

THE BANNOCK STAKE OF ZION.

BY ANDREW JENSON.

REXBURG.

Rexburg, the largest "Mormon" settlement in the Snake River Valley and the headquarters of the Bannock Stake, is pleasantly situated on a level tract of country lying between the base of the foot hills on the south and the south branch of the Teton River on the north. It is twenty-two miles by direct road northeast of Market Lake, the nearest station on the Utah & Northern Railway, which is the shipping point for all the settlements situated on the forks of the Snake River; and it is thirty-five miles by way of the Big Buttes ferry northeast of Eagle Rock. The altitude of Rexburg is 4,950 feet above the level of the sea.

Rexburg is divided into three Bishop's Wards. The townsite embraces eight hundred acres, divided into ten acre-blocks, which again are divided into four lots each. The streets are six rods wide. (See plat on page 305.)

The town contains four general stores, one furniture store, two blacksmiths shops, one hotel, one livery sale and feed stables, one meat market etc. Durans, Winter & Co. carry a greater stock of goods than any other store in the forks of Snake River.

Immediately east of the town is the patent roller mill, the pride of the valley. It was erected in 1889 at a cost of \$25,000. The main building is 45 x 55 feet and four stories high, built of solid rock. The mill has all the improved machinery and turns out as good a grade of flour as any mill in Idaho. It is owned by an incorporated company.

HISTORY.—March 11, 1883, the Rexburg townsite was selected by President William B. Preston and Bishop Thomas E. Ricks. It was surveyed on the 12th and the following day by Surveyor Andrew S. Anderson, into ten-acre blocks, with four lots in each.

On the 15th of March, the Rexburg city canal was surveyed. Work was commenced on it June 4th following, and water turned into it on the 14th.

In February, 1883, the first logs were hauled on the townsite preparatory to building by Francis C. Gunnell, Thomas E. Ricks and others.

March 18th, 1883, the Y. M. M. I. A. was first organized with E. Paul as President.

March 25th, 1883, the first house was built by Bishop Ricks.

March 26, 1883, Ricks and Co's. ferry boat was launched on Henry's Fork. This ferry was continued until the bridge was built in the spring of 1890.

June 3rd, 1883, the first Sunday School was organized by Henry Flamm, with James M. Cook as superintendent and twenty members.

In October, 1883, the first meeting-house in Rexburg was built at a cost of about \$850. The Church contributed \$200 of this amount, and the balance was donated by the people. On the 17th of October, the first meeting was held in the new meeting-house.

Oct. 27, 1883, the first ward conference was held at Rexburg, W. B. Preston presiding.

December 3, 1883, the first day

school was opened at Rexburg, with Thomas E. Bassett as teacher.

In September, 1883, the first store was established by Thomas E. Ricks & Co. This is now the Rexburg Co-operative Store. About the same time Walter Paul opened the first furniture and hardware store; he also carried building supplies.

April 1st, 1884, the first postoffice was established in Rexburg; Thomas E. Bassett, postmaster.

At the first quarterly conference of the Bannock Stake, held at Rexburg, Sunday, April 27th, 1884, Thos. E. Ricks, jun., was ordained a High Priest and set apart to act as Bishop of Rexburg. Andrew S. Anderson was set apart as his Second Counselor. Subsequently John L. Roberts was set apart as his First Counselor.

In December, 1884, the Rexburg Grist Mill was dedicated. This mill continued to run successfully until April 11, 1889, when it was burned down. After this loss, steps were immediately taken to erect the present patent roller mill, which commenced running November 14, 1889.

April 5th, 1885, the Relief Society was first organized with Ann Ricks as President.

May 18th, 1886, Joseph Morris and C. Ayling were appointed acting Counselors to Thomas E. Ricks, jun., in the absence of Counselors Roberts and Anderson, who had gone into exile, because of the strict enforcement of the Edmunds law. This Bishopric acted until the ward was divided in November, 1887.

At the quarterly Stake Conference held at Rexburg August 20 and 21, 1887, the town of Rexburg was divided into three wards, to be known as the Rexburg First, Second and Third wards.

In March, 1888, Hyrum Rands opened the first hotel in Rexburg.

REXBURG FIRST WARD.

Thomas E. Ricks, jun., Bishop; Nathan Ricks, First Counselor; William Hill, Second Counselor.

Rexburg First Ward embraces the east part of the town of Rexburg, (see plat on page?) and includes the business part of the town.

HISTORY.—When the original Rexburg Ward was divided into three wards, Thomas E. Ricks was retained as Bishop of the Rexburg First Ward, and three months later, at the quarterly conference, held November 27, 1887, William Hill was set apart as acting Counselor to Bishop Ricks. He was the only Counselor the Bishop had until August, 1888, when Nathan Ricks was called to act as First Counselor and William Hill as Second Counselor. This was done at the quarterly Conference held at Louisville.

REXBURG SECOND WARD.

Casper Steiner, Bishop; Roman Seipert, First Counselor; Conrad Waltz, Second Counselor.

Rexburg Second Ward embraces the southwest part of the town of Rexburg. Many of the residents are of German descent, and only a very few outsiders reside in this ward. The meeting house, situated south of the Second Ward Public Square, is a log building, 18x30 feet, and was built by donation in 1888. The Relief Society is the only separate society so far organized, all the other usual ward associations be-

ing connected with the First Ward up to date.

HISTORY.—When Rexburg was divided into three Wards, at the quarterly Conference held at Rexburg, August 21, 1887, Casper Steiner was ordained Bishop of Rexburg Second Ward, and at the next quarterly Conference held at Rexburg, November 27, 1887, Roman Seipert and Conrad Waltz were ordained High Priests and set apart to act as First and Second Counselors to Bishop Steiner. No change in the Bishopric has occurred as yet.

REXBURG THIRD WARD.

Timothy J. Winter, Bishop; Robert Archibald, First Counselor; John R. Paul, Second Counselor.

This ward embraces the northwest part of Rexburg. No separate Sunday school or any other organization have been organized yet; neither has any ward house been erected. Preparations, however, are being made to build one in the near future.

HISTORY.—The boundaries of the Rexburg Third Ward were agreed upon at the Stake Conference, held at Rexburg in August, 1887, and Timothy J. Winter was chosen as Bishop; but he, being absent at the time, did not receive his ordination until April, 1888, when he visited Salt Lake City and was there ordained by Apostle Franklin D. Richards. Soon afterwards Robert Archibald and John R. Paul were ordained and set apart to act as his Counselors. Those three still compose the Bishopric of the Ward.

RIGBY WARD.

George Albert Cordon, Bishop; Daniel Stoddard Robbins, First Counselor; Josiah Call, Second Counselor.

Rigby Ward consists of all the Saints living on their respective quarter sections in a tract of country lying east of Louisville Ward. The boundaries of the ward are as follows: Commencing at the northwest corner of Section 2, Township 4 north of Range 38 east, and running thence south to the township line between townships 3 and 4, thence east along said line to Snake River, thence along Snake River to the mouth of the "Dry Bed" of said river, which forms its northern boundary line. This includes about fifty square miles of country. The south end of the ward, embracing the east half of range 39 east, township 4 north, is organized into a separate branch known as the Cedars Branch, where meetings and Sunday schools also are held regularly the same as in Rigby proper. Jesse T. Clark presides over the branch, which consists of about a dozen families.

The intended townsite of Rigby, surveyed in 1886, consists of 160 acres, being the southwest quarter of section 18, township 4 north of range 39 east. It is 25 miles, by way of the Big Buttes ferry, southwest of Rexburg, or 14 miles in a straight line; it is also six miles by road southeast of Louisville and 17 miles northeast of Eagle Rock. It is surrounded by rich, level lands, covered heavily with sage brush, but under cultivation produces very good crops. Water for irrigating purposes is conveyed to the lands through a canal which taps the "Dry Bed" of Snake River about 33 miles from the townsite. All the people reside on their farms as yet, but intend to build on the townsite as soon as it is entered as such and title can be secured to it.