

Riverton Yesterdays



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A Monthly Newsletter of Oldtime Stuff about Riverton, Utah

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Childhood Memories of a Brother and Sister:

Violet Page Hamilton and Delbert Page

Riverton School: Principals and Teachers

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Childhood Memories of a Brother and Sister: Violet Page Hamilton and Delbert Page

[Note: These reminiscences of Violet Hamilton and Delbert Page were recorded 15 September 1988 at a Riverton Historical Society lecture program.]

Violet:

We used to play in the straw. We'd slide down the hay stacks or straw stacks. You know the old ticks in the beds?

"Well, it's already soaked with gas, let's set a match to it."

We always emptied out the straw that had been there for a year and then put fresh straw in. We had to take the straw out from underneath the carpets that were hand-woven. They wound balls and balls of carpet rags and we had somebody weave them up and then you just put them down on your floor. You'd put the straw underneath for a pad, but all the dirt sifted through. Then in the spring, you'd pull up the carpet and shake all the old straw out and put the fresh straw in. It smelled so clean and nice. . . . We didn't kill our [ticks and bedbugs] with hot water. We killed them with gasoline. It would make your house smell awful. I'd get so tired of it. Sometimes I'd say, "Well, it's already soaked with gas, let's set a match to it."

John Newman lived right next door to us and I always thought he was a character. When I was little . . . we all had horse and buggies. I don't think there was any cars in Riverton. When we went to the ball games and sat in that grandstand, my mother would take three little kids in a horse and buggy and tie up the horse and get out with those three kids and sit in the grandstand. We liked to run up and down and back and forth and around and play all the time. I never watched the ball game when I was there. I always had fun with the other kids running around. It was hard for her to get ready and get the horse hooked up and everything for the buggy and bring us three down there. I remember my dad getting a motorcycle. He had a sidecar on it. We could ride in the sidecar. It was fun. A change from the horse and buggy, that's for sure. My mother and dad went to Idaho in that. She went in the sidecar.

I remember the very first airplane I ever saw fly over. Oh, I couldn't believe it! Somebody said it was an airplane. We had coal oil lamps. We didn't have any electricity. I can remember my mother doing all the washing for our family on the boards — rub a

dub dub. When she got her first washer, my dad finally said, "Well, you got a washer." She was so excited. It took her all day long to do the washing in the washer, trying to figure out how it run. She was tempted to start over and let the water out of the washer and start to rub them. But she always went and washed the socks out on the back porch when she got through with the whites and everything else.

We lived right by the school house and we had teachers to dinner every night there for awhile. They lived in the top of the school house in those upstairs rooms in the old, old building. There was Mrs. Sult and she had a boy named Dorr [?] And they used to come over to dinner. There were several of them over to dinner every night. I had to help by setting the table and dust mopping around the rug and keeping the kids quiet. She did all the cooking. I don't know whether they did it all the time or for how many years. Before the year was out [i.e., Violet's first year in school], we moved to Bluffdale to a big farm [1916]. We had such a big place.

There was two canals. One was right close to the house [South Jordan Canal] and my dad kept us from getting near the canal by telling us there were water dogs in the canal. We had to walk right near the

We couldn't walk on the edges or the water dogs would come up and get us.

center of the bridge. We couldn't walk on the edges or the water dogs would come up and get us. Of course, as we got a little older, we went swimming in the canal and I was baptized in that canal by Father on my birthday with my girl friend Ruth Hardman. Then we had the canal break one Sunday morning when we were in Sunday School. Someone come and told us that the water was swirling around our house. Across the street from where we lived there was a nice little place we used to like to play. There was trees down in there, like a little tiny canyon. We had one on our side, too, but the canal filled it all right full to the top and took all my beautiful little play houses that I had dug out into the side of the hill — padded out so smooth and had my little furniture there and everything.

I don't remember having any friends right close to me, but it was Ruth Hardman and Ruth Mousley and Ruth MacFarland. When I moved to Salt Lake, everybody was roller skating. Kids my

age and younger. I'd never had a pair of roller skates. I'd had ice skates that you'd put on with a key and used to skate on the canal. We used to have our sleighs and go down hills on our own farm. When we got to Salt Lake, I wanted a pair of skates so bad so, of course, being one of the Pages and the big Page-Hansen Store, Rolly said, "I can get you a pair at Salt Lake Hardware wholesale." So he got me a pair for \$4.75 and look how many times I had to tend kids to save for those skates. Anyway, I loved them. We used to ride on our skates clear downtown and go to the Gem Theatre for a nickle and then skate back up [they lived in the Avenues]. It wasn't so much fun going back. Then we came back to Riverton when I was in the 9th grade. Everybody was skating out here then.

May and Roy Glazier were wonderful at putting on a play. We had a play that — I can't remember the name exactly, but it was something like "Beautiful Are the Waters of the Seashore" — so you know it was Hawaiian. We made skirts out of gunny sacks for our grass skirts. But we put it on and we had more fun! We put on a lot of plays. I got to be in the school play and that was so much fun! We took it several different places. When you got a play ready, you didn't just play in your own town. Bluffdale would bring down a play and we'd go up there and have our play. I don't remember going to Bluffdale in any I was in, but we went to Midvale.

Christmas trees. We always went out and got a cedar tree on our own property two or three days before and decorated it. We kids got to decorate it. We put the candles on. They had little clips. It's a wonder we didn't burn everything down. That smell of cedar in the house! I don't remember us having a pine tree at all. There was lots of popcorn in our house, but we raised our own, shelled it.

It's a wonder we didn't
burn everything down.

Grandpa Page had an apple orchard. Everybody in the family and all the other people got to pick apples at Grandpa Page's for a nickle a box. All my cousins got to work in the store, in the ice cream parlor. When I was about in the 9th grade, they were working in the store. I envied them. They'd get to work in the ice cream parlor and dish up all those sundaes and make those drinks. When I was only in the 10th grade, just barely started in high school, my Grandpa Page come and gave me the opportunity to go be the bookkeeper in the Page-Hansen Store. So I did and I

worked five years there.
When I started, I worked
for 10 cents an hour. I
had to be there at 7
o'clock in the morning.
So I would walk down to
the store. The law said

When I started, I
worked for 10 cents an
hour.

you couldn't work more than eight hours. Of course we did
because we were supposed to close at 6 o'clock and somebody
always came in the store just as it was time to close. I had to take
three hours lunch time off in the middle of the day. So I'd walk
back home for lunch and tend Momma's baby while she went and
give the Relief Society lesson. She'd come back and I'd go back to
the store and work till after 6 o'clock. Sometimes it was nearly 7
o'clock when I got home. It was a wonderful store. It was the
biggest store in the south end of the valley. They had all these
different departments. They had a shoe department, grocery
department, and a big fountain and drug store — everything. Ice
house. When they took inventory, we had all the inventory on a
little hand adding machine — pull it down for each one. Now the
customer never waited on themselves. They got a clerk when they
came in. She stood behind the counter and they stood on the
other side and told the clerk what they wanted, especially in
grocery. You got it off of the shelf, put it on the counter, wrote it
down and then at the bottom of the slip, even if it was two slips
long, you had to add it up in your head. You got to add it up and
they'd bring the money up and check it in with the bookkeeper,
which was me, or the cashier — I was both. I took care of the
money. I was sixteen years old. I had to count the money, balance
the books, make the slides for the weekly sales and take 'em down
to the movie picture show and get them down there before they
started the show so that they would get them up on the screen to
tell what specials Page-Hansen was having. I had to send out
penny postcards and do a mimeograph job on those to get those in
the mail on Thursday so that they'd be sure and get those before
Saturday. We had a big mailing list — Bluffdale, Herriman, South
Jordan, Riverton. It kept me busy, but after all, I was getting a
dollar a day. Grandpa Page was getting quite old, but he seemed
real pleased with me. He would grunt a lot. I'd say something to
him. "Uh. Uh." Then later, after he couldn't work, I had Roland
Page for a boss, then Meredith Page. I had three bosses while I
worked there. I even got a raise to \$1.25, I think. Or \$1.75 five
years later. Meredith wanted me to stay after I got married and

Eldred didn't want me to stay. Meredith said, "Well, I'll have to have you stay awhile because I have to have you teach someone else." So Jennie May was the one I helped to get started there after I left. Well, I said, "Rose Oliver got

"If I'm going to stay, I've got to have \$2.50 a day." So he had to pay me or I wouldn't stay. I got him that time.

\$2.50 a day." I said, "If I'm going to stay, I've got to have \$2.50 a day." So he had to pay me or I wouldn't stay. I got him that time.

Audience: That was the only time you got him.

Violet: Yes, that was the only time. I really enjoyed meeting people all day long. I enjoyed talking and getting to know people. I made friends there that I've had all my life. My father did get a car. It was an Oldsmobile. I don't think I was too old when he got the car. I think he was one of the first in Riverton that had a car. We were really proud of that car.

Delbert: Violet was six when we moved to Bluffdale. She was quite a worker. When she worked down to the store, her two brothers — one just older and one just younger — wanted a big Flexible Flyer for Christmas. A big sled. Violet paid half on it and had to wait at the store the night before Christmas until about 8 o'clock.

Violet: It was after 8 o'clock because nobody could leave the store. Nobody could leave till everybody had picked up their lay-aways. So if they didn't come till about 10 o'clock, somebody'd have to be there to give the lay-aways out on Christmas Eve.

Delbert: Then she had to pull it all the way home, which was about a mile. She was a great sister. On some of these memorable characters. I want to talk a little bit about Joe Newman. Joe Newman lived by us, as Violet said, prior to when he lived on the corner. Some of you don't know him, but he was really quite a character in a lot of ways. A lot of them kind of looked down their nose at him, but I used to be a hunter. I used to like to go hunting. His son, Joe, introduced me to pheasants. We moved out of Salt Lake City when I was about seven. One day he walked over and said, "Would you like to see something?" I was eager to see and learn and he took

me out in the backyard there. We tracked in the snow for a little ways and we scared out a couple of pheasants. That was my first introduction to pheasants. His dad, being the great hunter that he was and, you

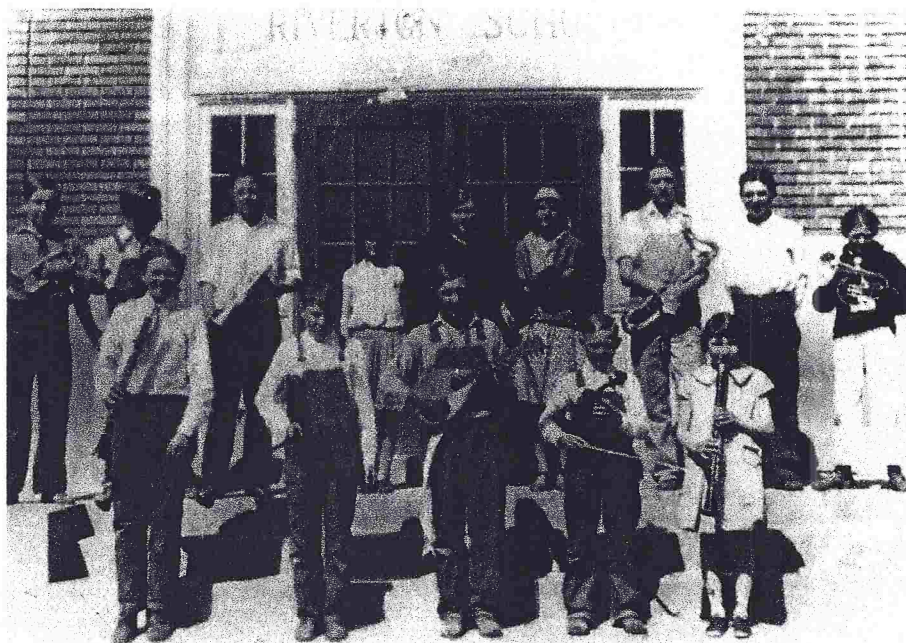
know, I'm kind of a golfer now — you might even say I'm a golf-aholic, I go so much. That's the way Joe Newman was about hunting. When you go golfing, it's a gentleman's game. There's certain things that you do. The man that's the farthest away from the flag, he gets to hit first. It's really a gentleman's sport. He taught us to be gentlemen when we were hunting. Who had the proper position to shoot at a duck, a pheasant, or whatever when you was out hunting. He taught us how to train dogs. He always had a hunting dog. When he'd feed his hunting dogs, he'd go out and feed 'em, that dog would be setting over here and he put this stuff in the dish and then go set down. When he said, "You can have your dinner." The dog ate it. Until he said so, the dog set there and behaved. His children, his dogs, everything was well mannered. He was quite a gentleman. As he got older, a lot of people didn't understand him. He was really one of the educated men in town when it come to hunting. So I quite enjoyed him. Of course, I also enjoyed Joe Morgan. I got a kick out of him.

I'm going to tell you about a memorable character — Jack Park. We used to call him Shug, for Sugar — I don't know where he got that sweet name, but I do know he was really Mr. Sweetness in a lot of

ways. A lot of us would go somewheres and we used to have dances down in the bottom of the Second Ward church house after Mutual. You'd go for a dime. Of course, sometimes it was hard to get the dime, but we could go dancing for a dime apiece. He was the best dancer. He could dress up in a pair of blue overalls and look like he was in a tux compared to some of us when we put on our best clothes. He always looked neat.

When he said, "You can have your dinner." The dog ate it. Until he said so, the dog set there and behaved.

Jack Park could dress up in a pair of blue overalls and look like he was in a tux.



Riverton School
Principals and Teachers — Years of Service¹

Principals (Years of Service)

Beck, Hanna	(1919)
Greer, J. H.	(1910?-1911)
Hansen, John, Jr.	(1891-1892, 1903-1908)
Isaacson, A. B.	(1916-1919)
Jensen, James B.	(1890-1891)
Quinn, H. J.	(1911-1916)
Stephenson, S. F.	(1919- ?)
Stevens, W. R.	(1925-1926)
Thomson, N. K.	(1934-1945)

Teachers (Years of Service)

Adams, Elsie Dee	(1943-1945)
Allen, Frank S.	(1912-1914?)
Allen, Mary	(1925-1926)
Anderson, Myra T.	(1944-1945)
Anderson, Stanley R.	(1943-1945)
Baldwin, Carrie	(1910-1911?)
Baldwin, Jessie	(1910-1911?)
Ballard, O. D.	(1909-1910)
Bateman, Melissa	(1913-1914?)
Bates, Helen	(1921- ?)
Beckstead, Erma C.	(1943-1945)
Bernhardt, Helen	(1907-1910)
Bihler, Martha A.	(1912-1914?)
Bodell, Pearl	(1934-1935)
Bowman, Florence	(1905-1910)

¹Sources used in compiling this list include Jordan School District, Board of Education minute books and newspapers (see "Riverton--Schools" folder in Bashore Research Files).

Bradley, Harold	(1934-1935)	Larson, Blanch	(1943-1945)
Brooks, Myra D.	(1943-1945)	Larson, Norma F.	(1925-1926)
Bushman, Jenny	(1934-1935)	Leaver, Irma L.	(1921- ?)
Butterfield, Amy L.	(1925-1926)	Lee, Virginia	(1944-1945)
Butterfield, Dora G.	(1921- ?)	Lindsay, Emogene	(1943-1944)
Butterfield, Mildred	(1921- ?)	Malstrom, ?	(1910-1911?)
Buttterfield, Tira	(1922-1923)	Malstrom, Willard M.	(1915-1917?)
Carter, Metta	(1921-1923)	Martin, Lillian	(1915-1916)
Cartwright, Mabel E.	(1908-1910)	Maynard, C. C.	(1905-1906?)
Christensen, Hazel M.	(1925-1926)	Miller, Margaret M.	(1912-1913)
Clark, Maurine	(1925-1926)	Milne, Mr.	(1915)
Crane, Oliver	(1925-1926)	Mousley, Ella	(1934-1935)
Day, Joseph	(1934-1935)	Neilsen, Maren C.	(1916-1917?)
Densley, Elna	(1925-1926)	Nokes, C. M., Jr.	(1906-1907?)
Densley, Marjorie	(1934-1935)	Oleson, Deon H.	(1943-1944)
Densley, Mildred	(1944-1945)	Oliver, James	(1890s)
Duke, Naomi	(1916-1917?)	Olson, O. G.?	(1909-1910?)
Dutson, Celestial	(1934-1935)	Orgill, Edward	(1889- ?)
Edgel, William R.		Parry, Montella	(1925-1926)
	(1925-1926, 1934-1945)	Pearson, Clara	(1902-1904)
Ellis, Mary	(1906-1908)	Peterson, Hazel	(1915-1916)
Garfield, Jane	(1922-1923)	Platt, Zelma	(1943-1944)
Grange, Morinda	(1943-1944)	Rasmussen, Darwin	(1944-1945)
Griffiths, D. F.	(1934-1935)	Rasmussen, Mae	(1934-1935)
Gunderson, Rachel	(1922-1923)	Reese, Delphia	(1922-1923)
Hansen, John, Jr.		Rhead, Inez	(1912-1914?)
	(1892-1896, 1901-1903)	Rinder, T. W.	(1902-1904)
Hansen, Mary C.	(1916-1917?)	Samuelson, Carrie	(1934-1935)
Hanson, Irvin L.	(1916-1917?)	Seal, James	(1934-1935)
Harrison, Lucile	(1913-1914)	Smith, Mildred B.	(1944-1945)
Higgs, Mary A.	(1901-1902)	Smith, S. E.	(1892-1896)
Holt, Essie	(1934-1935)	Spanton, Edith M.	(1922-1923)
Hurley, Julia	(1915-1916)	Stephens, Vernah	(1922-1923)
Jenkins, Julia	(1901-1902)	Sult, Jessie I.	(1912-1914?)
Jensen, D. Rees	(1915-1916)	Swenson, Esther	(1915-1917?)
Jensen, Lillian	(1922-1923)	Swenson, Lydia	(1943-1945)
Johnson, Elsie C.	(1921-1923)	Tangwall, Nora	(1912-1914?)
Jones, Alice P.	(1907-1909)	Vawdry, Thomas	(1890s)
Jones, Mae	(1921- ?)	Victor, V. F.	(1934-1935)
Jones, Mildred	(1910-1911?)	Walton, Ella M.	(1943-1945)
Kane, Irene	(1906-1908)	Welch, Kate	(1907-1909)
Kirkham, Wanda	(1921- ?)	Werther, Caroline M.	(1916-1917?)
Koford, Lamar W.	(1922-1923)	Whiteside, Miss ?	(?)

Death Notices

Arlene Bills (86); widow of Hilton Lars Bills; parents were Arthur F. and Elizabeth Beverly Gaisford; mother of Vicky Kay.

Leola "Lee" Mortensen Dowd (83); died in Salt Lake City; parents were Christian and Christina Hemmingsen Mortensen; mother of Shannon, Ted; beautician

Eldred William "Bill" Heap (81); died in West Jordan; widower of Pearl Timothy; parents were Henry and Olive Herrick Heap; father of Billy, Brenda, Casey, Scot, Dugan, Sheri, Connie; rodeo announcer.

Christina May Nelson Orfanos (36); died in Salt Lake City; wife of Willy George Orfanos; parents were Revere and Rebecca Pettit Nelson; mother of Stephanie, Joshua, Tyler, Terry, Michael

Letters

In our last newsletter, we inserted a page on nicknames. Did we miss any? We'd love to add to our list of nicknames, so drop us a letter and tell us about some that weren't on our list — or how some of the nicknames came to be given. With the demolition of the Page-Hansen Store, we'd love to add other people's memories of shopping or working in that old store. Don't be bashful. Please write us — and yes, we'll probably print it, but everybody who reads this newsletter loves to read about "oldtime stuff."

Next Issue

My Father Was a Polygamist: Interviews with Viola Nokes Dowdy and Marie Densley Bills



Riverton 8th Grade, Jim Seal (teacher), ca. 1933-35.

[Note: We don't know the names of these students. If you can identify any of these students, please make a xerox copy of this photo, number the students in the photo, and key that number to their name on a sheet of paper – and send it to us.]



Riverton Elementary Faculty, ca. 1947

back: Don Cottrell, Edgar Aylett, ____ Nichols, Cecil Furr, [?], N. K. Thompson
middle: [?], [?], Mildred Butterfield, Mildred Densley, Virginia Bush Lee, Dean Bishop
front: [?], Ella Walton, Donna Freeman, Erma Beckstead, Rebecca Benson, Myra Brooks, Caroline Mirer [Note: Can you help identify teachers not known (?) or correct spelling?]

**RIVERTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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BLANCHE LARSON'S CLASS, CA. MID-1940s