

History

1. Lake Bonneville (14,500 BC)

- Maximum Shoreline height of 5,090 feet or to just below the fee collection station (Curry 1990 as cited in Link et al.)
- Native fish may have included Bonneville cutthroat trout, suckers, dace, sculpin, whitefish, chub

2. Pre-1847 prior to pioneer settlements

- Native American Tribes (Utes)
- Refuge for wildlife, with water draining into the Jordan River

3. 1847-1906 (Settlement, High Councils and County Courts)

(Carter 1941, Keller 2001, Sigler & Sigler 1987)

- Mills were built along the stream. (15 to 20 total) Grist (1848); Timber Mills (1848 Highland Drive, 1850 mouth of Porter Fork, 1852 Elbow Fork); Shingle Mill and Fuel Wood Mills

HEART THROBS of the WEST

"A Unique Volume Treating Definite Subjects
of Western History"

Compiled by
KATE B. CARTER



Daughters of Utah Pioneers

Salt Lake City, Utah

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Volume Three

MILLS BUILT IN MILL CREEK CANYON (Salt Lake County)

Mill No. 1—The first mill was built by Archibald Gardner early in 1848. This was a lumber mill and was located on the Mill Creek stream at Highland Drive and Murphy's Lane. Mr. Gardner was noted as a mill builder. He built mills all over the Western country, and Brigham Young once said: "That it would take the moon for a mill yard for Archie Gardner."

Mill No. 2—The grist mill built by John Neff, Sr., in 1848. It was located just west of the pond at Oakwood. It was run by a large over-shot wheel and a log for a shaft; improving the power, as time went on, until finally it was run by a large turbine wheel. This was the first flour mill in Utah which separated the flour from the bran and shorts.

Mill No. 3—Built by Chauncey Porter. This was a lumber mill and had a flutter wheel and a circular saw, located at the mouth of Porter Canyon, four and one-half miles up from the mouth of Mill Creek canyon. This mill was burned about sixty years ago. Mr. Porter then left here and settled in Morgan County where he continued in the lumber business. A piece of the mill shaft still remains partly buried in the ground at the mill site.

Mill No. 4—Built by Archibald Gardner. This mill was located at the Elbow, six miles from the mouth of Mill Creek Canyon. It had a sash saw and they sawed lumber that just fit in the stakes of the wagon. This lumber was hauled to Salt Lake City and used to make table tops. A Mr. Foster was the cabinet maker and this lumber was used by him to make some of the first tables in Utah.

Mill No. 5—Built by John Neff, Sr. This mill had a sash saw, and had an under-shot wheel, located three-fourths of a mile west of the mouth of the canyon, or what is known as the Moses Estate.

Mill No. 6—Built by John Neff, Sr. This was a shingle mill, located near the home of J. O. Smith:

Mill No. 7—Built by a Mr. Hyatt. It was a lumber mill, located one mile west of the mouth of canyon on Alexander Estate, just east of Mr. Geo. Aris' home. The road was on the south side of the hollow, and they had a dugway over which to haul the logs down to the mill. In February, 1857, there was sickness in the home of a family living near the mill, and Mrs. Sarah Skidmore was sent for. She went to the edge of the hollow, but the snow was so deep and frozen she could not walk down, so she sat down, took her baby in her lap, gathered her skirts around her, and slid to the bottom.

Mill No. 8—Built by Fred Foyer and owned by Messrs. Gausant and Reed. Later sold to Osguthorpe and Skidmore. They sawed lath shingles and lumber. It had a circular saw and a flutter wheel. Located near the mouth of Mill Creek canyon. Locust trees from the temple block were sawed at this mill and used for steps on the stairs in the Salt Lake Temple. This mill was partially burned many years ago, and the charred timbers held up the roof until 1886 when it was rebuilt. At the time of the fire,

Lydia Osguthorpe, knowing what the destruction of the mill meant, sprang into the mill race and with a bucket, threw water on the flames, and it is said that she saved the mill.

Mill No. 9—Built by Edmond Elsworth, and later owned by Mr. Thayne. This was a lumber mill with a circular saw and a flutter wheel, located at the junction of Church and Thayne's canyons, three miles up the canyon. Jack Hill and Daniel Brian ran this mill.

Mill No. 10—Built by Alva Alexander and his sons, Henry and Alva, and later owned by John Osguthorpe. This was a lumber mill with a circular saw and flutter wheel, located at the mouth of Alexander basin, seven miles up the canyon.

Mill No. 11—Built by Joseph Stallings and later owned by Charles Stillman. This mill was burned to the ground and another was built on the same site, with a circular saw and flutter wheel, later replaced with a turbine wheel, located at the mouth of the canyon, just west of the power house. They sawed both shingles and lumber. Owned later by Charles Stillman, David Brinton and Daniel Hussey.

Mill No. 12—Built by a Mr. South and later owned by Mr. Barton. This was a lumber mill with a circular saw and a flutter wheel, located near Porter canyon.

Mill No. 13—Built by Benjamin Ashworth, later owned by Daniel Brian. They sawed lumber and had a circular saw and flutter wheel. Located just east of the first power house. A dugway was built on the south side of the canyon to haul the logs from Neff's canyon to the mill.

Mill No. 14—Built by Peter White. Located at Thayne's flat, three miles up the canyon.

Mill No. 15—Built by Archibald Gardner. Known as the upper Gardner mill; later owned by David B. Brinton and James Hawker. This was a lumber mill with a circular saw and turbine wheel. Located seven and one-half miles up the canyon.

Mill No. 16—Built by Peter Ranck. This was a shingle mill, located at the mouth of Alexander, seven miles up the canyon.

Mill No. 17—Built by Archibald Gardner, later owned by Hyrum Rose. This was a lumber mill with a circular saw and turbine wheel. Located near head of canyon, thirteen miles up.

Mill No. 18—Built by Hyrum Rose. This was a shingle mill, and located near his other mill.

Mill No. 19—This was a steam mill built by A. B. Neff, Wm. Newall, Ross Porter. Located west of where Stillman's mill now stands.

Mill No. 20—This mill was built by Charles Stillman and had a circular saw and turbine wheel. Located on the Stillman homestead, near the mouth of Mill Creek canyon.

All the mills were run with water power. There are five power sites for the generation of electricity on Mill Creek, and some small mills for sawing wood for fuel.

Mill Creek canyon had a vast amount of timber when the pioneers came to Utah. This canyon, being very handy to Salt Lake City, many mills were built and thousands of feet of lumber together with shingles and laths were sawed for the building of our cities and towns. Not only Mormons, but outsiders hearing of the wealth in our mountains came West to seek their fortunes, consequently, inside of forty years' time, our mountains were partly cleared of timber.—Selina O. Stillman.

- Power Generation (5 sites)

An upper plant was torn down in 1970. The lower plant at the mouth of the canyon was shut down in 1949. (Keller, CL. 2001. The Lady in the Ore Bucket. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City, Utah)

From the report, "Utah Power & Light Co., History of, Origin and Development, Prepared in connection with [a] Federal Power Commission Request, Order Dated May 11, 1937"

Reference: Part II, page 16-17

Mill Creek Power Company

The Mill Creek Power Company, incorporated January 24, 1906, build a hydro-electric plant in Mill Creek Canyon (east of Salt Lake City) in 1907 and constructed a 16,000 volt transmission line to serve a brick company. In 1910 the Company obtained a contract to furnish power for the U.S. Smelter at Midvale. To fulfill the contract the Company started construction on a second plant but before work was completed the Company was purchased to form the Knight Power Company. At the time of its purchase the Mill Creek Power Company operated one plant rated at 1400 kva and served one major customer.

Knight Power Company

Having acquired the above power projects the Knight people decided to consolidate all electrical properties under one head and separate its mining and electrical activities. The Knight Power Company was formed for this purpose on June 2, 1910. At the time of acquisition by the Knight Consolidated Power Company the Knight Power Company operated plants at Santaquin, Snake Creek, Murdock, Upper and Lower Mill Creek. This company served the Knight mining interests in the Tintic and Park City districts, a brick yard near Salt Lake City and a smelter at Midvale.

Appendix, page 178-179:

Mill Creek Power Company

In 1906 Francis M Lyman, Jr., surveyor and engineer of Salt Lake City, had surveyed a large part of the mountainous area lying to the east of the city. He visioned the possibilities of power in this area and along the Duchesne River the year before and had even made application for water power and the State Engineer's Office and planned three large plants on the Duchesne. The plants, however, did not materialize.

Preliminary Surveys

In the latter part of the 1905 he interest John P. Cahoon of Murray in the development of Mill Creek waters just east of town. At this time Mr. Cahoon and Melvin M. Miller were partners in the mercantile business and Mr. Cahoon was active in the management of the Salt Lake Pressed Brick Company.

Mr. Lyman and Mr. Cahoon made an inspection trip to the canyon in January 1906, which fully convinced Mr. Cahoon. He purchased a power site near the one which Mr. Lyman owned and announced that a company would be formed to build two plants and that all the power from one of the plants had already been contracted for by institutions in and around Salt Lake City. Company Organized

The Mill Creek Power company was formed January 24, 1906 with Mr. Miller as President; D.B. Brinton, Vice-President; Mr. Lyman, Secretary; John A. Bagley, Attorney and Mr. Cahoon.

Upper Mill Creek Plant Built

The upper Mill Creek plant was constructed in 1907 about six miles above the mount of the canyon. A rubble masonry dam was built on solid rock foundation and a flow line of 22-inch wood stave pipe was laid in trench on the hill side for 9135 feet. The penstock consisted of 865 feed of 22, 20 and 18-inch riveted steel pipe. The generating station consisted of on Doble Company unit direct connected to a 2300-volt G.E. generator.

Power was transmitted at 16,000 volts for 12 miles to a substation at the Brick Company's yard. It developed that the brick company used most of the plant's output.

Second Plant Started

In the spring of 1901 the Company obtained a five-year contract to supply power to the U.S. Smelter at Midvale. To fulfill the contract the Company started work on another plant.

Company Purchased by Knight

Before it was completed, however, the Knight Investment Company had made a survey of the Mill Creek properties and the two concerns combined their power holdings June 2, 1910, to form the Knight Power Company.

March 30, 1912, the Mill Creek Power Company conveyed its holdings to the Knight Consolidated Power Company.

[Note: Utah Power & Light Company was incorporated Sept. 6, 1912, with Knight Consolidated as a direct predecessor.]



Pelton Wheel once used to generate power.



- Timber was Harvested
- Toll and Public Roads Constructed (1848)
- Grazing
- Recreation
- Fish Stocking in the Salt lake Valley started in 1873.

4. 1906 after the establishment of the Wasatch National Forest

- Recreation Residents built between 1915-1950 and are still in operation.

From the Salt Lake Telegram May 25, 1915 it reads:

Uncle Sam Has Choice Camp Sites for Rent in Mountains of Utah

HOW would you like to own a beautiful little summer cottage up in the mountains, where the air is pure with health giving odors of the pines, and where a gurgling mountain stream, filled with gamey trout that leap into the air after flies, is engaged in gurgling its way to the Great Salt lake right past your cabin, luring you to try your angling luck by day and to sweet dreams by night?

Sounds fine, doesn't it? Also, it sounds strangely like real estate literature. That's exactly what it is—only Uncle Sam's the agent.

Also, Uncle Sam is the landlord of this property and he has it to rent. He hasn't the cottages, but he has the places to put them, and they are alongside the well known gurgling streams. Hurry up, folks; there are only a few desirable sites left. These are in Big Cottonwood canyon, a few in Mill Creek canyon and a number in American Fork canyon.

In finding out which of these sites you want you must hire a rig or automobile and go drive them the up and down. Up and down is good, they being on the mountainsides. The government as a real estate agent differs from the regular realty persons in that it has no soft sprung touring cars, with softer spoken salesmen, to point out the beauties of the sites. If you want them, you have to go get them yourself.

Leasing Authorized.

The act of March 4 of this year, authorizes the secretary of agriculture upon such terms as he may deem proper, to allow the occupancy of national forest lands for any period not exceeding thirty years where the lands are to be used for summer homes, hotels, stores, or other structures needed for recreation or public convenience, but no person may be allowed to use more than five acres.

The purpose of the act is to make the national forests more available than hitherto for recreation uses. Prior to its enactment national forest lands could not be occupied for the various purposes mentioned in the new law, but only under permits which were revocable at the discretion of the department.

Users of national forest lands have expressed an unwillingness to make substantial improvements where they are to occupy lands under a permit subject to revocation, at any time. Where, however, inexpensive structures are contemplated no difficulty has been experienced in meeting the wants of users by granting such a permit.

It is expected, therefore, that in the future, as in the past, the needs of persons who do not expect to occupy the land for more than a few years will be met by the ordinary special use permit. But when prospective permittees contemplate the erection of structures involving expenditures valued at a considerable amount, and, therefore, expect to occupy the land for several years, they should be given the right to occupy for a definite period under the new law, if they so desire.

Surveys Planned.

Although there is no information available at the local office of the Wasatch national forest just now, as to where these sites are located, it is planned by W. P. Beulin, forest supervisor, to have surveys made later in the year. Topographical maps will then be made, showing all the available sites and persons may visit the forest office and lease their lots from a plat map.

These sites are not numerous in the Wasatch forest, it was stated today, for the reason that much of the best land—that located along the banks of streams—has been taken up as main selections. Most of it is owned either by the city of Salt Lake or by private individuals. This is true of Big Cottonwood, Little Cottonwood, Parkways, Emigration and City Creek canyons. However, there are a number of excellent sites, one in particular, at the mouth of Silver fork in Big Cottonwood, three miles above Heintzsch and a mile and a quarter above the Wasatch nursery.

Land Limited.

The amount of land which any person may be allowed to use is limited to five acres. For ordinary summer home uses it is believed that an area considerably less than this amount will be sufficient to meet the needs of most persons, since such an area will be large enough to include all structures which it is probable will be erected. Ordinarily, one acre, or even less, would suffice. Great care should be taken to prevent a few persons gaining control of the best sites where it would be possible to suitably accommodate many others.

It is not expected that permittees will be placed close together unless there is such a demand for building sites in any particular locality that users must be placed near together in order to meet the reasonable needs of all.

or all.

Permittees can be assured that while they are allowed to occupy only a restricted area, nevertheless it will be the policy of the department not to allow other persons to use lands immediately adjoining unless justified by reasonable necessity.

Rates Are Low.

The government is not a high priced landlord, either, as witness this scale of annual rates:

Summer homes, \$10 to \$25.
Stores, \$15 to \$20.
Resorts, \$15 to \$25.
Hotels, \$15 to \$20.

These rates may be modified when warranted by special conditions. The rates for special use permits leased for indefinite periods may be as low as \$5 per annum for summer homes.

District foresters are authorized to grant permits where the permittee does not wish to make expenditures in excess of \$200 nor to obtain a permit for a great period than fifteen years. All other permits will be approved by the forester.

- Picnic Areas Developed
- Power Plants Built (see above)
- Mount Olympus Wilderness (1984)
- Forest Management Plans (1986, 2003)
- Stream Habitat Improvement (1990-1995)
- County Fee Collections (early 1990's)
- Culvert Surveys (2007)

5. Current Features

- Twelve Picnic Areas
- Two Restaurants
- Two Recreation Resident Tracks (69 lots)
- Multiple Trails and Trailheads
- Multiple Boy Scout Camps and Training Facilities
- Heavy Dog Use
- Winter Ski Trails
- Non-motorized Bike Use

