

History Question of the Month

How did Murray City acquire the rights to McGhie Springs?

Answer to History Question of the Month

McGhie Springs was comprised of several crystal clear springs flowing from the hillside on the McGhie property located at the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon. William McGhie Jr. settled in the area in 1867. He used the water from these springs to irrigate his property as well as some of his neighbors' properties. William McGhie Jr. died in 1902. His wife continued to live on the farm until it was sold to Hyrum Covert in 1912.

Early in 1919, Dr. William T. Cannon and Hyrum Covert made an offer to Murray City to sell 40 acres of land that contained McGhie Springs and the the rights to the water from the springs. After several months of negotiations Murray City purchased 9 ½ acres of land which provided access to the springs and springs themselves along with the water rights to the springs for a sum of \$13,022.20. \$8372.20 was paid to Mrs. Ada C. Cannon and \$4750.00 to Hyrum Covert. Murray City piped the water from McGhie Springs 3 ½ miles to a 150,000 gallon reservoir located east of 1300 East on what was known as the Butlerville Road (now Fort Union Blvd.)

During the 1930's, in an effort to improve the amount of water from the springs, Murray City obtained funding from several Federal Government programs that allowed them to bore four tunnels into the hillside in order to pick up the increased flow. The tunnels were cemented in 1939 making them permanent for several years. During this same time Murray City built a new 1,000,000 gallon, state of the art, domed reservoir next to the old reservoir, which they also covered. They also constructed a new concrete pipe line from inside the mountain to the new reservoir, using the right of way of the old McGhie Ditch which they purchased for \$50.00 and right of ways they obtained from other property owners. This now meant the water flowing from McGhie Springs never saw the light of day until it flowed from the taps of the users in Murray. The water was so clear and pure that it required no form of purification. The springs are still a source of water for Murray City.

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