

Brigham Jarvis and Cottonwood Water Route

Brigham Jarvis, Sr., and Cottonwood Water -- St. George

by Claude Cannon

Brigham Jarvis made a tripod and used a spirit level with two peep sites on each end as he surveyed the ditch which brought the Cottonwood water into St. George, Utah.

When they got to "Jackass Point" they couldn't get to the top with a team and wagon. They hauled an anvil as close to the point as they could but had to leave it there. Brigham expected the men to carry it on up the mountain, but they had failed in the attempt. The next morning when the men got there, they found the anvil was where they needed to use it. Brigham Jarvis had carried it up himself. The anvil and forge were needed to sharpen the tools they used to dig the ditch.

He rode a mule and carried his tripod and spirit level to each point as he made the survey. He measured the normal step of the mule and rode him so many steps around the mountain side. He then put a stake at that spot as an approximate marker for his survey. In this way he followed the contour of the mountain instead of trying to go up over the point where they had previously planned. As the men dug the ditch, water was run to that point.

This was the procedure carried out which brought the water into St. George. This route is the same one that is still used to bring culinary water to St. George. At this time it is syphoned through a pipeline over the mountain.

My father, David H. Cannon, told me many times that the L.D.S. Church had put out a great deal of money investigating the feasibility of the project, and had finally decided the water could not be brought in at that time.

I understand that much of the money Brigham Jarvis, Sr., got from his mine was used to finance the project.

I, Claude Cannon, born and raised and having lived in St. George all my life, am of the opinion that Brigham Jarvis did more regarding water in the early days for St. George than any one man.

--Signed by Claude Cannon, May 19, 1963

Note: In a recent interview with Claude Cannon, he said ,I was the most intimate friend and companion of Thomas, son of Brigham Jarvis, Sr. who died at the age of twelve. We used to play with his father's span of mules." Zora Smith Jarvis (1967)