

History Question of the Month

Growing up in Cottonwood Heights, and living near Little Cottonwood Creek, I remember my mother always warning us to stay away from “the creek”, not only in the spring when the waters were running high, but all season. This was true not only for me, but for all the kids who lived by a creek or irrigation canal. Why were our mothers so concerned?

Answer

In May of 1946, Vola Proctor, while working in her yard, found the body of a small boy floating in Little Cottonwood Creek, which flowed through their property near Highland Drive. She retrieved the child from the water and carried him into her house, where her son, Jay, performed CPR until the County Rescue Squad arrived. They tried to revive the child without success and he was pronounced dead about 50 minutes later. It was learned that the boy was playing with his younger sister about an hour before he was found. Neighborhood children who were playing with them saw the boy fall into the water and went to notify his mother. She immediately called the Sheriff's office and then started searching for the boy. The Proctor home was about a half mile downstream from where the boy had fallen in.