

Riverton Yesterdays



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A Monthly Newsletter of Oldtime Stuff about Riverton, Utah

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"In Them Days": Rulon Dansie

[Note: This is an edited transcript of an interview Mel Bashore conducted with Rulon Dansie on 6 February 1986.]

Rulon: Ren Howard's older brother died over in France from the flu during the war [World War I] and they shipped him home. I remember that was a sad day when they took his body off the interurban. I was there.

Mel: Were there a lot of people there?

Rulon: There wasn't too many people, but they all turned out.

Mel: I think he was the only Riverton boy who died in World War I.

Rulon: In World War II, one of the Cowdell boys come up and go some potatoes for his family when he was home on leave and he shook my hand.

"Well," he says, "I won't see you again in this earth." By darned!

"Well," I said, "you'll see your folks over there."

He says, "Well, I'll be waiting when I get over there. I'll be waiting to see you." There was two of 'em. When they made that invasion to get in to the country, two of 'em lost their lives. Scott Wiberg, my neighbor, when he went in, he came here. I says, "Scott, I'm gonna promise you one thing. If you live your religion, stay true to the faith, remember who you are, and you'll return." Well, do you know when he was a scout over there, a bullet went right through him and missed his jugular vein and missed the bone of his neck. And then two weeks later, he was out on the front line again. He was crawling up and they had him checking the enemy out on the lead. Him and his companion was going up the side of the hill there and Scott told him to move. He says, "They've got us spotted." Well, he jumped back under some bushes and the bullet went right through his ankle. He just happened to move just quick enough so's that

He jumped back under some bushes and the bullet went right through his ankle. He just happened to move just quick enough so's that he wasn't killed.

he wasn't killed. They laid there and never moved till after dark. They went all night and got to safety. So you see, sometimes when you're prompted to tell lots a people that way, it be a reality.

Mel: What do you remember about T.P. Page?

Rulon: Once he was in England. He had bought a ticket to go on the *Titanic*. Then before it sailed, a guy came up to him and offered him a little more money to buy his ticket than he had bought it for. He says, "I was prompted to sell him my ticket." He bore his testimony. He said,

"Now you listen to the still small voice." He says, "If I hadn't have listened to the still small voice and been told to come on out of the ship, I'd have been at the bottom of the ocean today." And that's had a great influence on me. I was just a youngster when I heard him say, "When I was told to let the other guy have my ticket and I come on the other ship." He wrote and told his family that he was going to ride the *Titanic* home. So you can just imagine how thankful they were when he showed up alive!

He says, "If I hadn't have listened to the still small voice and been told to come on out of the ship, I'd have been at the bottom of the ocean today."

Mel: Like seeing somebody from the dead!

Rulon: It sure was.

[to be continued]

Death Notices

William Melvin Densley (95); husband of (1) DeVone Oliane Jensen and (2) Grace W. Petty; parents were Aaron and Eliza Jane Huffman Densley

Lola Bills Schouten (85); widow of Richard Schouten; parents were Bertie M. and Victoria Crane Bills; 2 children

"I Had a Very Happy Life":
Norma H. Madsen

[Norma Hamilton Madsen was born 9 June 1898 in Mill Creek, Utah, to Reuben Seaburn and Matilda Winder Hamilton. She wrote this autobiographical sketch in 1977. It has been edited for clarity and readability.]

We used to visit Grandpa and Grandma Hamilton on the old farm in Mill Creek. It took a long time to get there, but I sure did like to go there. I remember my grandpa lying on an old couch out under the trees with a homemade fly swatter in his hand. I don't think many flies got away from him. When he saw me coming he always said, "Well if it ain't my little Tommy" — and I had to go give him a love and kiss. I was always glad when that was over as his long whiskers and beard didn't feel so good. Grandma always had cookies and bread and jam for us. It was a long day, but I always looked forward to it.

I loved the old Winder farm, too. My mother's mother died when she was 12 years old on Christmas morning so I never did know her, but I will always remember Aunt Rye, his last wife. Everybody loved her. They raised Jersey cows and Shetland ponies and I always like to ride the ponies. Uncle Will Winder gave us a little bay Shetland named Bird. We all rode her and loved her.

I remember the first auto I ever saw. If any of us saw a car coming down the road we yelled, "There's a car" and all ran to the road to see it.

I went to grade school in Riverton and graduated, [and] then went to Jordan High School for two years, [and] one year to LDS High School. I rode the Orem train every day to Salt Lake. It was [a] long walk home [from the train station], but I liked it. The next year I graduated from Jordan High School. The first year we rode to Jordan in an old sheep wagon with seats on both sides, drawn by three mules. In the winter we got so cold, we got out and ran some of the way. Those mules hardly went off the walk. The next year we had a bus driven by Jim Madsen, pulled by four horses. Those horses really traveled so it was better that year. My brother Rex had a nice horse and buggy so we drove a lot the last year. I graduated in 1919 and teachers were so scarce they ask[ed] me to help Elsie Petersen who had 40 pupils in first grade. I started the middle of the year. They split the class and I took one group one day and the other the next. We got along very well together, but when they offered me a contract the next year I just knew school teaching was not for me.

I had to go give him a love and kiss. I was always glad when that was over as his long whiskers and beard didn't feel so good.

I taught Sunday school for many years. [I] sang in the choir as long as I can remember. [I] sang solos, in quartets, chorus, duets. We always had good times in the old hall [Commercial Building] that stood where Leonard Beckstead's service station now is and were very sad when they tore it down. People came from all around to the dances. The only way we had to travel for years was horse and buggy and we couldn't go very far that way. Many times we went to Jordan High School and Draper to dances. It was late when we got home. My time to be home on Sunday night was ten o'clock, and right after we got home, I heard my dad saying, "Norma, it is time to come in." I thought sometimes he was hard on me, but later was thankful for what he did. I loved him very much and he was always kind and good to us all.

On December 21, 1921, I married John M. Madsen in the Salt Lake Temple. We bought the place where we now live and fixed up the old house that was on it and lived there until 1947, when we built the house we have lived in for over fifty-four years. We sure did appreciate it as the little house had only three rooms, no bath and for years no water in the house.

On October 15, 1922, our first baby girl was born. We named her Tira. She was the pride and joy of all who saw her. She talked so young and made friends with everybody. Steve was born March 28, 1924, tipping the scales [at] ten pounds. We were so happy with the two lovely children and how Tira did love Steve, but in May our little Tira took sick with tonsilitis, then mumps, erysipelas, pneumonia, the[n] meningitis — all in two weeks. I can never forget how she suffered. We buried her on the eighteenth of May 1924. I wondered how I could ever go on without her. So many lonely hours, but we had the Lord to help us and people were all so kind. We also had Steve. Ralph, born August 24, 1925, a fine healthy baby took sick all of a sudden when he was eight months old with high fever, [and] so many convulsions all night. The doctor would say he couldn't take many more and live, but he did and the doctor also said if he lived his mind would be affected and he would never walk. It was faith and prayers that kept him alive and the Lord has blessed us in all our sorrows. Ralph has lived a very happy and useful life. Donna was born March 6, 1927. We were happy to get another little girl. Later I had three miscarriages. We wanted more children, but are happy for the ones we have. . . . After my children were grown, I worked in the post office for many years with Jack. . . .

My time to be home on Sunday night was ten o'clock, and right after we got home, I heard my dad saying, "Norma, it is time to come in."

[concluded]

"We Were Poor":
Crilla Myers Egbert

[Note: These are edited excerpts from an autobiographical sketch written by Crilla Myers Egbert in 1987.]

I made my debut into this world on 4 January 1907 with the assistance of Betty Blake, a well-known midwife, at our home located on the south corner of Myers Lane and Redwood Road in Riverton. I was the first child of Charles Frederick Myers and Annie May Butterfield. I was also the first grandchild of Zachariah Butterfield and Crilla Maria Wardle. He always called me his twin since I was born on his birthday. I was given the name of Crilla in memory of my grandmother, who died when my mother was eight years old.

My mother bathed me in a small galvanized tub placed between two chairs near the new coal range in the kitchen. Coal and wood were used to heat the stove which had a warming oven on top and a reservoir attached to one side that was always kept full of hot water to be used for washing dishes, clothes and for bathing. A tea kettle full of water was always kept on the stove. The kitchen was always warm and cozy as long as the stove was heated.

My parents later leased a farm in South Jordan where my sister, Tressa, was born. Then my grandfather, Jacob Myers, gave my dad a building lot west of his orchard on the south side of Myers Lane. All seven of my brothers and sisters were born there.

Even though we were poor, I had a very happy childhood. We did many fun things together as a family. We usually made our own entertainment. Outdoors we played various games of that time — hide and seek, kick the can, hop scotch, run my sheeby run, ball games, and many others. Indoors we played card games, popped corn, made candy, read books, listened to the radio which sometimes had a lot of static.

Even though we were poor, I had a very happy childhood.

There were deep, wide hollows on Grandfather Myer's property made from rain storms from the Oquirrh Mountains before canals were dug. The water gushed through on its way to the Jordan River. As children we hiked to the hollows and picked wildflowers that grew in great abundance there. Some of them were the fragrant sweet peas. Also [there were] lady slippers, red and blue bells, Indian paint brush, sand lilies, and occasionally sego lilies.

[to be continued]

Ninety Years of Memories:
Wilford Myers

[Note: This is an excerpt of a transcript of an interview Mel Bashore conducted with Wilford Myers on 5 January 1985. It is edited for clarity and readability.]

Mel: Would you tell me about the Indians that used to come through Riverton?

Wilford: Well, I didn't pay much attention to Indians. My mother was so scared of the Indians that she'd almost go into hysterics if any of them came around. That's the reason that we didn't encourage the Indians to come. They come on horses generally. They had mostly loud [bright] clothes. They wore beads. I couldn't tell you what tribe they were from. I wasn't old enough at that time to know and particularly when my mother was so frightened of them. She didn't like them to come around. She'd let them know that she didn't like them. I don't know why. She came here pretty early. **She came from Denmark.**

My mother was so scared of the Indians that she'd almost go into hysterics if any of them came around.

Mel: Do you remember when the Indians stopped coming?

Wilford: I was born in 1890. They didn't come too much after I get up [before 1900]. They'd go on horses and some of them walked, but they weren't too trustworthy. As I remember, they'd steal quite frequently. They'd go down south in the fall and then they'd come back through here in the spring. They'd just pass through.

Mel: I have a list of old pioneer people who lived in Riverton. If I mention their names, could you tell me about them?

Wilford: Yes, you go ahead.

Mel: What do you remember about Gordon S. Bills?

Wilford: He was the bishop here for a long time — 23 or 26 years — I can't remember which. He was a polygamist. One of his wives was a Holt woman.

Mel: I've heard some people say that after the Manifesto, some of the polygamous families really weren't treated too well. Did that happen in Riverton?

Wilford: You mean the people didn't like the polygamists? Well, I don't think there was any distinction made against them because they were polygamists. I believe they were treated all right.

Mel: Charles Mormon Nokes was the only person who went to prison for polygamy from Riverton. Do you remember him?

Wilford: Charles Nokes had a boy who was as smart as anybody who ever lived in Riverton — Mormon Nokes. He was really a smart fella. Mormon Nokes became a millionaire. He produced some machinery and stuff like that. You could look at the fella and tell that he was just a smart guy. Benjamin Nokes got in with the railroad. Harold Nokes was a doctor up there in Idaho. He was a pretty smart fellow. Charles Nokes's oldest boy was William. There was a fellow up here by the name of Larsen who was kind of a silly guy. Will Nokes pulled all Larsen's teeth out with just a pair of pliers. There was quite a stir over that.

Will Nokes pulled all Larsen's teeth out with just a pair of pliers. There was quite a stir over that.

Mel: You mean he pulled his teeth out just for a joke?

Wilford: Yeah! This Will Nokes was kind of a hard fellow. He didn't have much feeling for himself or anybody else. But his father, Charlie Nokes, was pretty good. He got to be the horticulturist here, working for the government. I got along with him fine. He was kind of an outspoken fellow. His daughter, Tilly Nokes, was a fine-looking girl. My folks carried the mail from the D&RG railroad over to Riverton. They'd take it over at night and in the morning, bring the mail back. They'd meet the train. One day, Tilly Nokes wanted a ride from the D&R over here to Riverton. She was dressed up and I had about a ton of coal on the wagon. She got on and the wind was blowing. She wasn't so white and beautiful by the time we get here to Riverton.

[to be continued]

Second Printing for Silcock Biography

The 500-page Silcock biography, *Come After Us*, recently written by Mel Banner has sold out of its first printing and is taking orders for a planned second printing in June. Following are some excerpts from the book giving a glimpse into interesting home remedies used in the Silcock family in 1881 in Riverton:

"February 25, Nicholas was sick and had diarrhea very bad. 'I took black pepper and water twice and I had some peppermint tea and some charcoal and molasses and I felt a little better.'

".... In June Nicholas recorded yet another home remedy: 'A teaspoon of turpentine in a meat spoon full of sugar and some saltpeter put in water as much as the water will dissolve. Give a teaspoon every three hours with two-thirds spoon of alcohol, and let them have all they can drink.' This was an elixir formula Nicholas felt would benefit his posterity as he took the time to record it." (page 370)

Give a teaspoon every three hours with two-thirds spoon of alcohol, and let them have all they can drink.

Following is an order form for the second printing:

NICHOLAS THOMAS & JANE SILCOCK BIOGRAPHY ORDER FORM

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

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PHONE _____

The biography goes to print June 21, 2004.
Please have your orders in by June 18, 2004.

Important Note: If family orders can be shipped in bulk to one central address, it would facilitate the mailing by volunteers.

NUMBER OF BOOKS	COST PER BOOK	TOTAL COST
	\$35.00 (Includes Shipping)	

Send check or money order to:

Melvin B. Banner
972 West Yucca Drive
Salt Lake City, Utah 84123
Phone (801) 313-1785

**RIVERTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
CRANE HOUSE
1640 W. 13200 S.
RIVERTON, UT 84065**

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