

# CHRIS LANE

*A "Bit" O' History!*



*By  
Melt Stelter*

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## A "BIT" O' HISTORY!

To better understand Chris Lane's historical past one must begin with the building of Union Fort on the banks of Little Cottonwood Creek. The fort was built by some of the very first pioneers to enter the valley. The precise location of the north wall of the fort is very nearly along the south walls (back of the stores) beginning near the west wall of Wal-Mart and continuing over to and including Mr. Mac's clothing store located in the Family Center shopping complex at 13<sup>th</sup> East and 7200 South. The fort walls extended about an equal distance to the south, forming an enclosure a little less than a city block (ten acres) in size. It was a small area yet enclosed 23 homes, and a school. Homes in this area have been, forever after, referred to by the locals as being "in the fort" even though the walls of the fort have long since disappeared.

It has been noted that soon after the laying of the cornerstones for the Salt Lake Temple in 1853, the Timpanogos Ute Indian Chief Walkara began raiding isolated settlements of pioneers. In the beginning there was great fear that the marauding Indian warriors would attack and overrun the isolated settlers in this forlorn section of the valley as well as Utah Valley and even into Sanpete Co. It was deemed a necessity to build the Union Fort not only as a protection for the settlers of "Little Cottonwood," but as a safe retreat for workers cutting stone in the quarry in Little Cottonwood Canyon as well.

As trust and confidence grew with the friendliness of the Indians once more, homes began to be built outside the fort. Thus, the small town of "Union," (renamed because of the townspeople's great unified effort to build the fort and relocate homes within it,) began to grow once more beyond its walls. An interesting report on the origins of this new community was carried in our new "city newspaper," *Cottonwood Heights/Holladay Journal*, Sept. 2004. (A copy of that article is included on the next page.) It reported that the original founders of Union included some black families who had been very much a part of the Mormon migration westward. One of these families figures very prominently in Chris Lane's history.

(NOTE: Growing up in Union it was always an assignment of the men and boys of the Ward to clean up and take care of the small cemetery noted in the article. It is not far up the Creek Road from 13<sup>th</sup> East on the north side of the road. (It is easily located.)

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Among the first houses built outside the walls of the Union Fort was an adobe house with two rooms. (Additional rooms were later added at the back.) It was located on the hill to the East of Union far above and away from the main settlement. Indeed it was built right where Ron Lindsey's home now stands on Chris Lane. The property that went with the house included twelve and one half acres of land that strictly defines *all* that is now called lower Chris Lane. It includes both sides of Chris Lane from Fort Union Boulevard to 7200 South. (See area bounded by red line on map, page 5.) This entire parcel of land was included with the house from its original pioneer beginning.

My grandparents came to Salt Lake City from Germany as converts to the LDS Church in 1904. My father was four years old. They purchased this house and parcel of land in 1910 for the sum of \$250 (\$20 per acre.) They were people familiar with farming and felt vastly more secure in owning some land of their own.

Title to the property came with an "abstract" of its history from its time of origin. This abstract was quite thick and rich in interesting anecdotal information. I always enjoyed reading the many entries contained in it. However, the last time I saw it was in 1960. It was in the possession of my father, but at the time of his death in 1975 it could no longer be located. What happened to it is a family mystery. Be that as it may, I can and do vouch for the following historical information about this property.

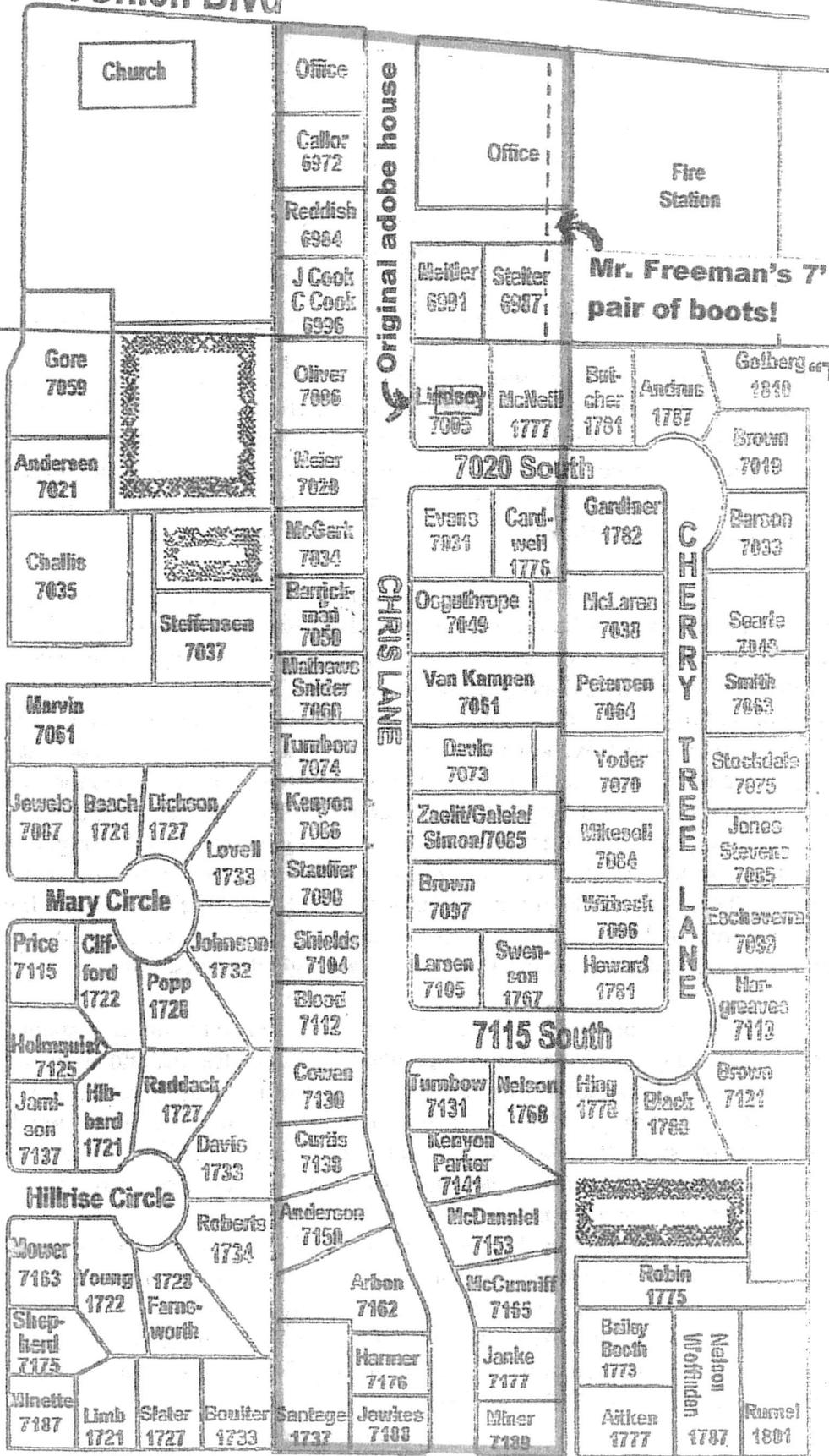
While I do not recall who built the home originally, I well remember that for many years it was the property of the Freeman family noted in the *Cottonwood Heights/Holladay* news article. This means that everyone who lives on lower Chris Lane is living on property that was once owned and farmed by one of the black families that were numbered with the early pioneers that came into the Salt Lake Valley. It is of interest to mention that as to just where the Freeman family lived I do not know, but they did not live in the adobe house on the property. Rather, they used it as one would a root cellar to store the harvest that they raised on the land. It was reportedly filled with onions, carrots, potatoes, etc. The adobe walls were cool in summer and amazingly insulated against harsh outside temperatures in winter.

There were several white owners of the property after the black families left the area and before my grandparents' purchased the property, but I personally remember the Freeman family ownership most of all because of Mr. Freeman's boots!



# Fort Union Blvd

1700 EAST



Original adobe house

CHRIS LANE

CHERRY TREE LANE

Mr. Freeman's 7' for a pair of boots!

"Township" line

Office

Fire Station

Church

Office

Callor 6972

Reddish 6984

J Cook 6996  
C Cook 6996

Oliver 7006

Meier 7020

McGert 7034

Barrickman 7050

Mathews Snider 7060

Turnbow 7074

Kenyon 7086

Stautier 7090

Shields 7104

Blood 7112

Cowan 7130

Curds 7138

Anderson 7150

Arbon 7162

Harner 7176

Jewites 7188

Santage 7197

Office

Maitier 6991

Stalter 6987

Macey 7005

McNeill 1777

Butcher 1784

Andrus 1787

Golberg 1810

Brown 7019

7020 South

Evens 7031

Cardwell 1776

Gardner 1782

Barson 7033

Oogathrope 7049

McLaren 7038

Searle 7045

Van Kampen 7061

Peteresen 7064

Smith 7063

Davis 7073

Yoder 7079

Stockdale 7075

Zacht/Galelef/Simon 7085

Wikesell 7084

Jones Stevens 7085

Brown 7097

Witbeck 7096

Kacheverna 7099

Larsen 7105

Swenson 1767

Heward 1781

Margreaves 7113

7115 South

Turnbow 7131

Nelson 1768

Hing 1770

Black 1760

Brown 7121

Kenyon Parker 7141

McDaniel 7153

McCunniff 7165

Janke 7177

Miner 7199

Robin 1775

Bailey Both 1773

Arken 1777

Nelson Wolfenden 1787

Rummel 1801

7200 South

It is challenging enough to walk this distance in good weather, but Dad also walked it virtually every day through some extremely tough winters. Snow was much deeper in the valley in those days. I remember well the deep snow from my childhood since it was often my job to shovel the pathways from house to barn, coops, etc. In order to keep Dad's clothes as dry as possible, Grandma fashioned him some "leggings" out of "oil cloth." It was the only thing in that day to prevent water from soaking through it.

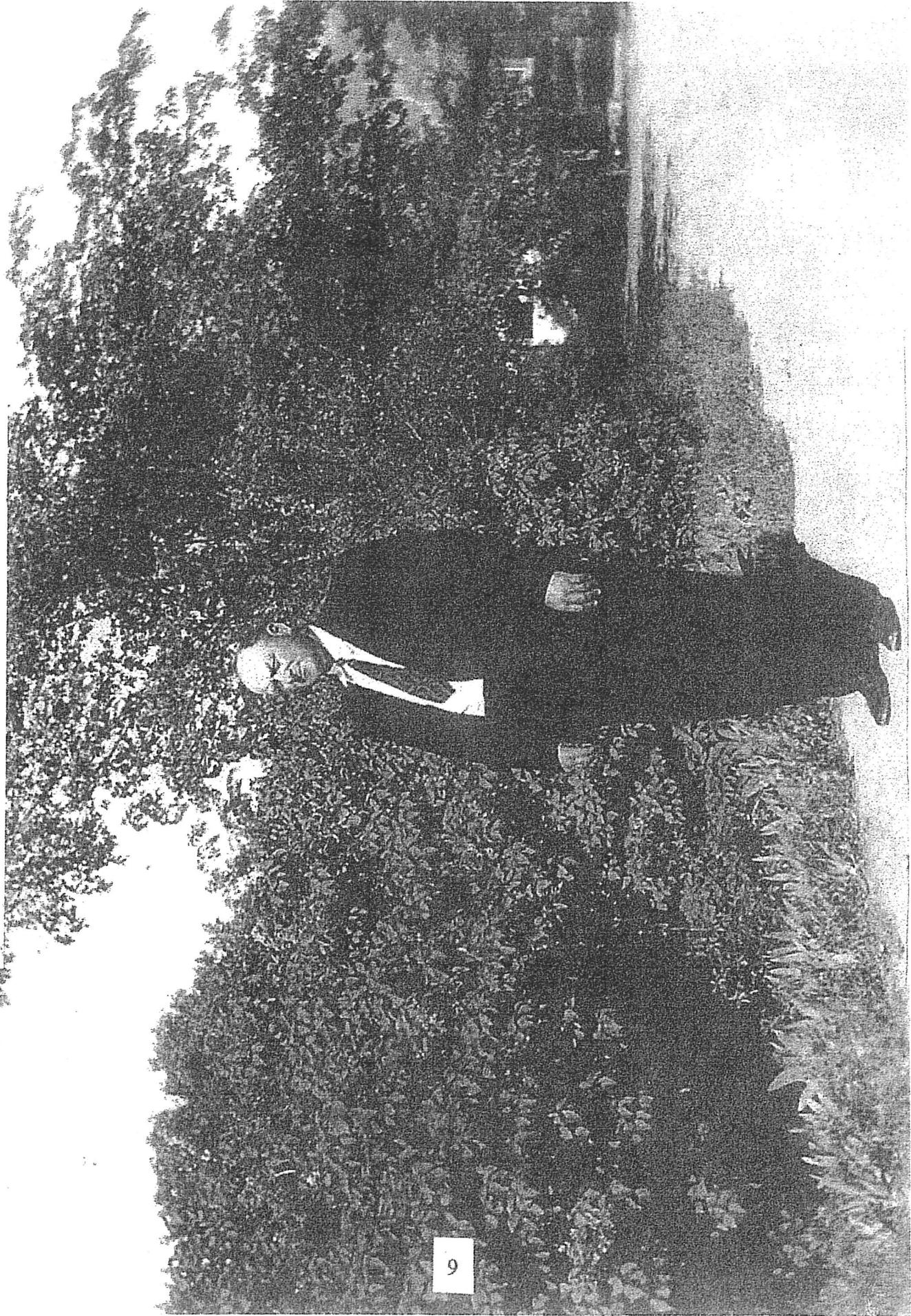
Because people were so few and widely distributed across the landscape, Dad had to "break his own trail" through the deep snow much of the way. He said there were times when he passed a barn coming home from work that he was tempted to go in and go to sleep. Yet he knew that if he did so, he would probably never wake up because of the cold. Temperatures commonly dropped well below zero here in the valley and his morning trip home was always near the maximum low temperature for the day.

In addition to his work at the smelter Dad also had to take care of the farm. This included such things as storing sufficient fuel for the winter stove, producing enough food to last through the season by preparing the land, sowing the seeds, watering and tending the crops, harvesting and properly storing the harvest for the coming winter. They had a cow for milk and a few chickens for eggs that needed daily attention.

As was noted above they lived without electricity! It would be several years before they would enjoy electrical power. Indeed, the first power to our house on Chris Lane came from the Murray City Power Co. My mother and father were married in 1921. They soon began raising turkeys for market to obtain the money necessary to pay Murray City Power to run a line all the way from 13<sup>th</sup> East up 70<sup>th</sup> South (Ft. Union Blvd.) to our home. This was the very *first* electric power on the hill where we live. Utah Power and Light came a few years later but we remained with Murray City until I was a teenager while everyone else was connected to Utah Power. As I recall it, Murray City finally withdrew their service from the area requiring us to switch to Utah Power.

Dad walked to and from work for six years. When he turned eighteen years old he purchased a 1918 Indian motorcycle. Finally he could "ride" to work. By this time my father's more basic personality began shining forth. Let me simply say that "he never met a stranger!" He loved people and was demonstrably friendly. He grew to know nearly everyone in the South end of the County at that time. We never went anywhere as a family but what the people knew our father. My siblings and I were shocked one day when one of his old friends began telling us about our Dad and his famous motorcycle. One must understand that the pavement on State Street ended at 33<sup>rd</sup> South. It was a dirt road from there to all points south in the valley. We were somewhat shocked when this old friend told us that our father and his motorcycle held the speed record for traveling from 33<sup>rd</sup> South to the Midvale smelter on the old dirt road. He said Dad could do it in something like fifteen minutes. (There were no stop signs or lights!) The man also told of riding with Dad while racing a railroad train to the Midvale crossing. He said, "We won the race, but I could nearly touch the engine as we crossed in front of it!" When we confronted our "circumspect" father with this story, he simply laughed!

Cherry Tree Lane runs directly through Grandma's house in the background.



Grandma's life continued to be hard. After her marriage she bore three daughters, two of whom died under the age of two. She was widowed at age 29. It was after these tragic events that she met Elder "Al" Berrett who was a missionary for the LDS Church. Grandma was a devout Episcopalian. She had been their organist in Wilmington for years. Yet, the things that Elder Berrett taught her converted her to The LDS Church. After joining The Church she met and married a member who was from Germany, and who strongly desired to move to Salt Lake City.

The only person they knew was Elder Berrett. And he happened to live in the last house on "Berrett Lane" (a part of Union) that was located just below Ft. Union Blvd. to the northwest. I cannot be certain, but I am compelled now to believe he must have had something to do with arranging for my mother's family to live temporarily in a small, two-room house located in front of Ridgecrest Elementary near the present tennis courts. They lived in the house for nearly two years before friends in Melbourne, Australia enticed them to go there with promises of much better opportunities for work.

The significant thing in all of this is that Mom and Dad were the same age. And this is *where* and *how* they met! These were the two years before Grandpa Stelter died. Mom and Dad went to school together (fifth & sixth grades). They gained life-long friends from the Union area at this time. About the time Dad quit school and went to work, Mom's family moved to Australia. For eight years, from ages twelve to twenty, they continued writing to each other. Following World War I, Mom's family returned to Salt Lake City after an eighteen month detour stay in Germany where her stepfather had to await "new" credentials to reenter the United States. There they experienced the deep devastation that Germany suffered in the aftermath of that war. The year following their return to Salt Lake City my mother and father were married in the Salt Lake Temple.

Al Berrett had died before I really knew him, but his wife, Elizabeth Berrett, was among my parents' nearest and dearest friends. We visited there often. There was an apple orchard between her home and "Aunt Ellie" Berrett's home that I thought was a leftover from the "Garden of Eden." I remember well the joy of playing in the clover and wild flowers. It was so peaceful there and everything seemed so refreshing to me.

At age 20 I was one of the Ward Teachers to both Aunt Ellie and Elizabeth Berrett. This was during the Korean War and I was drafted to serve in the military. As I said goodby to these two wonderful women they both hugged me and said, "I'll probably not be here when you get back," to which I replied, "you had better wait for me to get home." Aunt Ellie passed away while I was gone. But Sister Elizabeth said, "well, I'll hang around because I want you to play *Oh My Father* for me one last time." It was a fast Sunday when I attended the Ward for the first time after returning home from Korea. The leaders asked if I would play a number for them in that meeting. I played *Oh My Father*. After adjourning, there came Sister Elizabeth, hugged me again and said, "I waited for you and you played my favorite." Within the week I played for her funeral.

We had a cow and a workhorse. Mom and Dad still raised a few turkeys through the Depression years. We ate so many turkeys one year that Mom served "meatloaf" for Thanksgiving dinner just so it would be special.

Beside the cow and horse we raised a few chickens and pigs. I was about twelve years old when my father (who had years earlier left the smelter to work for the Denver Rio Grande Railroad) brought home a baby razorback pig that had been left in a railroad car by accident separating it from its mother. We raised this pig on a bottle at first. As just a small "piglet" he ran up and down the bean rows as we picked beans. He would dig his little nose into the dirt so hard his back feet lifted off the ground. We called him "Oogie!" He was friendly and obedient. When he became large enough, I could let him out of his pen and literally ride him like a horse around the barnyard. But the day arrived when Dad and Mom thought he was too big and he would turn "mean" and dangerous. It was time to sell him to a meat processor. When the day came to take him, they thought they could easily transfer him from his pen to the truck. He bolted and got away from them. They could not get him to go into the truck. Mom had insisted I stay in the house while they did this because he had become such a "pet." I consider it one of the most difficult assignments of my youth when they finally had me go out and call him, and then lead him into that truck. He did it so obediently. A few years earlier I had given up my pet heifer that I called "Sunshine" in a similar manner, although I didn't go out to help on that one.

We, children, made "pets" of nearly everything. "Nellie" was the cow and "Duke" was the horse. Although Duke was a workhorse all three of us boys rode him bareback using only a bridle. We didn't own a saddle. (Here I am ready for a ride on old "Duke." The person taking this picture was standing just about in Bishop Meier's driveway.)





We are getting an early start on weeding. My sister Esther, Joseph and me  
This garden will soon cover most of the property owned by the Meitlers.



We even used horsepower to clear snow in winter. My brother Reinald and I  
are on the horse while Esther, Joseph (with goggles) and Bob McCarthy  
are standing.

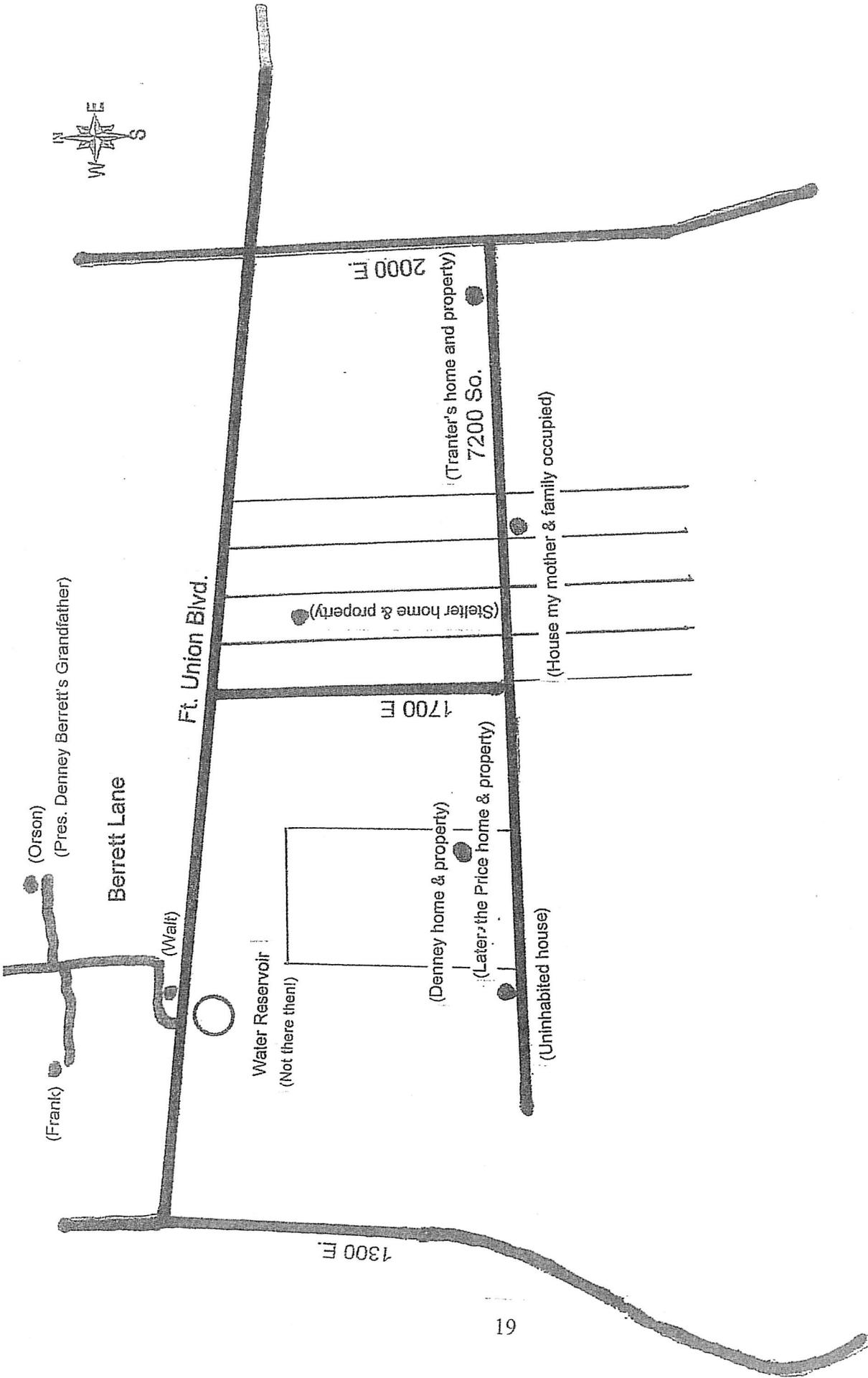
determining how much land was enough than on this hill. Irrigation water had to come from the stream flowing out of Big Cottonwood Canyon, then cross the flat plateau of Butlerville in a Southwesterly direction to 23<sup>rd</sup> East at about 74<sup>th</sup> South. There it split into an upper "A" ditch and a lower "B" ditch. The "B" ditch dropped down to water lower farms. It flowed west along the north side of 7200 So. as far as Jack Miner's back fence. The "A" ditch (also known as the "Tanner ditch") followed the brow of the hill high above Ridgecrest School. This brought water to the farms as far west as the present location of the 7<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> Ward chapel. Indeed, in an earlier day there were two orchards on the very edge of the hill. One extended from 7200 southward while the larger one began where the Ward chapel now stands and ran north nearly to Ft. Union Blvd. The land at that time continued on the same level as the chapel is now. Commercial removal of sand created the low-lying area where we now find Sante Fe, Target and Home Depot.

The demand for water, especially for culinary use, was the driving force in digging wells. There were eight wells in the area of our lower Chris Lane map (see large red dots on the map). Having a well enabled farms to have larger areas under cultivation. One home on the south side of 7200 near Highland Drive pumped their well with a windmill like you see in the Midwest. These wells were formed from concrete rings that were poured at ground level and slid downward as men dug out below the bottom ring allowing the rings to slip. The wells were about eight or nine feet in diameter and nearly all had a platform inside about ten feet down where pumps were mounted to bring the water to the surface through pipes for culinary use as well as irrigation of the land. The wells were usually forty feet deep or more. The underground water table in those years was much higher than it is today. In my youth I never heard of a well going dry, yet most all of them did in later years even though they were not pumped. It was presumed by most that the falling water table was primarily due to increased pumping by public facilities for an evergrowing demand at large, coupled with a "drying out" of our region.

As evidence of the higher water table of those earlier days, I wish to note that where Brookhill Drive enters Ft. Union Blvd. (next to Gotberg's home) there was a large pond of water that profusely produced cattails and other pond vegetation and was home to a chorus of frogs that croaked so loudly they sang us to sleep all the way over at our house on clear summer nights. It was fun catching pollywogs there. The pond was so large that kids actually sailed around on it on a small wooden raft. Directly across the street from Gotbergs, where the street enters Greenfield Village, there was an artesian well under some giant cottonwood trees. This well was engulfed in a large patch of wild, fresh mint that produced an aroma that we all loved. We could briefly rub our hands in the mint and the fragrance would stay with us for hours.

#### "POVERTY FLATS"

The settlers' homes down in Union were primarily located as they generally are everywhere that new communities spring up. That is, they are very near to water sources. In Union that was along the streambed of the Little Cottonwood Creek which still flows from the mouth of Little Cottonwood Canyon down through the Creek Road bottom to

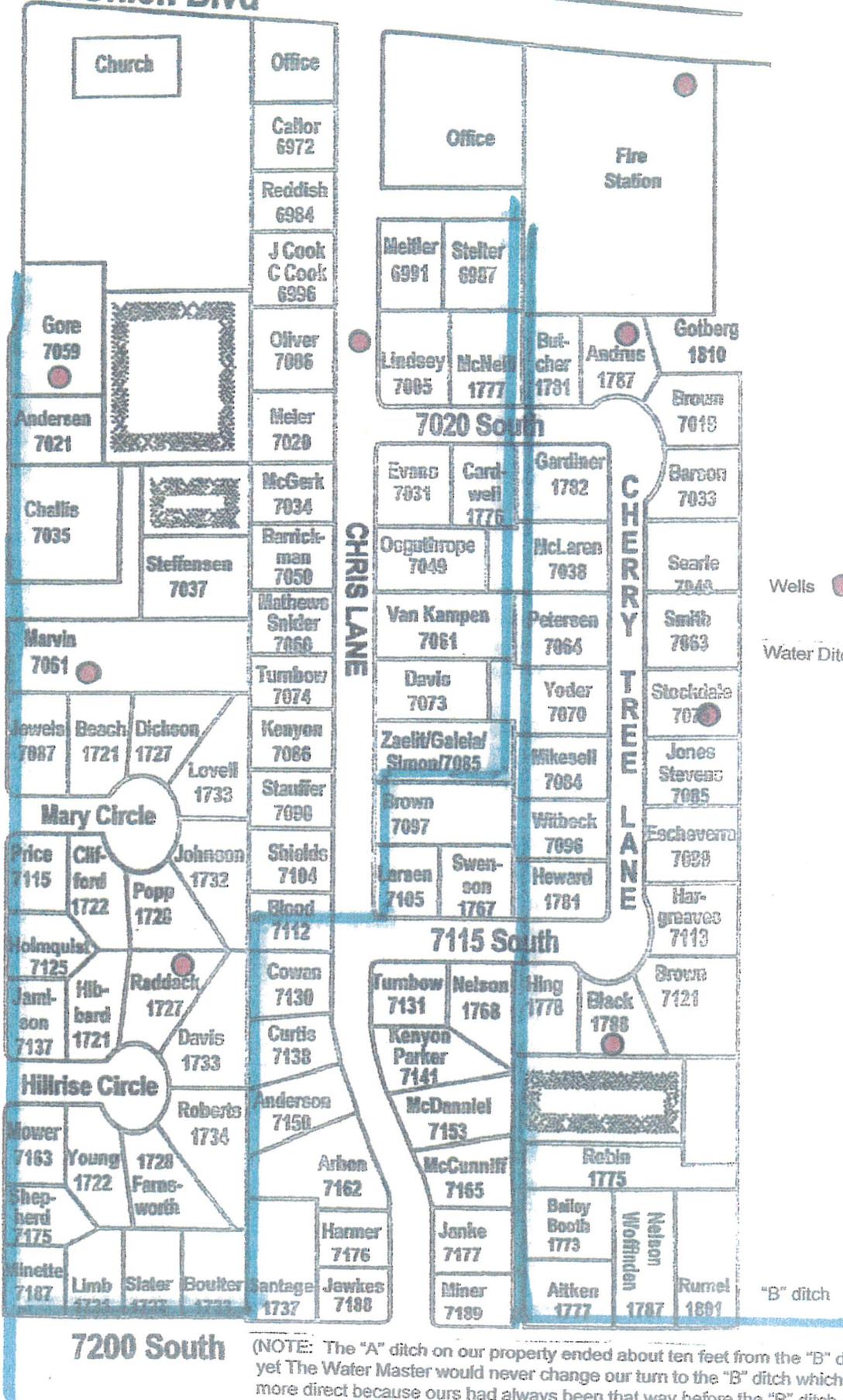


Known ownership of land and dwellings in the Chris Lane vicinity in 1910 - 1912



# Fort Union Blvd

1700 EAST



"A" ditch

7200 South

(NOTE: The "A" ditch on our property ended about ten feet from the "B" ditch, yet The Water Master would never change our turn to the "B" ditch which was more direct because ours had always been that way before the "B" ditch existed.)

The 1920s, or "Roaring Twenties" as they are known in US history, was a time of great social and economic growth in America. World War I was over, the stock market was taking off and people were feeling a sense of renewal and adventure. It seems that in a way this atmosphere was instrumental in actively developing the neighboring land adjacent to both sides of the original property known herein as Chris Lane, as well as upper Chris Lane south of 7200. I wish to present something of that story here. Since I have never precisely known the exact sequence of when all of these people came to settle in our neighborhood, I shall just simply discuss their arrival as I understood it.

### THE BUTT FAMILY

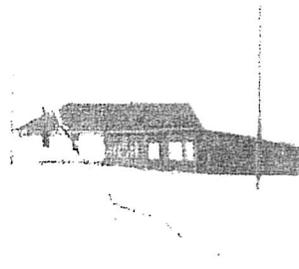
The first family to actually settle in the area of Chris Lane after my mother and father were married was a family from England whose last name was Butt. They were members of The Church of England over there, but were Episcopalians here. They purchased only the front portion of the land running parallel to 17<sup>th</sup> East. Their parcel was limited to just the land on which we today find The Southeast Baptist Church with their entire parking lot, Bill and Frances Gore's home and the land that Kay and Pauline Anderson's home occupies. This was the extent of their property. They built (or must have had built for them) the basic home in which Bill and Frances Gore now live today.

They were an elderly couple with only one child---a grown son whose name was Walt. They were extremely quiet people and kept very much to themselves. Walt was extremely timid and shy, yet he always had a "grin" on his face. I have no memory of him when he was not smiling. They were as wonderful neighbors as anyone could want. I was always excited to go to their house. Both Mr. & Mrs. Butt spoke with a soft but extremely distinctive British accent that intrigued me immensely. However, she had more to say than he did. I was fascinated when she would talk because she hardly moved her mouth and I wondered if her teeth actually separated when she spoke. Yet she was clear and distinct and you knew what she was saying.

There was a deep well immediately to the south of their back door. They built a chicken coop to the east of the house and a garage south of the well in which Walt parked his car. He owned an automobile---a two-door coup. I cannot remember the make, but I wish to say that he kept it looking like it had just rolled off the assembly line. And he kept it looking immaculate for as long as he owned it, which was well over ten years! I've never known anyone that took better care of an automobile.

Walt lived on the property by himself for a period of time after his parents passed away. Now in spite of his extreme shyness, a young woman did in fact catch his eye and they were married in The Salt Lake Temple. He sold his place and they bought a home a few blocks west of what is now Fashion Place Mall. Walt sold his home and land to one of the sons of the neighbors who owned and lived on upper Chris Lane above 7200 So.

(Butt's house and chicken coop. Now Bill & Frances Gore's home.)



JOHN McCARTHY

I remember John. As a boy in 1936 I went with a cousin to visit him. He was quite taciturn, not saying much to either of us. I felt, however, in his steady look a keen appraisal of me; in spite of our differences in age I felt comfortable with him and quite a close kinship. In a much more recent visit with Merle, John's oldest son, a few stories were gleaned about John's life and family. The bulk of information is still forthcoming from the descendants of John and will be published in the QUARTERLY from time to time. John was a skilled carpenter and mechanic, even into his later years. When he was 86 (1946) he was granted a permit to dig a well if he

### Results Prove That Many a Problem Is Solved by Just Digging Into It.

Six years ago John McCarthy quit the contracting business and bought himself eight acres in "Poverty Flat"—so-called for many years because of difficulties encountered in maturing crops comparable to those grown on adjacent but more favorably situated land.

About one mile due west of the mouth of Big Cottonwood canyon, just west and north of the Butlerville ridge, "Poverty Flat" spreads out over half a dozen sections of sandy soil rich in the minerals requisite to vegetation, but lacking the capacity to hold water.

"Poverty Flat" is on one of the Big Cottonwood ditches attempting to serve so great an area that irrigation turns come but once a week—and water once a week is too infrequent for the thirsty soil.

Residents of the section have always been optimistic—that is proven by the fact of residence—so they named one of the principal streets Egan's View in reference to what may be seen looking away from there. It is on that street just off Sixty-fourth South that John McCarthy bought eight acres.

For five years he and his son struggled against the lack of water and they managed to earn a good living off the place because—John McCarthy explains—the soil is so fractious that even on a meager water ration it will produce. But the crops were not what they should have been—the products were undersized and of insufficient numbers to what might be expected if sufficient water could be obtained.

"Always," John McCarthy says, "we had to wait our turn. We couldn't take the ditch water when it was most needed and, anyway, once a week wasn't enough."

So he studied the surrounding area and decided that underground flow could be tapped at from twenty to thirty feet depth and he began sinking a circular cement casing to get that water.

Some of the neighbors laughed at him—few, if any, believed. He was just throwing good money away.

But John McCarthy got the last laugh—he got water. A subterranean pond against which the demands of his place can hardly make a dent.

And he cashed in on it this summer.

A small gasoline engine and pump does the work—an acre an hour on four gallons of gas a day—when, how and as you please.

**Results—**  
Well, by feeding his crops water when they need it, by using his well to supplement the ditch water, John McCarthy's little bit of "Poverty Flat" has been encouraged to a yield never thought possible. Small fruits, large fruits, berries, melons and garden truck—the McCarthy place has an upset neighborhood expectations that already several other wells are in contemplation—at least one actually under construction, with John McCarthy directing the work for his next-door neighbor.

So it won't be poorraps, "Poverty Flat" much longer. John McCarthy suggests they change the name to "Paradise."

MBER 30, 1925.

## WELL, WELL! WELL--WATER!

John McCarthy, sage of "Poverty Flats," and some of the fruits of his faith that started his neighbors well-digging.



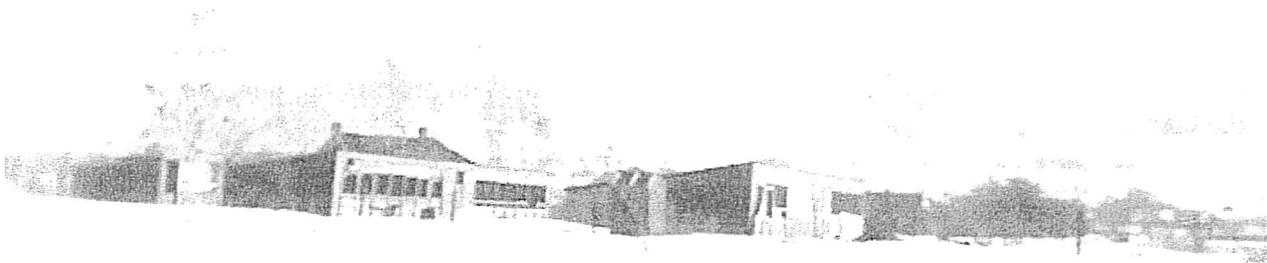
Myrle and Liz had four children: Paul, Glen, Bob and Mary. Paul was older than any of my siblings. Glen was near in age to my oldest brother Reinald, which was also about Gene Price's age. Bob was a year or two younger than my brother Joseph. Mary was two years younger than I was. The two families were very close. A crisis with one was a crisis with the other. Whenever illness struck we were mutually involved.

During the depression years The Royal Bakery, where Myrle worked as the buyer, would bring back lots of bakery goods from the store shelves around town because they had not sold. As a policy they would throw them away. Every now and again Myrle would bring home large flour sacks filled with the best of the doughnuts, cupcakes, sweet rolls, etc. They were like our day-old stores offer today. Crowds of kids would come from far and wide for them. He dearly loved standing on his back step and tossing these special "goodies" out to the kids, making sure everyone got their fair share. In those days it was indeed a rare treat highly appreciated by all. Myrle had a heart of gold and always anxiously shared what he had with those-in-need whenever and wherever he could.

McCarthys had a large orchard and very productive fields where they raised wheat and hay in addition to their vegetable garden, thanks to Grandpa's wells which richly supplemented their irrigation water. They also had two large chicken coops from which they generated a thriving egg business. One of the big chores at the McCarthy house *every* night was the "candling" of eggs. Myrle would deliver them on his way to work the next morning. I suspect most of them ended up at the Royal Bakery.

While Word War II was raging, McCarthys went out of the chicken business. Their older boys were gone. Myrle and Liz were getting older and money was not so tight anymore. The coops lay vacant. And it was a good thing because one night we had a terrific wind that was as fierce as we had ever had. It picked up the south coop from off its foundation and slammed it into the north coop. There was nothing left of either coop. They lay in a pile of broken, splintered boards that I shall never forget. Myrle hired a man to salvage what he could and build a small barn with the salvage. That barn stood on Butcher's property. Bob bought a horse and kept it there. He always loved horses.

BELOW: McCarthy's coops before the wind destroyed them--- view shows Cardwell's, Gardiner's, McNeil's, Butcher's, Andrus', Brown's, & Barson's property.)



line of Miner's property. His orchard occupied just about what these combined properties do, including the street. Frank planted his garden starting about where Harmer's property begins on the west and ending with Jenke's east property line (again about the same area as their properties now occupy plus the street). The rows ran east to west from Harmer's west line to Jenke's east line. I remember this extremely well because Frank paid me to weed those rows when I was a young boy. To me at that age, they looked so long from one end to the other, it seemed like they ran all the way to Highland Drive!

North of the garden Frank built two large double coops that he filled with chickens. The front one began about in Arbon's front yard and ended on Saunder's yard. The second began about in Anderson's yard and ran to McDanniel's yard. Like Myrle McCarthy, Frank went into the egg business. On Frank's front lawn, near the west side under some shade trees, he built the first "swamp cooler" I had ever seen in my life. It was huge. It was a large box type framework of wooden 2x4's. It stood about six feet tall and was about 2x3 feet in width and depth. Inside were many shelves upon which he placed his eggs. It was completely covered on all sides with layers of burlap from top to bottom. At the bottom was a large galvanized tub that caught the water. On top was a small pump that circulated the water from the tub underneath back to the top where it poured down the burlap keeping it continually wet on all four sides. He fed the tub with a small "drizzling" water hose. It truly was "cool!"

Frank, too, was an extremely goodhearted person who anxiously and willingly was there to assist any neighbor that needed a helping hand. His wife was quite shy but she was very friendly. She just never had a lot to say. And she seemed to leave all the "outside" work to Frank. But, here again, one could never ask for better neighbors.

(Photos of the Fetchner and Smith properties will accompany the Leek and Nunley stories.)

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## "UPPER CHRIS LANE"

### THE PEDERSEN FAMILY

Gustof (whom my father and other adult neighbors called "Pete") and Cecelia (whom we *all* affectionately called "Granny") were older than my parents by some years. They were Scandinavian. It seems to me that one was Norwegian and the other Swedish. They had a large family: Adolf, Frank, Lanore, Alfred, Norma, Clara and Harold. They purchased all of what is now called upper Chris Lane.

Pete and Granny Pedersen moved here from San Francisco, Calif. about the same time Myrle and Liz McCarthy moved here. They built their home far up on their property, almost to the brow of the hill. They built their house near the west fence line and faced it east toward their front yard that they created directly east of the house. In the very center of the yard they had a well around which cars would make a loop when going out again. At the eastern edge of their yard they built a barn and faced it west toward the yard. Their driveway ran up to their home along their west fence line.

out the rest of his life, which was many, many years, on two healthy legs. But needless to say that during this crisis there were countless prayers offered in his behalf.

Still, an even more devastating event faced the Pedersen family three years after Word War II was over. Their youngest son Harold (whom everyone, even to this day, knew warmly as "Dootsy") died at the young age of 20 from nephritis (kidney failure). Neither Grandma Stelter's passing the year before nor Grandpa McCarthy's death earlier that year prepared me for Dootsy's death. They were very old and unable to do much physically or mentally. Dootsy's death was much more difficult for me because he was not only just five years older than I was, but he was extremely active and full of effervescent life and vitality! You could count on him to "liven-up" any gathering. I still sometimes reflect back on his illness and the tremendously devastating impact it had on the entire neighborhood when he died. I was then Ward Organist and played for his funeral service.

#### ART PERODI

The matching parcel of land, directly west of Pedersen's, was owned by an Italian whose name was Art Perodi. He pretty much lived alone and involved himself very rarely in the neighborhood of the "1930's." His prime crop was grapes. He had lots of grapevines covering his land from which he made wine. He also owned land to the west next to Gene Price's family property where he grew more grapevines. I suspect his wine production alone was sufficient enough to support him.

Art sold his property after W.W.II to a family called Dunn. I did not get to know these people. They were older and were gone a lot. However, one of their sons, Marion, became a sports writer for the Deseret News and continued to write for many years.

#### THE JOHNSON FAMILY

The parcel of land to the east of Pedersen's, (Ridgecrest Elementary property), was purchased by a family named Johnson. They, too, were an older family. They had three girls and two boys. I never knew the oldest boy, who was the eldest in the family. Then came three girls: Mimi, Beverly and Phyllis. The baby of the family was a boy, Bob.

The Johnsons built the two-story home where Kim and Nancy Hayes presently live. It is located directly in front of the west end of Ridgecrest Elementary School on 7200 S. Johnsons also built a couple of small chicken coops, one that they used to raise chickens, and the other to house their three Shetland ponies.

They did not have extensive orchards or gardens as most others did in the neighborhood. Rather they raised a few fruit trees and a small garden. Their great love was their ponies. Indeed, their ponies were the delight of the entire neighborhood. All the neighborhood kids shared in the excitement of riding them around the hill and even over the hill down into the creek bottom to the south. They were great fun for everyone!

Their mother, Lucy, was born in New Zealand and came here at the age of three after her parents joined the LDS Church in New Zealand. They settled in American Fork in Utah County. Since their father was raised in Draper and their mother in American Fork, they must have met somewhere near the "point of the mountain." Lucy Price was a loving, "gentle" woman. She was kind, softspoken and long suffering. She radiated kindness and love. But then, quite remarkably, she had daughters-in-law of a similar nature. Ralph's wife Evelyn, Gene's wife Margaret and Calvin's wife, who is also a Margaret, were and are wonderfully delightful, gentle, soft spoken women. There are a couple of other facts regarding the Price family men. One, that they were all married during "leap year," while yet another is the fact that, with the exception of Earl, they have all outlived their wives (so far), which is contrary to the norm in our modern society.

Preceding the other neighbors noted here, the Price family moved into this area in 1919. Charles Denney, who built their home in 1880, married Gene's maternal grandmother. They married quite late in both of their lives. After being left a widow once more "Grandma Denney" became bedridden in her final years of life. I remember visiting her many times while growing up here. As a youth in the old Union First Ward we often dropped in as a group to sing to her, especially at the Yule Tide Season when we resoundingly filled the air with Christmas Carols.

It was Gene's younger brother Calvin that first introduced me to the assignment of "Ward Teaching" shortly after I was ordained a deacon. (I know it was premature but I was approved to be such.) Our Ward in those days reached out well beyond 80<sup>th</sup> So. on 10<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> East, and up the Creek Road as far as the present Willow Creek Country Club. Those first homes that Calvin and I visited were, in fact, in the Willow Creek area.



Price family members: Front Row: Marie, Melvin, Velma and Keith Ekker. Back Row: Angus, Lucy, Gene (baby), Merna (Earl's wife), Roy, Sarah Denney (Gandmother), Ivy (Lucy's sister) and husband Arnold Ekker

## THE STAKER FAMILY

One needs to understand that while Union grew from the building of the "Union Fort," *down below us*, Butlerville grew from the establishment of "The Old Mill" *above us* near the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon. This mill was one of the very earliest industries established by the pioneers after they first entered the valley. The Old Mill produced paper from "rags." Around this industry the community of Butler flourished. As with the Union Fort, The Old Mill was built there because of the immediate access to *water!*---the Big Cottonwood Creek. "Butlerville" was a good area to settle homes and farm the land. It had the stream at the mouth of the canyon. It was this "no man's land" here on this "bluff" of virtual pure sand, far from either Big or Little Cottonwood streams that we find "Poverty Flats." Interestingly, both Union and Butlerville have had their histories written in quite some detail and in more than one version. Yet, neither area histories have included much if anything about our hill here. That is part of the reason I have undertaken the task of writing a little something about our "neck of the woods."

The great uniqueness of the Staker family lies in the fact that they were folks from up on Butlerville hill that actually moved "down" to become our dear friends and neighbors "here below" on "Poverty Flats," while the rest of our friends and neighbors, by and large, moved in from more distant lands and climes. Not only did "Ag" and "Iry" (as they were fondly called) come from Butler, but Wayne's wife Helen was also from Butlerville and actually lived up the canyon near the Utah Power & Light powerhouse. David's wife Norma was from Butler as well. (In truth Ira was born in Butlerville. Agnus was born in Sugarhouse and Helen was born in Logan, Utah. Wayne was born in Butlerville, while David was born at the UP&L Power Station near the "Stairs" in Big Cottonwood Canyon. Stuart was born at the Power Station at the mouth of the Canyon.).

Ira worked for Utah Power & Light in the power Stations in Big Cottonwood Canyon operating the electric generators there. He left UP&L, after some years, and went to work for the Salt Lake City Water Dept. testing the "springs" from which they drew their water in those earlier days. Back then he also served many years as the Water Master of the Brown & Sanford Irrigation Water Co. in which we all held shares of stock.

The Staker family moved into our area around 1924. Ira was asked by a friend if he would "wire" a house for electricity that he owned. The history of this house is not known, but it had not originally been wired for electricity. Subsequently, Ira decided to purchase this house and property (10 acres) from his friend. When Ira and Agnus moved in they had three sons: Wayne 7, David (Brud) 5, and Stuart (Stu) 2 years old.

Their new house had four rooms and an old cement and rock chicken coop. There was a well lined with timbers and boards. The water was terrible, so they carried water from Butt's well in 10-gallon milk cans. They filled in the old well with dirt and built a cistern. A cistern is a concrete structure in the ground in which many people of that day "stored" water from irrigation streams. Staker's cistern was 10 feet deep and 10 feet across. They plastered over the cement walls and floor of the cistern and then covered it so no one could fall in. The water was then pumped out as needed.

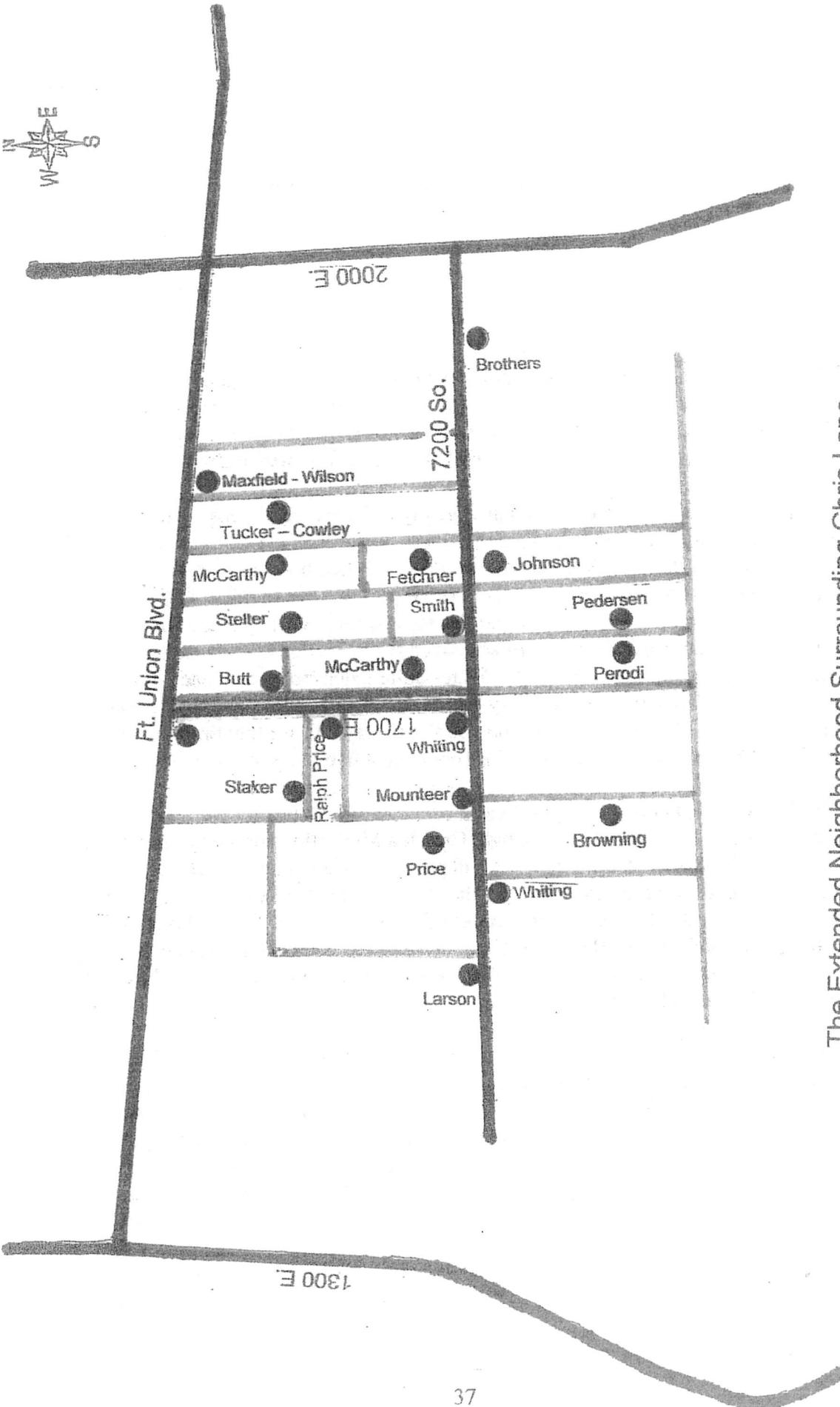
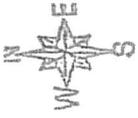
For decades "Staker's Corner" was the *central landmark* of our entire hill. All High School students got on and off the school bus there. (Elementary and Jr. High kids also caught their bus at Whiting's corner on 7200 S.) The US Mail (rural delivery) in those years required the mailboxes for all homes along 17<sup>th</sup> E. and also 72<sup>nd</sup> So. be placed in front of Wayne and Helen's house. Helen recalls the great "socialization" of neighbors as they picked up their daily mail. Mailboxes were mounted in a row between two posts.

Wayne and Helen raised four children: Gary, Susan, Paul and Scott. Susan and her husband Rod (Meyer) live next door to the south of Wayne and Helen's home on 17<sup>th</sup> East. The Staker family possessed many talents. One is the ability and skill of writing. Beginning with Ira and continuing with Wayne and Helen, and particularly with their daughter Susan, they have filled volumes of memories and endearments from life's choicest moments. One can readily feel the great bond of love they feel for each other as one peruses the many beautiful volumes they have filled over the years. Moreover, Ira and Wayne have written much about the "realities" of their lives that gives a sense of what life was like and how things were done in those bygone years. It seems appropriate here to quote Wayne's own words on the building of their own home.

"Not long after [receiving property title], we started to dig a basement with a pick and shovel. We did fairly well. The ground was hard and rocky until you got down about five feet and then it was white sand and caved in real bad, so we went modern. We borrowed a team and stone boat from Rube Walker to finish. A stone boat is like a large wheelbarrow with no wheels. After that, we bought our lumber from Jensen and Kure in Sandy. We never charged more than \$100.00 at a time. We formed and braced it. We would order about ten bags of cement and five yards of sand and gravel. We mixed this in a wheelbarrow with a square mouth shovel. We hauled water in a ten-gallon milk can to mix the cement. By the way, our son Paul now has the wheelbarrow that is at least one hundred years old. Shanni has the milk can which she painted and it is beautiful."

"Our next step was the floor, but first the studding of the rafters. My Dad would make a pattern and I would cut them with a handsaw. After the studding was up, we cut 1 X 6 pine boards and nailed them diagonally to make them strong. The roof was 1 X 6 pine nailed horizontally with a pinch gap between boards to allow for expansion. Now came the siding tongue and groove cedar in 8 foot lengths. It was cheep then, along with hardwood flooring. The shingles were wooden and quite a job to install. Gilmer Hilton was building a house the same pattern as mine. My Dad designed his and helped him the same as he did me, which included wiring for electricity. Gilmer was a bus driver for the Jordan School District. He and one of his fellow drivers would come after their morning run. One day they were working on my roof, the next day Gilmer's friend was killed along with twenty-three students in West Jordan. The bus was hit by a train."

(NOTE: Everyone who lived in the south end of the valley at that time remembers well this bus tragedy. It was reported over national radio newscasts and headlined in newspapers around the entire United States. At the time it was reported as one of the worst school bus accidents in U.S. history. It happened just north of 105<sup>th</sup> So. where a narrow country road crossed the railroad tracks. There was an extremely dense fog that morning. The bus driver stopped at the tracks, opened the door and listened, but apparently heard nothing and then proceeded onto the tracks and was hit broadside by a fast moving freight train. The bus was full of Jordan High students:)



The Extended Neighborhood Surrounding Chris Lane  
 From Early 1920's to 1940  
 (There was very little change during this time)

Walter Gottschalk acquired a huge saw for cutting large tree limbs, 12x12 inch or larger logs, railroad ties, etc. Its blade was two to three feet in diameter and was driven by a six-inch wide belt from his Allis Chalmers tractor. It had a short bench that would move back and forth on hinges. One would place the heavy wood on the bench and slowly push it toward the saw as it was turning. It was frightening to be near when it was running, but it was totally efficient in making fast work of cutting up large pieces of wood. In providing firewood for winter stoves and fireplaces in the neighborhood, my father would bring loads of old railroad ties and other excess lumber home from the railroad and he and Walter would cut "mountains" of firewood for people. The precise spot where this industry took place I judge to be in Jean Davis' backyard. It was my job to keep the pile of cut wood from stacking up and blocking the saw. It was a scary thing with that huge blade spinning quite unprotected through most of its circular path.

I remember distinctly the very first car that ever drove up Chris Lane from Ft. Union Bld. The older Gottschalk son, Hyrum, saved for and purchased his first car when he was about sixteen or seventeen years old. It was a Model A Ford two-door coup. As some teenagers do, "occasionally," he was returning home one day on Highland Drive at an excessive speed when a county sheriff began pursuit. Hyrum thought that if he could get home and off the street before the officer caught him, he could not give him a ticket on his own property. Hyrum turned west onto Ft. Union Blvd. and then, in order to get off the public street and out of reach of the sheriff, he turned up our driveway, then out into the field around our barn and up through field almost to Frank Smith's fence then turned west into his father's orchard then up through the orchard and around the well and into the shed where he always parked it. I'm not sure if his father ever knew this, but he avoided the ticket. I know this well since I watched him do it.

Young Walter and I became the very best of friends. We shared lots of common experiences and interests. His parents nearly always invited me to go with them each summer to Lagoon. They knew that going to Lagoon alone is not much fun for a young kid. Hyrum was about eight years older than Walter and did not have the same interest in things. It was always fun for me and I looked forward with great anticipation to a special "Lagoon day" each summer.

In 1952 The Gottschalk family moved out on 40<sup>th</sup> West just north of Kearns where they could farm a much larger acreage. They sold their property to a family called Softland. After living on the property for over a decade, Softlands sold to developers about 1963. From this property Hillrise and Mary Circles were created as well as the homes facing 7200 S. from 17<sup>th</sup> E. to and including Lynn and Edith Boulter's home. During this time I was away (four years) first in the military and then on an LDS mission.

#### THE MILLET FAMILY

Walt Gottschalk and I most often played with other children. For example, the Millet family moved in across the street shortly after the Gottschalks moved in. The three youngest (out of ten children) were Dale, Cleo, and Lorna. They were about our ages. The Millet family bought the land where Arlin and Kathy Randall now live. That



TOP: London Millet pumping up tire in Arlin and Kathy Randall's yard. Behind the car is the pulley and framework for the well being dug there. Ira and Agnus Staker's house is visible in the distance to the left.  
BELOW: Jana Millet Kelley is standing in Randall's driveway. Gottschalk's orchard is in the background. Gene Price's present home is on Jana's left and present-day Mary Circle entrance is directly behind her.



## Refinery **MAN of the MONTH**

Arvel G. Leek, refinery electrician, comes into the spotlight as the refinery's man of the month for October. Arvel has worked for Utah Oil since May 15, 1945, when he was employed as an electrician. During the past 9½ years he has played a prominent role in maintenance work at the refinery. His assignments have taken him into every unit at the plant, where he has had an opportunity to utilize his knowledge of electrical work, including motor repairs, pole line and trouble shooting, power, lighting, telephone, and the installation of a wide variety of electrical wiring.

His first electrical experience was during 1925 with Western Electric Company, and later he worked for Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph Company as a telephone repair man. In 1944, he operated an electrical appliance and repair shop.

Arvel was born in Amery, Mississippi, on October 3, 1908. When he was four years of age, his family moved to Bountiful, Utah, where he attended elementary school and high

school. In 1924, another move brought the family to Salt Lake City. He married Autie Bradshaw on June 3, 1930, and they are very proud parents of six lovely children—four boys and two girls. Their eldest son, Thomas A., 22, serving a four years' enlistment in the U. S. Navy, is presently aboard the U.S. Cockrell, based at San Diego, California. Duane L., 19, graduated from Jordan High School in 1952, and is currently working for Z.C.M.I. Glena, 16, is enrolled at Jordan High School. Dale W., 14, is attending the Junior High School in Union. Laura L., 12, is a student in the Union Grade School, and Randall K., at ten months, is the junior member of their happy family. They are members of the LDS Church.

Spare time and idle moments are seldom found in Arvel's daily routine. He applies practically all of his off-duty hours taking care of his 3½ acre fruit and produce farm, located at 1757 East 7200 South in Union. However, for diversion, he likes hunting, deep sea fishing, strumming his guitar, and singing.

Arvel summarized his remarks with emphasis on the pleasure which has enjoyed while working for U Oil, adding that he has always tried to do a good job, maintaining honest attitude toward the management and his fellow workers. Congratulations, Arvel, and happy birthday greetings.



Arvel is shown at work on large motor at the utility unit.

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UTOCO TOP



Duane, Glena, Lauralee and Dale Leek are standing behind Lloyd and Stanley South in Leek's yard. The chicken coop (on the right) is on or very near Jay Brown's property. The well is near the car. Cinderblock stacks on the left inhibit a clear view of Hing's, Heward's and Whitbeck's properties.

## THE NUNLEY FAMILY

In 1943 Frank Smith sold his property after nearly fourteen years. His home and property were purchased by Doyle and Dema Nunley. Doyle was born in Spring City in Sanpete County. Dema was born in Escalante in Southern Utah. Doyle was a painter by trade. They had five children at the time: Dorothy 11, Jimmy 9, Joyce 7, Phyllis 5, and Alma 3 (almost 4).

They were living in a lovely home in Holladay when Doyle decided he wanted some land to have in addition to his home. The children were clearly saddened when they moved into Frank Smith's house. Frank and his wife had built the home specifically to their needs, which included a living room, kitchen, a bath and one bedroom. Now there was a family of seven moving in. In comparison to the home they left, this was less than exciting to the children. Nevertheless, Doyle soon built onto the house to more adequately accommodate his family. He actually subsequently added to the home a couple of times since two more children were added to the family in succeeding years. They were Ric and Kathy Jo.

The Nunley family continued their garden on the same spot that Frank had planted his garden. They also used the chicken coops that he built. In one coop they raised chickens and in the second coop they raised pheasants. The trees that Frank planted were primarily cherry trees. This led to a family event that the children seem to remember quite vividly.

The girls saw their mother "canning" cherries and so they proceeded to can cherries like she did. They filled bottles with cherries and then poured them full of water and put caps on the bottles. It apparently wasn't just a few. When Dema saw what they had done to her supply of cherries she got a large mixing bowl out of the cupboard and, one by one, placed it over each girl's head and cut their long, pretty hair into a "Dutch cut" using the bowl as a guide. This was a strong reminder to "ask mother first!"

After Glena Leek moved in next door, she and the Nunley girls became great friends. They were together so much of the time one of the older members of our community asked her one day, "Now, which one of the Nunley girls are you?" (Glenn tells me she was in on the last part of the cherry "canning," but she didn't get the haircut.)

Jimmy Nunley reminds me now that they moved out on Smith's property in April of 1943. It must be so because I was working on the water ditch near their house. Walt Gottschalk was there talking to me when the Nunley kids came running over to meet us and introduce themselves. Jimmy and Joyce were there first with Phyllis and Dorothy close behind. Then, there appeared this little three-year old who came as quickly as her little legs could carry her. She was Alma--the same one we all know as Alma Jamison today! That introduction took place either in Gary and Lynn Arbon's backyard or Doug and Janet Anderson's back yard because our water ditch was on the Nunley side of the fence at that point.



The Smith home after the added additions made by Doyle Nunley later on.



Alma and Ric posing in front of the chicken coops built by Frank Smith in 1930. They are about twenty years old here. The front coop begins about on Arbon's property while the back coop begins more on Anderson's place.

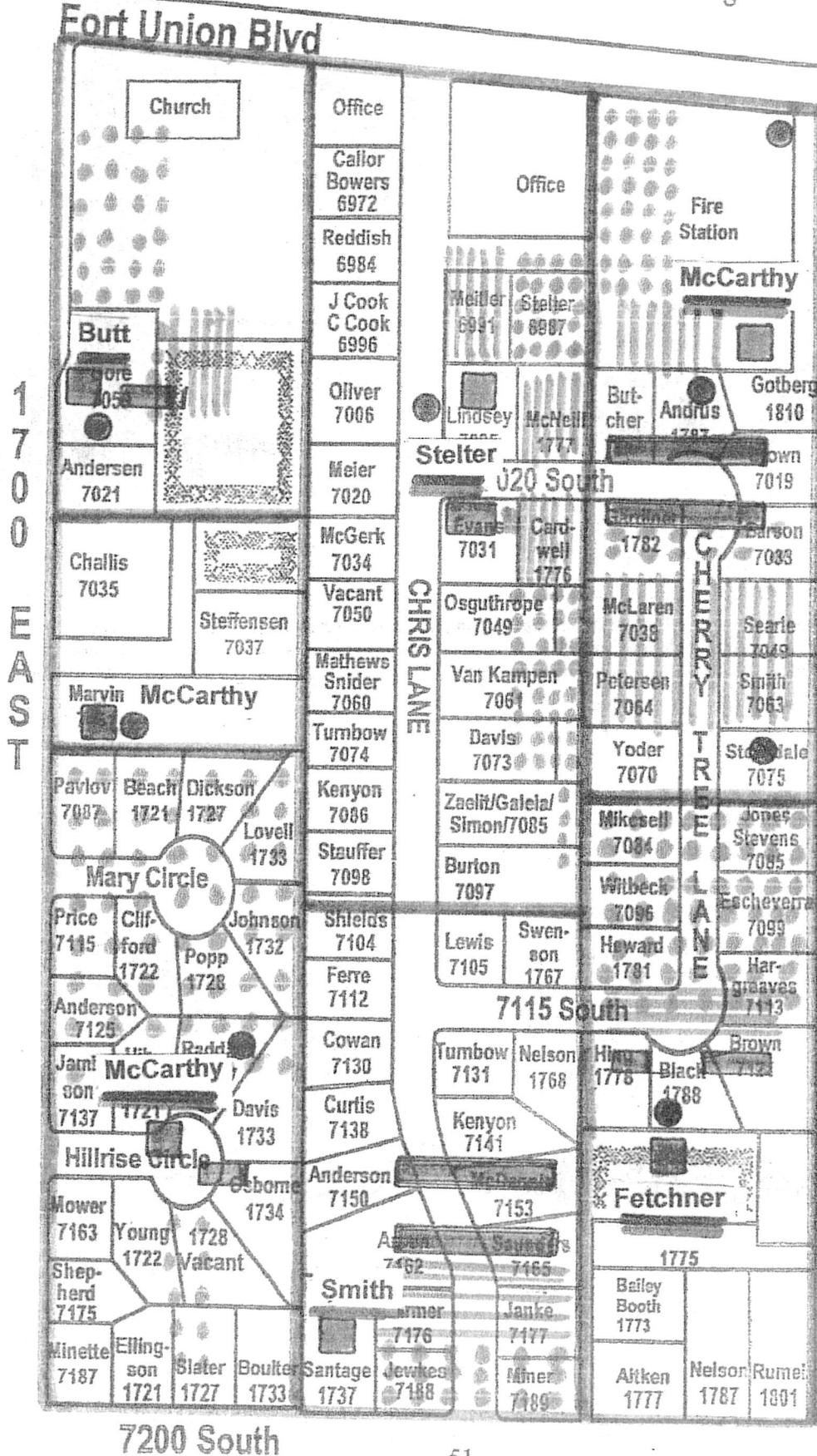
## CONQUERING "POVERTY FLATS!"

It is quite clear that from its earliest days, the hill upon which we live was not looked upon as desirable for homesteading and raising a family. It also clearly appears that those few families that daringly collected around what we herein call the "Chris Lane Neighborhood," became the nucleus around which further settlement of this area became a reality. It was this closely-knit group of original families that had gathered on this hill that seemed to attract others into venturing to live here. Yet this process of attracting others was slow and took thirty to forty years to fully achieve. The addition of new neighbors was not quickly realized by any means.

These families essentially formed an "island" neighborhood in a sea of widely spread farms with much greater acreage under cultivation than we could possibly have here on the hill due to the availability of water. To illustrate: My brother, Joe, worked for a family down on 13<sup>th</sup> East just north of Ft. Union Blvd. The family was installing a system that needed controls down below ground level. They dug a hole to accommodate a 36" ceramic tile (as used in fireplaces) to house the instruments. It kept filling with ground water and they had to abandon the idea. Up here our wells had to be at least 30 to 40 feet in order to reach the ground water.

Following is a "graphic" of our Chris Lane Neighborhood followed by a pictorial view from our home taken over many years showing that from the 1920s until as late as the 1950s, this area remained quite unique and isolated from other homes and settlements where people collectively chose to live in close neighborhood communities.

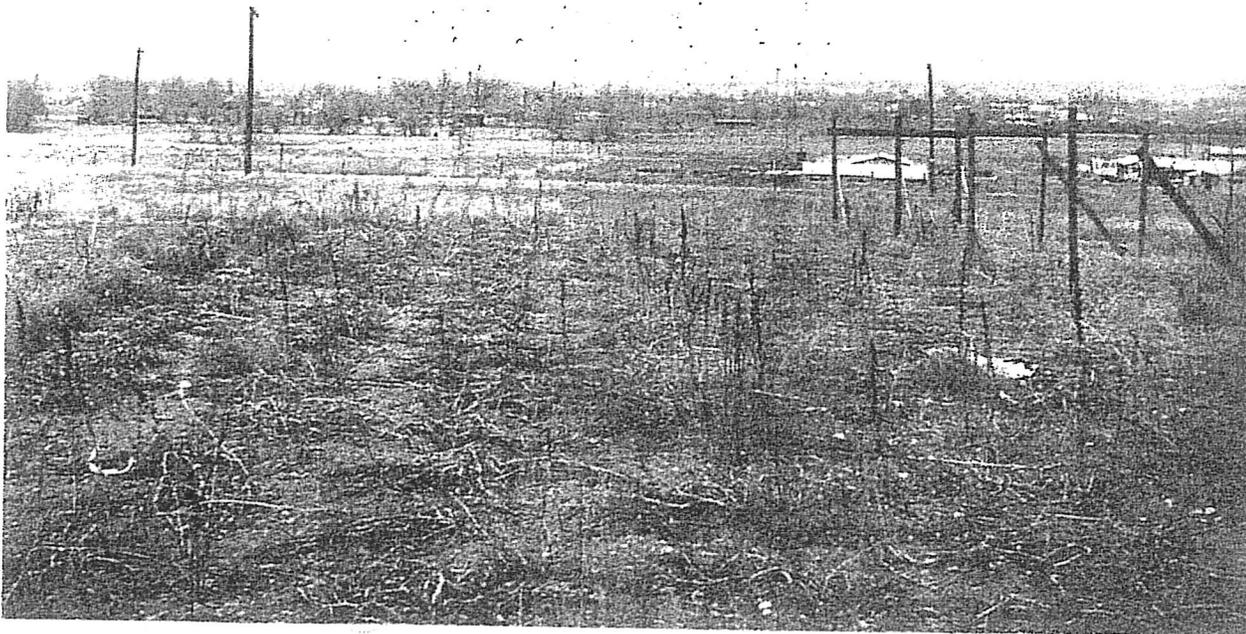
# Land Utilization of Lower Chris Lane



- Key**
- Homes
  - Farm bldg.
  - Well
  - Orchard
  - Crop use



Looking southeast across our strawberry patch and south orchard one can see there was no settlement on the hill. The fence line serves as the west property line for most homes on west side of Cherry Tree Lane. The persons across the fence are on McLaren's lot. Trees in the distant orchard are precisely on Dean and Ruth Jones' lot. The lot in the field this side of the trees is Bud and Camille Stockdale's. One can judge where all the other homes would be from these references. Home on 7200 S. is Brother's.



Looking directly north across Meitler's property, the professional building, Greenfield Village and beyond. This picture was taken just before we cleared and prepared the garden for planting in the spring of 1955. Note the first houses being built in Greenfield. Distant houses are north of present-day I-215. Once again one can observe the vast open land that surrounded our neighborhood. (Note our "pole bean" framework)

## "LIFE" IN OUR NIEGHBORHOOD

I noted earlier that growing up here in this neighborhood was a very happy time in my life. Yes, it was the Great Depression. Times were not easy. TV had been invented, but it was still only a "futuristic" dream in that day. I recall reading a small book in our junior high school library "predicting" that we would one day be able to "see" and "hear" something happening in New York that was "moving" (like a movie), yet we could see and hear it in our living room at home precisely *as it happens* in New York. The last chapter in that book even made the bold prediction (because the technology had been proven by then) that the picture could even "*be in color*" someday! "Wow!" I thought. "Will I really and truly ever see that come to pass during my lifetime?"

We had the radio! And the radio brought us "Jack Armstrong, The All-American Boy," "The Lone Ranger," and "I Love A Mystery!" We could listen to those programs, or a myriad of others, no matter what we were doing so long as we had electricity.

## THE OLD SWIMMNG HOLE

But we had other things besides radio, chores and farm work. It was long before I was born that the kids from up here on the hill, along with the kids from down in Union, had a couple of great "swimming holes" over the hill, down in the creek bottom to the south. One was called "the reservoir" which was created in an attempt to pump water up hill onto our land from Little Cottonwood Creek. This was before my time, but Gene Price tells me it was costly and counterproductive, therefore abandoned. Nonetheless, for sometime after that the reservoir remained a good place for swimming. However, by my day the water had become stagnant and undesirable for swimming since it had no in-and-out "flow-through" to refresh it. But that did not stop the kids back then. They went up the creek a short distance and put in a few logs to dam the stream, then dug it out wider and deeper. There we had a super, popular swimming hole shared by all the kids of Union and Poverty Flats too! The water was direct from the canyon and was, therefore, *always very cold* and *very refreshing* on a hot summer afternoon!

I have a vivid memory of one occasion of returning with my brothers from swimming "over in the creek." We were particularly excited to get home because Sears was going to deliver our very first refrigerator. The old icebox was "going out!" The expression, "you have to have been there and done that," is appropriate here to know that back then, these are the kinds of things that really excited us all, young and old.

It was a day when we made our own toys. My brother Joe probably really got his start in woodwork by making toys. He was very creative. The toys he made were always very well-made. Commercially made toys were so few and so greatly appreciated, many of my friends still have the toys they played with as a vestige of those by-gone years.

This drive to make "homemade things" absolutely spawn the "inspiration" that impelled a few Chris Lane neighbors into becoming remarkably talented, "futuristic" automotive designers and engineers. A sampling of this great talent is over the page.

My father operated those projectors for many years. I helped him many nights with the rewinding of the reels, since that was required before they were placed back in their boxes. There was a bench with two large spindles for winding or rewinding.

A family would receive tickets for everyone in the family for an entire month. This allowed them into four or five movies (depending on the calendar). The cost to the family was 50 cents a month in the early '30s. This increased to about \$5.00 by 1950.

Candy was sold from the cloakroom directly below the projection booth on the main floor. I cannot remember anything costing much more than a nickel. Most of the "goodies" sold were paid for in pennies.

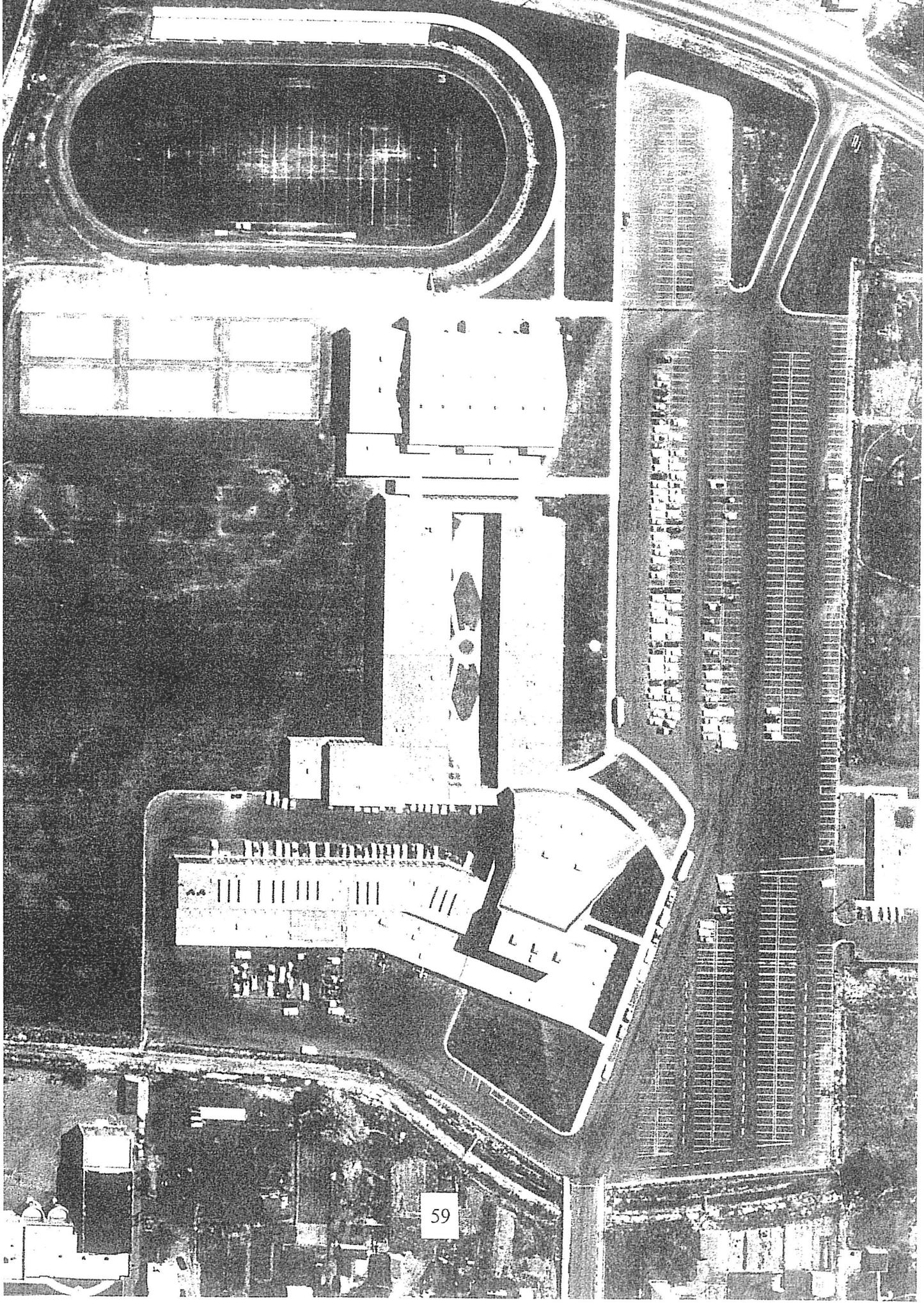
### OUR DANCES

If there was anything that our own children could not fully comprehend about our day, it was that our dances in those days included old and young alike dancing together on the same floor at the same time---*and with each other!* The old hall served also as the location of our dances. There was no such thing as a "generation gap." Young and old danced to the same music. It was around the beginning of the WWII that the first blush of something called "jazz" appeared. A skinny "crooner" named Frank Sinatra was then becoming nationally known. No one knew of anyone by the name of "Elvis" or a group called "The Beetles." It was the day of the "big bands" of "Tommy Dorsey," "Guy Lombardo," and "Glen Miller." It was before television broadcasting and so Lawrence Welk was relatively unknown at the time. The "jitterbug" was just making its debut.

Gene Price recalls going out to Sandy to the dances. I'm not certain what his dances were like there at that time, but a few years later I, too, went several times with a group of kids to Sandy (with our Jr. High School science teacher, John L. Smith and his wife). We danced "square dances." That was a community winner in Sandy at that time.

The old Amusement Hall was used for roller-skating for several years. It was also used over many, many years for a cultural activity sponsored by the LDS Church known as "The Road Shows." Every ward in the stake prepared (extensively) a short one-act stage play and then presented it throughout the stake (in our case in two or three locations in Union and Midvale). These traveling shows were presented in *all* the designated locations within the stake area, and *all on the same night!* They had to be short, one-act plays capable of setting-up, performing, packing and traveling to all of the locations in just one evening. Sometimes they needed two nights to provide for all the entries. They were judged in each location and a collective, overall first, second and third place winner was thereafter declared. It must be said that those productions were very well done and thoroughly entertaining. Some of us today still miss those old road shows.

Sometimes an LDS Stake would present an entire musical production on stage at Butler Jr. High School (which they would rent). We have done this in times past. It was presented for two or three nights so all who wanted to, could see it. The last one I remember was the musical, "*The Music Man.*" It was wonderfully done!



## “SHOPPING!”

If one needed gas for their car they would find the nearest gas station down in Union on the northwest corner of 13<sup>th</sup> East and 7300 S. It was near the present doors of WalMart's Tire and Lube store that are located on the southeast corner of their store. This station was owned and operated by Mike Milne and Gilmer Hilton (the same Gilmer Hilton that helped Wayne Staker build his house). The old gas pumps were of the kind where one would manually pump a lever to fill a large glass reservoir high above the vehicle and then fill your gas tank from a “gravity flow” system into your car. The amount of gas was measured in gradients that were marked on the glass reservoir. The next gas stations were many miles farther away. One would have to be careful how far they had to drive because gasoline was “up around 20 to 25 cents a gallon” back then.

Union had two “sort of Mom and Pop” stores. That is to say they were very small and carried a very limited offering to the consumer. One was located “in the old fort” area. It was the original Union Mercantile Store started by Charles Denney, who also built the Price family home. It was once the *only store*. It was “Greer's Store” to us.

The second store was “Burgon's Market” (owned by Charles Burgon) located on the northwest corner of 9<sup>th</sup> East and No. Union Ave. (7145 S.) directly north across the street from the Union Ward Chapel and the old Amusement Hall.

To find a large offering in “dry goods,” “hardware,” or even “groceries” one had the choice of going to either Midvale (west of State Street on 7800 S.) or to Murray. The Murray shopping center ran from 4800 S. to Vine Street along both sides of State Street. Or there was also Holladay as a 3<sup>rd</sup> option and that meant driving to the Holladay business district where 48<sup>th</sup> South, 23<sup>rd</sup> East and Holladay Blvd. converge! This was long before anyone ever thought of anything like the Cottonwood Mall or Fashion Place Mall.

I believe that most neighbors here in the Chris Lane Neighborhood considered it to be a very significant event to “go shopping.” There was no notion of “...just running to the store...” for something. One planned carefully and thoroughly for such a “junket.”

Some of our neighbors, including my mother (when she felt well enough), Liz McCarthy and my mother-in-law, Autie Leek, planned regular days on the calendar (usually only once, but sometimes twice a month) when they would make the great journey into Salt Lake City itself. Those were truly major events in the lives of people living in our neighborhood. My mother would always coordinate those days with days when my Grandma Wehrle (her mother who lived on north Redwood Road near the old airport) would also come to town and they would meet, have lunch together and do their “special” shopping. As a child I thought these excursions were some of the “highlights” of my early life! These occasions for us were significantly more rare than the monthly shopping in Murray, for example. I shall never forget the day (but I don't remember the year) when we had visited with Grandma and we were heading home, Mom turned into the old Gem Theatre, bought tickets and we saw the latest Disney movie---*Bambi*! It was just out! And this wasn't just the “Ward Show!” What a surprise treat this was!

## THE UNION LDS WARD

From the very beginning, with the building of Union Fort by the Mormon pioneers who entered this valley in 1847, Union was clearly an LDS community. While not all who have lived here were Mormon, the community was, nonetheless, an LDS Church-oriented community. The boundaries of the original Union Ward were essentially the boundaries of the town.

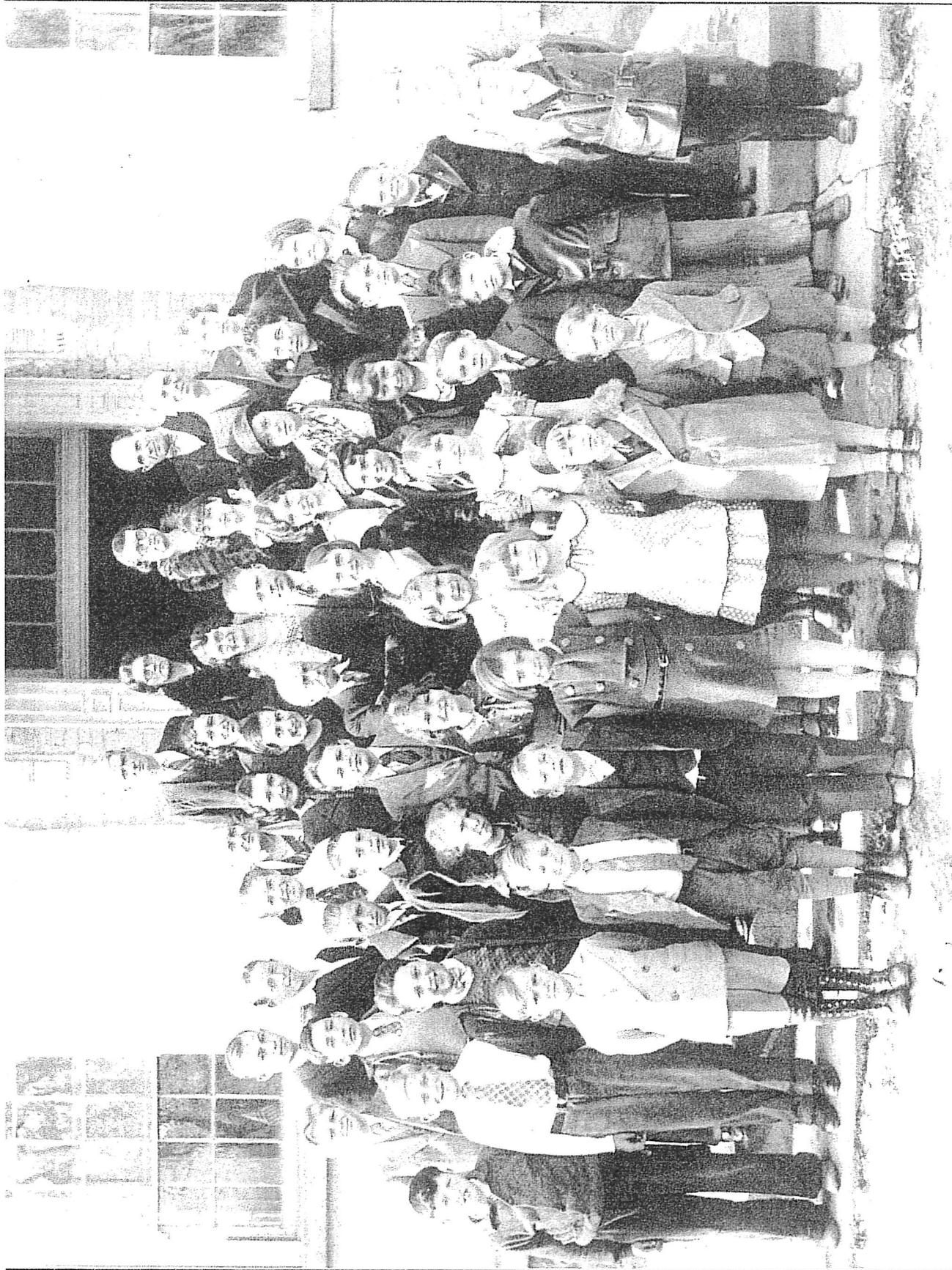
But as the population of the neighboring towns of Butler, Midvale, Sandy and Murray-Cottonwood expanded, boundaries were inevitably imposed. The original Union Ward boundaries that most of the old timers remember are as follows: Beginning from 3<sup>rd</sup> E. and 64<sup>th</sup> S., Union Ward included the south side of 64 S. going east to a point about 18<sup>th</sup> East. It then went south right along the fence line between Myrle McCarthy and the Tucker-Cowley property up to the top of our hill. It then followed the edge of our sand hill east along the brow of the hill south of Brighton High School until it rounded to the south above and east of Willow Creek. It went west at approximately 84<sup>th</sup> south until it arrived at 3<sup>rd</sup> E. once more. It then turned north and included all of the east side of 3<sup>rd</sup> E. back to the beginning point at 64<sup>th</sup> S. The precise boundary was never explicitly clear. But those who generally lived in this area were all members of the old Union Ward that Gene Price and I remember as our original Ward.

Butler, Union, Midvale, Sandy and Draper Wards made up the East Jordan Stake at that time. Everything from 64<sup>th</sup> South to and including Draper were all in one and the same Stake. That Stake consisted of twelve Wards. (Road Shows required 2 -3 days.)

This was our ward in 1941 when I was baptized. About 1943 or 1944, the ward was divided into Union First (east side) and Union Second Ward (west side). That division was primarily down the middle of 9<sup>th</sup> E. from north to south. This was, of course, in the middle of World War II. That meant that nearly all of our servicemen left a single Union Ward and returned to a divided one. The Stake was also divided. It was made into *three* Stakes. The new East Jordan Stake included only Midvale, Union and Butler and ran from the Jordan River to the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon.

On the following pages are pictures of that earlier day. The first picture is of the old Union Ward Chapel on 9<sup>th</sup> E. built by the pioneers. The second picture is of some ward members in 1934. It gives a good idea of the chapel and the people of that earlier day. (This is the chapel that my father stopped at on his way to work Sunday nights. The door he slipped into, that opened directly into the chapel, is behind the pine tree in the first picture. It is directly behind the people in the second picture.)

(This is the chapel where I was first called as organist in 1946. It is the organ that I wish to mention here. As a vestige of pioneer days, it had a "reed organ" that required blowing air to vibrate the reeds thus creating the sound. An electric motor blew the air in my day, but in the years before electrical power it originally had a "lever" that a young man was assigned to "manually pump" during the playing of the organ for services.)



The Union Ward Sunday School, 14 January 1934. All in the photo had perfect attendance in 1933.

(Please continue over the page)

## "FIRE" & "ICE!"

Trying to produce food and fiber from the sandy soil of "Poverty Flats," with the limited *water* available, was only one of many challenges faced by the people in the Chris Lane area. It was the excess of "uncultivated" land that posed the opposite problem--*fire!*

### FIRE

Several times, over the years of our history, fire has swept through the fields of our neighborhood. Alma Jamison recently commented that it was the fires that were so frightening to her as a young girl.

Our nearest fire department in those days was the Murray City Fire Dept. located north of 48<sup>th</sup> S. on the east side of State Street directly across from the Soffe Mortuary. It took fifteen to twenty minutes for them to arrive up here after being called. However, we did not have telephones on our hill until 1946! Before that we had to find the first "available" phone down on 13<sup>th</sup> East. That also took precious time and required a readily available vehicle to get there. It was most often from Horace Godfrey's home that most of our emergency calls were made for fire and, more often, for emergency medical help. Godfrey's lived roughly a city block north of Ft. Union Blvd. on 13<sup>th</sup> East.

One might say, in reality, that we provided our own "volunteer" fire department. In such crises all the available people on the hill would come quickly and we would fight the fire "up close and personal" with water soaked "gunny sacks" (burlap bags that our animal feed came in). We filled large tubs, buckets, etc. with water in which we soaked our sacks repeatedly (one in each hand). We fought for every foot in this manner. After we got the fire out we would all generally look like "aliens from outer space" because our hair and eyebrows would be nearly all "singd" off from above and about our faces.

Fortunately, there was never a home that was overrun and burned. They were always protected, as well as the barns and coops. A couple of small sheds were lost to the fires but that was about all.

### SNOW!

While I have not heard this "officially" explained by the experts, I do know that this valley had much colder temperatures in those days than now. It is my feeling that the increased number of homes with hot emissions of air rising out of their furnace vents has increasingly warmed the entire valley in our day. Some of the days just before I was born in 1933 are still reported annually each year as the "coldest day on record" for the Salt Lake valley on those particular days. They were well below zero.

Snow depths now are much less than we normally received. Of course we are in a record drought currently. In those yesteryears, every winter the Salt Lake County would routinely place "drift fences" across our fields about 50 to 75 yards from the road along the south side of Ft. Union Blvd. They did this in order to keep the road from being



Phyllis Nunley sitting on a snow bank in her front yard in the mid-1950s

### IMPACT OF "SICKNESS"

This was the day when all of America lived with some degree of anxiety and fear of the very real threat of polio. Polio is a debilitating, "crippling disease" that had no known preventative measure or cure. This was before the "Salk Vaccine" that came later as the wonder drug that freed us all from the threat (and fear) of being struck down with this dreaded affliction. Nearly everyone knew someone that had become a polio victim. Polio is an ugly, vicious disease, and to conquer it was a relief of major proportions.

Another major threat was tuberculosis. There was a massive "TB" vaccination program conducted in the schools as a vast and comprehensive move to stop the spread of this horrible disease. This actually continued for years after I became a teacher in the public schools myself. In the early days of this history, TB victims were removed from their homes and placed in "sanitariums" for treatment. This would last for what seemed to be incredibly long terms. I used to think of TB in the same way that we think of leprosy in ancient times.

Many illnesses seemed extremely more harsh and threatening back then than they do now. Often highly contagious illnesses were ordered by the Board of Health to be "quarantined." This is to say, that if a family member came down with a highly contagious disease, a large sign was placed in the front lawn or yard declaring that home "off limits" to everyone outside. Those who were in the home at the time, had to remain there during the course of the illness. Many fathers, for example, that had to "go to work everyday," simply had to find living quarters elsewhere. They were not allowed in their own homes. Or, once there, they had to stay there!

## NEW "ADDITIONS" OF THE 1940s

There were a few "new" homes added during the early part of the 1940s to our highly stable neighborhood of the 1920s and 1930s. This is clearly because of World War II. But just as World War I ushered in the "social climate" of the 1920s that brought our Chris Lane neighbors together in the beginning, so also did the climate following WWII bring about a similar movement of "renewal," and "new beginnings." This also largely meant "relocation."

Wayne and Helen Staker built their home in 1939. The Millet family built their home over a period of three or four years beginning about 1940. About this time Leo and Fern Larson established their home west of the Price farm on the north side of 7200 S. A new home went up on the northeast corner of 7200 S. and 17<sup>th</sup> E. built by Henry Cannon and his wife. Their youngest daughter, Norene, lived with them. A new home appeared in the early '40s on the south side of 7200 S. about a half block west of 17<sup>th</sup> E. This home was built by Raymond and Dora Hudson. They had five children living with them: Earl, Margaret, Dolan, Annette and Linda. Their oldest daughter, Lillian, was married and living in the Northwest. We previously noted the untimely accidental death of Dolan in the basement of his home.

Vernon and Laura Millard built a new home on the north side of 7200 S. just east of our present Butler West Stake Center. A year or so later the Weldon and Fern Walles' family lived for a short time in the Millard home but then built a new home next door to the west of the The Stake Center. They had four children: Robert, Beverly, Susan and Ronald. A little farther to the west of Walles' home Wid South built a new home (The Aitken home). Soon a family named Ellingson built next door to the east of Wid South. This property was purchased by a family named Newman. It is now Nelson.

## CHANGES IN ESTABLISHED HOMES

The war seemed to bring changes to the established homes in our neighborhood too. In 1938 Grandpa McCarthy sold his home to the Cook family. Two years later (1940) they sold to the Gottschalk family. In 1942 Franz Fetchner sold his cherry farm to the Searle family. Five years after that (1947) Don and Lanore Searle sold to the Leek family. In 1943 Frank Smith sold to the Nunley family.

## NEW ADDITIONS OF THE 1950s

In 1950 a new home went up between Myrle McCarthy's property and Brookhill Drive and in 1951 the new owners moved in. They were Wally and Beverly Gotberg. Wally was born and raised on 7200 S. just west of 3<sup>rd</sup> E. Beverly was born in Union but actually grew up in Butlerville. Here we have one from the far west of us, and one from the far east of us, coming to join with us in our neighborhood here. Wally & Beverly were the parents of two girls and one boy: Wendy, Terrie, and a son, Kent. They have five grandchildren and one great grandchild. As noted earlier, Kent was tragically killed when struck by a car in 1988 after departing a bus near their home on Ft. Union Blvd.

earlier on his property. In Day's case the well was dry. This can only mean that the ground water level had receded much further down than it was when Doyle drilled.

The Cliff Day family resided for about 15 years in the home Byron Millet built. Days sold the house and garage to Arlin and Kathy Randall in 1970. The building lots for John and Arlene Ellingson's home, The Bonnell home and Mike and Pam Hannan's home had been surveyed by that time, but the builder had not as yet constructed the homes. Arlin and Kathy have now lived in their home nearly 25 years.



The Ralph and Evelyn Price home in the 1940s.

Ralph and Evelyn's children: Lorin, "Buddy" and Ruby were born and raised in this home which was built in 1934. From 1953 -1964 Gene, Margaret and their children: Jeanene, Ron and Robert, lived here. The home was then demolished to clear the way for the street and building of new homes west along 7080 S. and north on 1620 E.

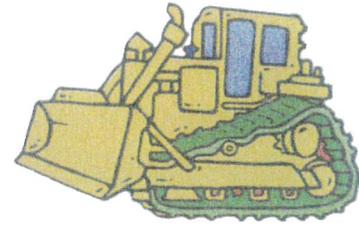
The end of the Depression and the disruption imposed by the war years brought dramatic changes to our otherwise longstanding, stable neighborhood. Albeit things began to change slowly in the 1940s, and picked up toward the 1960s, life in this newer era seemed to remain every bit as equally cohesive as it ever was earlier. The truly dramatic change, obviously, did not come until after the farmland was sold to developers and subdivided into the neighborhoods that we live in today. The transition from rural to urban living proved to be the most profoundly dramatic for us all.



Chris Lane



Subdivision!



1960's



## “SUBDIVISION” TIME!

In the mid to late 1950s the Chris Lane neighborhood began growing at an ever-increasing rate. New, individual homes were beginning to appear in all directions here on the hill. These homes were being built randomly here and there as property owners began selling little pieces of property one lot at a time.

It was around the beginning of the 1960s that the grand subdividing began. And, to be perfectly sure, it is difficult to say precisely what the sequence of these events was. Subdividing the open land seemed to simply “explode” into being from 1960 on through the 1970s and beyond. One can only say, “It was a movement whose time had come!”

It seemed to begin in 1959 when the development of the Pedersen property (upper Chris Lane) was begun. The Pedersen children had gone and Pete and “Granny” Pedersen could no longer care for their orchard land. They moved to Portland, Ore. at the beckoning of their eldest son, Adolph. They sold their home to a family whose last name was “Raines.” It turned out that the Raines family was a polygamist family. But the Pedersen home was occupied by only one of the wives. The husband was rarely seen. She had several children and often asked Alma Nunley (Jamison) to baby-sit for her.

Such a large piece of property was apparently too much for Mrs. Raines to care for alone in this situation. Raines sold to a developer named Delbert Steffensen. First the fruit trees were all removed. Then a street with curb and gutter appeared in the center of the field where the old orchard stood. Houses were built on the lots for some people, while others built their own homes on their own lots. Two such “contractors” that built their own homes on the Pedersen property were Gordon Brady (who still lives there with his wife, Alla Lee), and Bryce Hansen. Gordon Brady was the contractor who later built John and Arlene Ellingson’s home, the Bonnell home and Mike and Pam Hannon’s home. Bryce Hansen and his father, Lloyd, were the contractors that built most of the homes on both lower Chris Lane and Cherry Tree Lane. Bryce built two more homes for himself, one on lower Chris Lane (present Burton home) and one on Cherry Tree (Jay Brown’s home) before moving again up near Danish Road above Willow Creek.

The original farm property established by Grandpa McCarthy (where Gene and Margaret purchased their home) fell subject to this subdividing movement in 1964. It took a couple of years to finish the Hillrise Circle, Mary Circle, and neighboring homes.

About that time a new tract development started on the west end of 7200 South known as “Union View” subdivision. It was here that Glenna’s parents purchased a new home and moved back to our “neck of the woods” from Salt Lake in 1965.

The expansion of urban development was quite “fluidic” as it moved from one farm to another during the mid 1960s. As upper Chris Lane was being finished, a developer by the name of Lorin Ferre purchased the Nunley property, excluding the house and garage. This was the beginning of lower Chris Lane. This development then stopped at the Stelter fence line on the north and the Meeker property on the east.

## UNION FORT

The first settler along the banks of Little Cottonwood Creek was Jehu Cox in the summer of 1849. (He was also the one who donated ten acres of his land in 1853 for the building of the Union Fort, which had been ordered built that year by Brigham Young.) Following Cox's lead other settlers filled in along the streambed leading up what we now call the Creek Road. This settlement stretched for about 1 ½ miles east along the streambed. This original settlement was known as "Little Cottonwood."

On April 6, 1853 the cornerstones were laid for the Salt Lake Temple. Shortly thereafter Timpanogos Ute Chief Walkara started raiding Mormon settlements from Salt Lake Valley through Utah Valley into Sanpete County. These settlements included Brighton (Butler), Little Cottonwood and Draper. In early July, 1853, Pres. Brigham Young, as both Prophet and Territorial Governor issued a general order for the small settlements in these areas to build forts and move all of their people inside for their protection and defense. On July 25, 1853 his second order was issued saying that those who refused this order would be dealt with severely.

Little Cottonwood folks did not get around to laying out the fort and beginning construction until late fall (November) and were rather slow in complying with their assignment. In May, 1854, Pres. Brigham, in person, visited Little Cottonwood and finding them lagging behind schedule "chastised" them and impressed the seriousness of this assignment upon them. Thereafter, they turned to with greater energy.

Following Pres. Young's instructions, they literally dismantled the homes up the streambed, log by log and adobe brick by adobe brick, and "rebuilt" them inside the fort. Thus, all the homes were then located within its walls. There were finally 23 houses inside the fort. A school was built which doubled for social and public meetings. It was this great "unified, joint-effort" that led Jehu Cox to suggest renaming the place "Union."

The fort enclosed ten acres of land. Its walls were six feet wide at the base (with a four foot foundation below ground). Walls were twelve feet high. They were strictly perpendicular on the outside, but tapered on the inside from the six-foot base to six feet below the top. The upper six feet were two feet thick. At the six-foot level there were portholes through which they could fire on the attackers. A fifteen-foot road ran completely around the inside of the wall so that defenders could move and re-supply conveniently.

Even though a treaty was signed with the Ute Indians, Brigham Young had them remain in the fort for a few more years. It seems he may have had some future vision of the entrance of Albert Sydney Johnston's US Army that arrived in 1857. It was after this crisis subsided that the homes began to be built once more outside of the fort.

## OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

It was in the later part of the 1960s that Ralph Price's property, along with part of the old Millet property, was subdivided from 17<sup>th</sup> East west to 1620 East. It then turned north to include a large section of the Staker property, which extended down to Ft. Union Blvd. With the exception noted earlier that the three houses just west of Arlin Randall's home was built by Gordon Brady, this tract of houses was developed by George Hobbs, who lived at that time, west on 7200 South near Jack Whiting and Leo Larson's homes.

On the east the development around De Ville Drive grew until it filled in the open fields toward Highland Drive. Finally, there was the subdividing of the very top of the hill from Union View on the west to Highland Drive on the East. The speed and momentum that accompanied the urbanization of our hill has seemed incredible.

The "filling in" of developing neighborhoods continued for several years until, as we see today, they virtually cover our entire hill. Where once my friends and I would roam looking for Indian arrowheads and other artifacts, there are now very lovely homes and beautiful yards. There is no question that it was the end of one era and the beginning of another. Most definitely, our "neighborhood" on this hill no longer qualifies as the old "Poverty Flats" of yesteryear. "Cottonwood Heights City" is vastly more appropriate! I trust this little historical "glimpse" into our Chris Lane neighborhood's past will be of interest, and perhaps enjoyment, to all who may wish to know.

## ANECDOTES OF INTEREST

The Butt property was purchased by "Al" Pedersen while his parents were living in Portland Oregon. "Pete" Pedersen died there, but "Granny" returned to live with "Al" and his wife Dorothy. Al built the home where Kay and Pauline Andersen live for his mother. It was there she lived out the remaining years of her life.

When they cleared Grandpa McCarthy's orchard trees off the property they cut them up and put them down the well in Radack's backyard. They sought to burn them there. When they wouldn't burn they poured a significant amount of gasoline down the well to get them started. Instead, it exploded in a great volcanic-like eruption "spewing" parts and pieces of tree limbs and trunks high into the air and in all directions!

The old Stelter barn had remnant "artifacts" (junk, I called it!) from its earliest days. After selling the land I thought the whole thing should be burned and then hauled away in trucks to the dump. To my astonishment, I returned home one day to find a rather large ring of cars parked around the barn. There were "Cadillacs," "Lincoln's," "Mercedes'" and few other expensive vehicles there. There was a crowd of people sifting through our old barn and hauling lots of things out to their cars. Not only that, but the very boards that made up the walls were taken for use in "new homes" for a certain décor. Some boards, I was told, even ended up on some walls in *a Las Vegas Casino!*

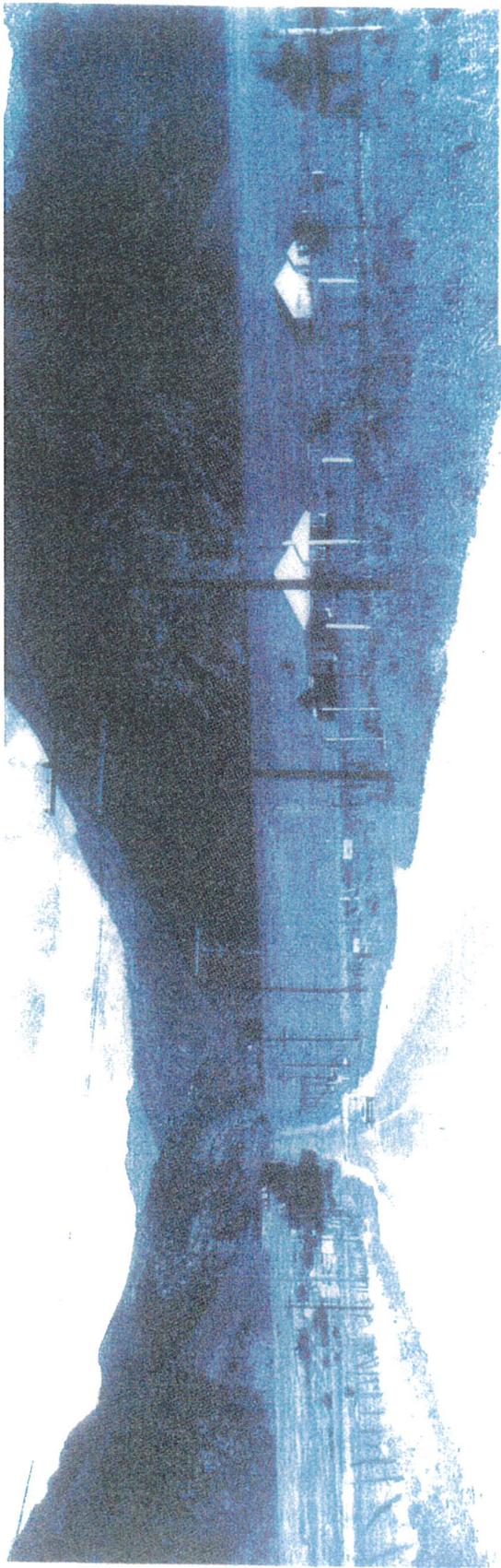


Photo by Leo Mosher--deceased  
Courtesy of LaFern Mosher Green

1948 Above  
2004 Below

### Butterville Hill & 70<sup>th</sup> South

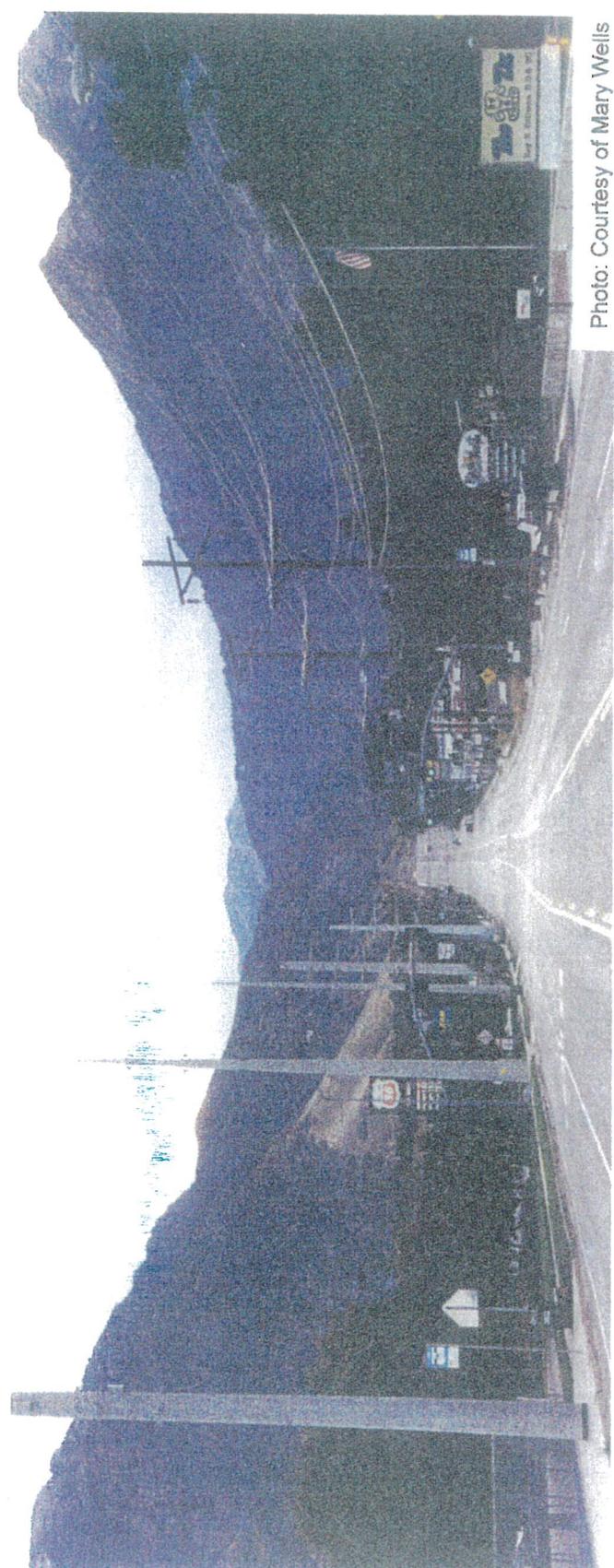


Photo: Courtesy of Mary Wells

