

HISTORY QUESTION OF THE MONTH

Living in a farming community has always had its dangers which have resulted in injury and loss of life. The Cottonwood Heights area was no different. What were some of the tragic results of some of these dangers?

ANSWER

August of 1895, James Joffe of Butlerville was stacking hay when a guy pole broke hitting him on the head and inflicting injuries that resulted in his death 24 hours later. He left a wife and a large family of children.

August 6, 1908, Gerald Maxfield of Butlerville had been to Murray where he had picked up a load of lumber, a package of meat and a bottle of carbolic acid (carbolic acid is a very caustic and deadly poison. Farmers used it in a diluted form as an antiseptic for their livestock). On the way home, driving his wagon loaded with lumber, the meat on the seat beside him, he put the bottle of carbolic acid in his back pocket. He noticed the meat was falling and made a sudden move to grasp it. The bottle of acid was thrown against the seat and broke, the contents pouring onto his legs. He immediately fainted from the pain and fell under his horses. He was picked up by passersby and taken to the Murray General Hospital where he died fifteen minutes later. This was the second freak accident to befall one of Joseph Maxfield's children.

In June of 1935, Kenneth Elroy Burns, the 2 year old son of Kenneth and Luella Burns fell into the swift moving Brown and Sanford ditch. His body was found about three hours later by sheriff deputies, lodged against a head gate at 6400 South and Highland Drive, about five miles from where the tot fell in. It was not until the water in the ditch was shut off at the head gate in Big Cottonwood Canyon, that the boy's body was located. Although Mr. Burns moved into the area in April, it wasn't until a week before the accident that his wife and children had moved in.

In October of 1935, 17 year old Melvin Thiede was thrown from his wagon when his frightened horses bolted. He suffered a broken shoulder blade and face abrasions. He was taken to the Salt Lake General Hospital where he was reported in "fairly good" condition.

June of 1943, 2 ½ year old Jerry Anderson, son of Douglas and Gwendolyn Anderson fell into the Brown and Sanford ditch at about 2750 East and 7000 South. His body was swept downstream to 2300 East where it was found lodged against a diversion dam by Mrs. Parley Blair. Attempts to revive the boy by Salt Lake County fireman and a Holladay Physician were unsuccessful.

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