed to borrow an additional \$600.00 to finish paying off the school building indebtedness. Jack Petty and Sylvester Earl had the rockwork contract, and Christian Larson the carpenter work.

The schoolhouse was completed in December, 1904, and Josephine Spilsbury, who had taught the first half of the year in the Samuel Webb home, gladly moved into the new building the first week of January 1905. This building was greatly appreciated by the people of LaVerkin, since the homes were all small and this new schoolhouse served the purpose for all community and church functions, and all social gatherings until the church house was erected in 1925-26.

John Sanders was among those who came from Virgin, bought land and lived temporarily at LaVerkin. He tore down his stables at Virgin, moved the material to LaVerkin and built a house. They lived here five years during which time two of their children were born. His wife, Fanny, often said they lived in a stable and her two children were born in a manger. She also said these were some of the happiest years of their lives, and they were able to save means with which to build a better home on Hurricane Bench.

Arthur Woodbury of St. George, with his wife, Harriet Pickett, and their four children, had lived in a large boarded-up tent at Shem. They bought land in LaVerkin and moved the tent onto their lot, coming there to make their home in the early spring of 1905. Many people recall the parties held in the Woodbury tent. It was large and roomy and could accommodate a good crowd. When their tent wore out they moved into the Hyrum Duffin home on the tunnel lot, that was previously owned by Byse Ashby, until they built their own home, into which they moved before it was completely finished. Harriet was second president of Relief Society, succeeding Sarah A. Stout. She held this position for many years and also worked in other organizations.

She and Arthur and their family have contributed much to the social activities of the Ward, especially in music and drama. Their talented family have functioned in many capacities, especially their daughter Ezoë (Dixie) (Mrs. R. F. Harrison), who has served many years as organist and chorister, and in dramatics.

Farming and fruit raising have always been major industries of LaVerkin. A small portion of the fruit was

sold on the ground, but most of it was hauled to market in the team-drawn covered wagons. The growers would leave LaVerkin by 4:00 a.m., the fruit having been picked and crated or packed the previous night, and aimed to get up over the ridge before the sun came up. The fruit was sold in Cedar City, Beaver and on up the line. Lucky was the man who had a set of heavy springs for his wagon, to ease the jolting and save the bruising and waste of fruit over the rough and rocky roads.

In those days every grower had one or more span of horses. Now, in 1950, scarcely a horse is owned on the entire Bench, except for a few saddle ponies. Nearly every family in town owns a car or truck or both, and most of the farm work, as elsewhere, is done by modern machinery, only one or two still are owning and using teams, and this mostly under emergencies.

LaVerkin still grows the finest fruit in the southern part of the State, and while nearly all of the almond orchards planted nearly 60 years ago are dead and have been removed, a few old almond trees still are standing to bear witness of the long ago. Walnuts and pecans are grown on almost every lot. There are also some pomegranates and figs, and some grapes.

For a great many years, Saturday afternoon in LaVerkin was observed as public holiday, and everyone gathered at the public square to participate in or observe all kinds of games and sports, especially baseball, the preferred sport for the men. LaVerkin has always been known for its fine sportsmanship, and for its hard-hitting baseball teams. It was in this little home town that John Ashworth Thompson received his first inspiration and training in athletics. Now he is nationally recognized as outstanding in basketball.

William Hardy sold the South half of the block he had purchased from Samuel Judd to George Judd about 1903, reserving the northeast corner of his for his family to live in until they could do better. While living here, his wife Nellie Hunt died following the birth of her sixth child, a baby girl who lived only a few weeks after the mother's death. These were the first townfolk to be buried in the LaVerkin cemetery. A few months later another great tragedy came to this man, his eight year old son, Barney, being dragged to death by a horse. Later, he married Eunice Sanders of North Creek and to them were born four children. They have raised a good family, who have served well in the community.

William Hardy was the first road superior on LaVerkin.

Arthur and Samuel Webb, half brothers of Joseph and Henry Gubler, both married Toquerville girls, Arthur wed

Laura Bowman, and Samuel wed Pearl Jackson. They both lived in Toquerville when first married, Samuel and Pearl with one son coming back to LaVerkin as soon as their home was built, and Arthur and Laura several years later.

Samuel was a good farmer and very energetic, giving his special interest to strawberries, his berries became well known throughout the area, as also did his wife's excellent strawberry shortcake, which was really a treat. He died in the prime of life, leaving Mrs. Webb with eight children. At present only his wife, now Mrs. Henroid, and one son, Roland and family, remain at LaVerkin.

Arthur and Laura had one girl and four boys. Their children have all made good in their respective work. These people were unfortunate in having their home burn down during the early 1920's, and they never rebuilt, but sold their property and moved to Salt Lake City. Their eldest son, Ervin, lives in Reno where he is employed as a railroad office stenographer. He is also an excellent pipe organist serving in the church, and teaching piano and pipe organ.

William and Riley Savage worked on both the canal and the Bench land most of the time except for two years when Riley filled a mission for the L.D.S. Church. When the Company decided to sell some of their land, the Savage brothers bought a building lot and 25 acres of farm land. Riley never lived here, but Will moved a house from Silver Reef and set it on his land then moved his family here. They only lived here a few years, then he sold to William Hopkins. It is now owned by Lorin Squire, who tore down most of the old house and built a modern home to take its place.

Lorin married Amelia Sanders, one of the pioneer girls, and they went through real pioneer experiences. Lorin is very efficient in his work and his records are a credit to any community. He has been Ward Clerk, Bishop's Counselor and Bishop, and is at present (1950) a member of Zion Park Stake High Council, and is in the Civil Service in the Utah Highway Patrol. He boasts of being the only Road Cop in the Southern part of the State with seven sons and two daughters.

While on a mission to the Southern State, Joseph Gubler met the Howell Segler family, who were members of the L.D.S. Church there. They took care of him and his sick companion for several weeks. The Seglers were making preparations to move West to be near the Church headquarters, and Joseph Gubler persuaded them that LaVerkin, which had a similar climate to that of their area, would be their best prospect, telling them he would meet them

at the railroad on their arrival, if they would let him know when they were coming.

The Seglers notified Joseph Gubler after they arrived at Lund, in 1907. In order to make the trip, Brother Gubler had to shoe his team, grease his wagon and make several other preparations, but when he finally arrived at Lund, the Seglers were waiting in a small cabin they had rented. While waiting, Brother Segler had become nervous about the several hundred dollars they had with them, and turned it over to a stationmaster, who though a complete stranger, kept it for them safely until they were ready to leave.

At Hamilton's Fort, they encountered a storm which held them up for several days due to the floods. The Seglers were not accustomed to mountains, and when they reached the old Black Ridge dugway north of Pintura, Brother Segler became nervous about riding and insisted that all of his family, except a small daughter who was ill, walk all the way down the dugway. They arrived at LaVerkin late at night and stayed with the Gublers until they could rent and move into the Rass Anderson home previously owned by Hyrum Duffin. Seglers brought with them a very excellent grade of cane seed, which is still known in this area as the Segler cane, which produces a better grade of molasses than had been grown here previously.

Howell Segler with the help of Bishop Morris Wilson and William A. Hardy purchased the first copper pan in which to boil their molasses, and Mrs. Segler made the first evaporated molasses ever made in this area. He died in 1910, but his family remained here, and three of his sons, James, Hardy and Walter, with their families still live in LaVerkin.

Henry and Susanna Gubler raised a large family, most of whom still reside in LaVerkin. They are true Latter-Day Saints and good citizens, and Henry Gubler, though along in years, is now President of the State Bank of Hurricane. Five of their sons and one daughter have filled missions for the L.D.S. Church. Ovando and Horatio have served as Bishops of the Ward, and others have served in various capacities such as Sunday School Superintendents, M.I.A. Presidents, and the girls as Relief Society and Primary officers and teachers.

Joseph and Mary Hunt Gubler and family, although fewer in number, have served equally as well. Three of their sons have filled missions. J. Edward, the eldest, is at present merchant and Postmaster of LaVerkin. Mary A. has long been justly called the Mother of LaVerkin Ward, for from the beginning, whenever there was sickness or trouble, families always called for "Aunt Mary" who has

been midwife, nurse, advisor, and otherwise the good woman on whom everyone could depend. Joseph died several years ago.

Powell Stratton also married one of our pioneer girls, Gretchen Stout, and settled in LaVerkin, purchasing the Marcellus O. Wright home. They have since served in various offices in the Ward, and he was recently released from the Sunday School Superintendency (1950). Their children are also active in Church and community affairs.

On one of his trips North, Thomas Judd learned of the success farmers were having by lining their canals with cement. He therefore purchased several bags of cement and sent it down for experimenting. Acting on suggestion, they obtained pamphlets from cement companies on the proper use of cement. Joseph E. Gubler, President of the canal board, James Judd, Vice-President, assisted by Edward Christian of St. George who had had some experiment with cement, did the first cement lining on the LaVerkin canal. This was about the year 1910. They first carried cement and gravel used for this experiment in bags on their shoulders. This was so heavy, they later made a small cart and with the use of a burro hauled the balance through the tunnel and up the ditch. The experiments proved worthwhile, and later the canal was enlarged and many sections cemented.

The canal was long a great expense, but when Dixie Power Company bought a right of way, they assumed under contract the upkeep of the canal, which has lifted a heavy burden from the farmers. The Power Company later obtained part of the water right which they carry in a large pipe across the LaVerkin Bench and down into the River gorge west of LaVerkin where they have one of the largest units of their electrical power supply.

In early days, candles and kerosine lamps were the only means of lighting LaVerkin homes. Now they have access to electricity, and have had for many years, and every home has all of the modern electrical conveniences and comfort.

From the first, LaVerkin has been known for its dramatic talent all over the County. The first play, name unknown, was played in one of the homes and required most of the adults of the town for the cast. When County Fairs were held in St. George, the committees asked LaVerkin to bring down some of their plays for evening entertainment, and they always played to packed houses.

In the fall of 1905, the first play produced in the schoolhouse was "Tony, The Convict" under the direction of Robert A. Dean. The cast included Mr. Dean, George and

Louise Judd, Wilford Thompson, Pearl Webb and Maud MacFarlane. The proceeds from this play went for the purchase of the first organ owned by the Ward.

Later plays produced included, "In the Toils, Nugget Nell, Moonshiners Daughter, The Lightning Rod Agent, Down Black Canyon, Receipt of Ten Thousand Dollars, Nevada-The Lost Mine, and the Red Rosette". In 1912-13 the drama came to life again with the "California Rose, Montgomery, Joe Ruggles" and others. Among those taking parts in these plays were Robert A. Dean, George and Louise Judd, John and James Judd, Wilford Thompson; Robert P., Arthur, Harriet, Camilla, Annie, Hartley, Glen, Hazel and Ezoë Woodbury; Mary Stratton, Atkin Hinton, Samuel, Arthur and Pearl Webb; Jed Fawcett, William B. and Alberta Savage, Mary Neagle, LaMar and Allen Stout, E. J. Graff, Linda Fletcher, Marge Gubler, Rhea Wakeling and others.

The scenes behind the scenes furnished much amusement for the players. This good clean entertainment kept the community alive and furnished funds for Ward, community affairs.

Emil J. Graff of St. George was Principal of the school for two years, 1915 to 1917. At that time he decided to go into business. He bought the small stock of merchandise from Henry Gubler, who had kept the Post Office along with a small store for many years, and set up his business. He also took over the Post Office. He later took over dry farming, obtaining many sections of what is known as the plains, and was the pioneer of LaVerkin Turkey Industry.

Emil married LaVerna Slack of Toquerville, who took great interest in the musical education of the children, and they sang many choruses which were a credit to our community. The Graffs were missed when they sold out their business and moved to Hurricane.

LaFell Iverson and wife, Cleone Adams, of Washington moved here the Fall of 1924, LaFell being school Principal. He taught for several years then purchased a home and farm along with his teaching. He served in the Bishopric and at present (1950) is First Counselor in the Zion Park Stake Presidency. Mrs. Iverson has been President of Primary and Junior Sunday School Superintendent, as well as teacher in both.

Vernon Church came to Hurricane to teach school, and became interested in LaVerkin as a desirable farming area for his family of boys. He bought land from James Judd and after farming for a few years, has gone into the dairy industry and has one of the finest dairies in Southern Utah. Vernon was Ward Bishop for several years (11) and his wife,

Areta Cox, served as Relief Society President and as officer in other organizations. Their daughter and sons are also active in Ward organizations, serving in all of the auxiliaries and organizations.

Cyrus Gifford and family purchased the Arthur Webb lot and built a home. Later they sold and moved away, but returned and bought a home on the East hill. They have taken active part in the Ward, Cyrus as Sunday School Superintendent and in other organizations. Their son, Sheldon, has served in the Bishopric and is now head of the Boy Scouts program.

Wallace and June Duncan and families moved here about 1923 and have taken active part in the Ward. June's wife, Vida Riding of St. George, has given great help in the Ward, music being her talent, and is a very efficient organist. At present she is Relief Society President.

Many families have come and gone from LaVerkin, but those who remain are still boasting for LaVerkin and helping to build up her industries, beautify and improve their homes and properties.

For many years LaVerkin Town was a part of Toquerville precinct. Later it came under County jurisdiction with a Justice of the Peace and Constable. Robert P. Woodbury was the first Justice. In November 1927, the residents and voters of LaVerkin petitioned the Board of Washington County Commissioners, Henry T. Atkin, James Judd, Francis J. Bowler, John T. Woodbury as Clerk, to constitute the town of LaVerkin a body corporate under the name and style of LaVerkin Town. On November 14, 1927, this was granted, and they appointed Henry W. Gubler as President of the Board of Trustees, with the following members: John A. Judd, J. Edward Gubler, LaVerna Graff, and George L. Hinton. On December 9, the Board met and organized. John A. Judd was chosen as Clerk. On May 27, 1928, the town board appointed J. Edward Gubler as Constable, Lorin D. Squire, Justice of the Peace and Mary A. Gubler, Health Officer; John Judd served as Clerk many years and was Secretary of the Canal Board for 34 years.

James Judd has served as County Commissioner, State Legislator, Vice-President of the Bank, member of the first Zion Park Stake Presidency and in the Mercantile business.