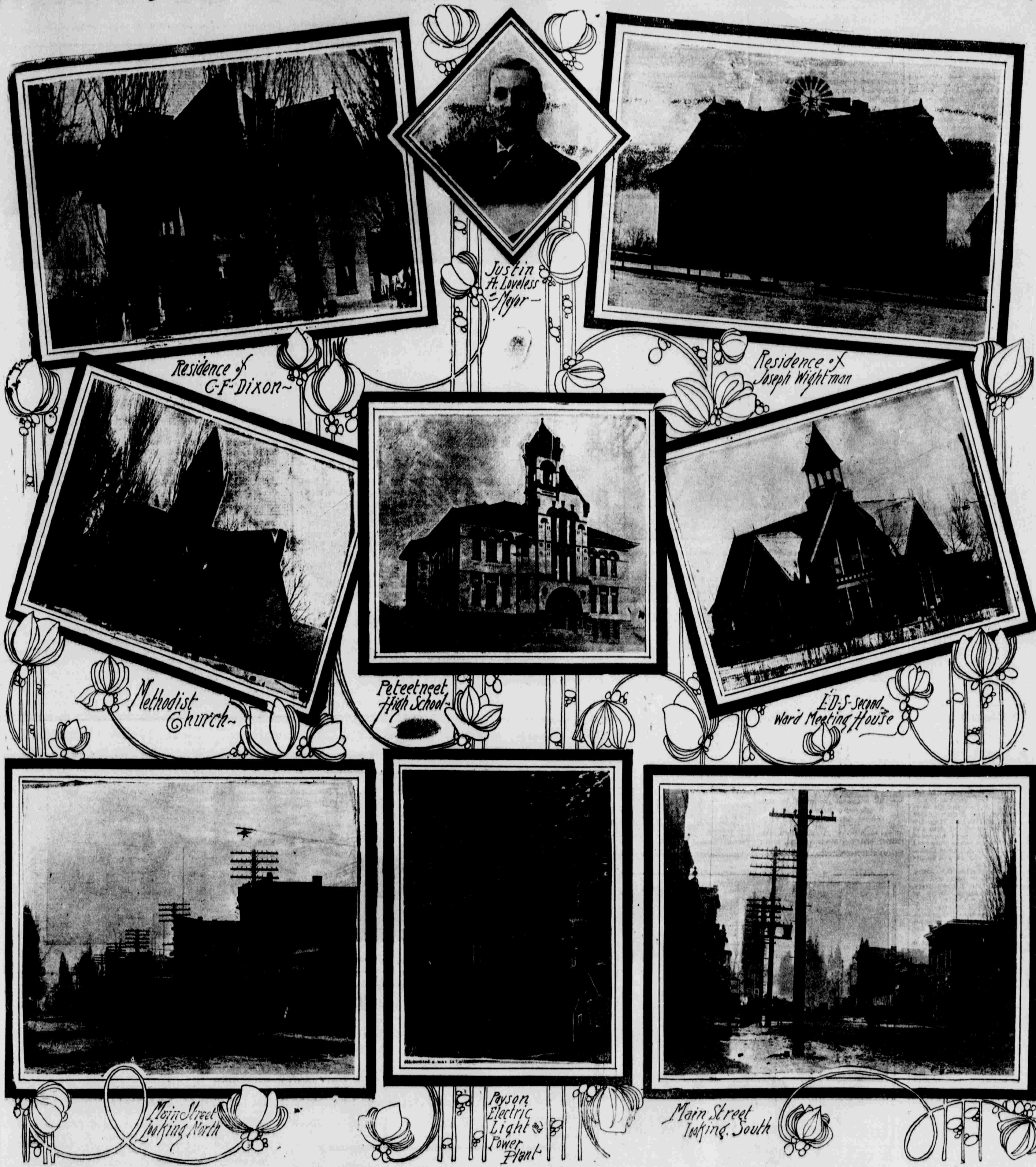


How Payson Thrives in Section Rich in Soil and Scenery



In the extreme south end of Utah's most beautiful valley, nestling like a gem at the base of the mighty Wasatch range, is the prosperous little city of Payson. Its population is numbered at about 3,000 inhabitants. Their comfortable homes, well tilled farms, numerous flocks and herds, and well stocked business houses, speak eloquently of the thrift and industry of this happy community. It is also an evidence of the wisdom, good judgment and foresight exercised by the early settlers in selecting a location so favorable for the building up of a healthy commonwealth.

How different was the outlook, when on Sunday, Oct. 20, 1850, a company of nine families under the leadership of James Pace camped on the Peteeetneet creek, (an Indian word meaning little water) and began the settlement of Payson, named after Mr. Pace. They immediately began to break up the land, erect houses and prepare for the winter. And be it always said to the lasting credit and honor of Utah's sturdy pioneers, that one of their first thoughts was to provide a school and care for the education of their children. This was not neglected at Payson for in the winter of 1850 a big school-

house was built and a regular school opened up.

The soil is exceedingly productive and fairly good crops were raised during the years of '52, '53, and '54. In the fall of '54 the plague of grasshoppers made its appearance—too late, however, to damage the crops of that season; but they laid their eggs, which hatched out the following summer by the millions, the young grasshoppers destroying the crops and leaving the farms and gardens as desolate of vegetation as a paved street. In the fall a strong south wind arose and blew them all away. The crops were harvested with scythe and cradle, and threshed on a threshing floor by means of oxen or horses treading on the grain, the kernel being separated from the chaff by the blowing wind. The first threshing machine was introduced in '58 and consisted of a log cylinder having spikes driven into it which merely threshed the wheat without cleaning. This machine was owned by Geo. Patten and Pardon Webb.

Many are the stories recounted of thrilling adventures, hairbreadth escapes, deeds of daring and bravery during the troublous times of the Walker Indian war. Payson was the scene of the first tragedy. From here it spread over the whole of southern Utah, and many were the savage butcheries and horrible outrages perpetrated upon the almost defenseless settlers by the revengeful Indian.

In 1852 the Indians under Chief Walker captured a number of Indian children and squaws from the Yampa

Utes. These they wanted to trade off to the "Mormons" or to some Spanish Mexican traders who were there in the valley trading with the Indians. They threatened to kill the children if they could not trade them off. Governor Brigham Young, who was also Indian Agent, hearing of this attempted traffic in human beings, immediately sent out word prohibiting the Mexican and settlers from buying Indian children. The disappointed Walker and his followers were very much angered, because surly and mean, seeking only a pretext before turning loose their savage hordes upon the little settlements.

The sought for opportunity occurred. One of Walker's bronco riders, Sharry Shocksletts, was beating his squaw at Springville, when a man by the name of Jim Ivis interfered, striking the Indian on the head with a gun, seriously injuring him. Walker threatened, if Shocksletts died, he would be avenged by taking the life of a white man. The Indian died in about fifteen days. They were then encamped at the mouth of the canyon above Payson. Their actions were threatening. The people were exposed; their lives were in imminent peril. Guards were placed at intervals about the little settlement, Alexander Keel being one of them. In the darkness of the night a shot rang out and Mr. Keel fell a victim to Indian vengeance. This did the famous Walker war, which raged for a number of years over fertile valleys of Utah, have its beginning. At this time, 1853, there were eighty-five families living at Payson.

Notwithstanding all of the drawbacks, hardships and struggles incident to pioneer life, the town continued to grow. The population increased; school houses were established; school houses erected; the water supply, which at first barely reached into the town, miraculously increased in volume, furnishing irrigating water—nature's magic enchantress—transforming the arid deserts into verdant fields and fruitful orchards. At the present time there are about 4,000 acres of land under cultivation, that are irrigated. This year's crop of wheat amounted to 50,000 bushels. Dry farming has also proven a success, about 6,000 acres being under cultivation.

Three hundred and fifty acres of land were devoted to beet culture, resulting in an average yield of 17 tons to the acre. Potatoes, hay and other farm products also yield abundantly. Twenty thousand head of sheep are owned by citizens of Payson, the wool output amounting to 140,000 pounds.

It is estimated that Payson has done \$500,000 worth of business during the last year.

Business Houses.

Payson contains five general merchandise stores, one bank, three meat markets, three millinery stores, two livery stables, two hardware stores, one tin shop, three shoemakers, one harness and saddlery store, one photographer, one printing office, one drug store, one restaurant, two saloons, one gent's furnishing store, one confectionery, two furniture houses, one tailor, two bar-

ber shops, six blacksmith shops, one opera house, one dancing hall, two hotels, two unimproved, one saw mill, which was recently destroyed by fire; this presents a good opportunity for a profitable investment either by local or outside capital.

Payson is on the line of two railroads, the Denver & Rio Grande, and the Salt Lake Route. There are three ledges, the Old Fellows, Woodman and Royal Neighbors. The churches represented are the Latter-day Saints, the Methodist, and the Presbyterians. The largest building in town is the Peteeetneet High school, costing \$20,000, and second to none south of Salt Lake City. Besides the High school, there are two district schools, employing in all 15 teachers. Payson is connected with the Rocky Mountain Bell telephone, the Independent telephone, and has an exchange of nearly 100 subscribers. The Independent Telephone Co. has obtained a franchise and are now at work installing the same.

Payson is also the southern terminus of the proposed Barney Mahler inter-urban electric railway, which is to extend from Payson on the south to Logan on the north.

Payson Electric Light Plant.

In 1891 this plant was installed as a private enterprise at the mouth of Peteeetneet canyon and was operated by water power. On Monday, July 12, 1897, a special election of the citizens was held to consider the advisability of purchasing and operating the above mentioned plant. The election carried

and accordingly the city was bonded for \$5,000, the deal was made, and the plant brought under municipal control. Payson being the first in the state to own its own electric light plant. Additions to the amount of \$2,500 were made, yet this was inadequate to supply the growing city's demand for electric lighting. The present administration, consisting of Justin A. Loveless, mayor; Hyrum Lemmon, Thomas H. Wilson, Jr., C. E. St. John, S. Taylor and C. E. Miles, councilmen, therefore, appointed a committee for enlarging and improving the original plant. The city was bonded for \$12,000, plans and specifications were drawn up and the following machinery installed:

One high-speed 150 horse power, ball engine; one steam heater; two 35 horse power tubular boilers; one 100 K. W. G. E. generator with marble switch board; four lightning arresters. Poles were set, lines extended in the city and the canal cleaned out and enlarged, and today as far as the quality and efficiency of its service is concerned, is second to none in the state. The total cost up to date is \$20,000. The water power is sufficient for the greater part of the year and the steam power is used only when this power is insufficient.

Strawberry Valley Water User's Ass'n.

One of the biggest reclamation schemes ever attempted in Utah is that of taking water from Strawberry valley for irrigating the south end of Utah county.

Located on the top of the Wasatch range of mountains—the great water-

shed of Utah—is located the picturesque Strawberry valley, 50 miles east of Payson. The streams flowing into this valley make their exit through a deep gulch on the east side and from thence find their way into the Green river. Years ago the idea was conceived of putting a dam across this gulch, converting the valley into a great reservoir, and bringing the water out on the west side. Surveys were made but it was found to be impracticable because of the high, unbroken mountain surrounding the west side.

Three years ago, State Senator Henry Gardner conceived the idea of tunneling through the mountain. Surveys were accordingly made and it was found that by digging a tunnel three and a half miles long the valley could be tapped on the west side. Work was begun by a company of private citizens, who continued at it for one and one-half years. In 1903 the citizens of Payson and Spanish Fork held a mass meeting to consider the Strawberry valley water project. A committee of prominent men from both towns was appointed to take the matter in hand. They appealed to the government for aid and got the reclamation authorities interested. Application was made to the secretary of the interior for permission to locate a reservoir in Strawberry valley, which was permitted. From here the plan took definite form and the successful completion of the work was practically assured. During the last year the land owners of Payson and Spanish Fork incorporated under the laws of the State of Utah with a capital stock of