

History Question of the Month

Who were the first officers and directors of the Brown and Sanford Irrigation Company?

Answer

In 1874 a group of homesteaders on the Butler Bench diverted water from Big Cottonwood Creek, near today's water treatment plant, and dug a canal to carry water to their farms. This water was used for both culinary and agricultural purposes. It was referred to by those living on the bench as "the canal". As the area grew and spread to the south and west and north below Butler Hill, the canal was enlarged and branches off it made to cover more farms. The canal then became known as the Brown and Sanford Ditch, named for two of the individuals instrumental in extending the coverage of system.

In December of 1900, the Brown and Sanford Irrigation Company filed Articles of Incorporation with the Salt Lake County Clerk's Office. William J. Panter, President, Charles F. Boyce, Vice President, Charles Colebrook, Secretary and Treasurer, who with John W. Foulkes and Charles R. Wootton formed the Board of Directors. Capital stock of the company was valued at \$19,500. There were 195 shares of stock issued valued at, \$100.00 a share. The company's service area covered 1000 acres. They claimed 1/5 of the water from Big Cottonwood Creek.

Since the greatest need for water was in the late summer when water levels were low, the company began construction of dams on three lakes located in the Mill B area of Big Cottonwood Canyon. These were completed in 1910. The company began enlarging the capacity of the lakes in 1914 completing them in 1934. In 1972 the dams which had become unstable were breached and Salt Lake City purchased the rights to the water that had been stored in the Three Sister Lakes for culinary use.

Published December 2018 – Gayle Conger

Published April 2021