

A paper prepared from data gathered by David H. Morris,
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The Washington Factory, created by or Afterwards known as the Rio Virgin Manufacturing Company, at Washington City, Washington County, then the Territory of Utah. During the year 1866, the building was completed and can still be seen, in this year of 1926, as one passes through this section of the Arrowhead Trail, (or on Highway 91.)

The machinery for this factory was hauled by team from Salt Lake City, under the supervision of William Carter, one of the original pioneers to Utah. Among the boys who drove teams were A. W. Ivins and Frank Foster. There were quite a number of others.

At first the factory was confined to the manufacture of Cotton goods, the cotton which supplied the factory being raised on the lands watered by the Santa Clara and Virgin River. In Washington County, Utah; Mohave County, Arizona; and Lincoln County, Nevada.

James Davidson was the first superintendent and his daughter Maggie, who afterwards married Benj. Baddock taught Amanda Pace, Mary Covington and Lucinda Clark, the different steps in cotton business, such as lapping, carding, spinning and weaving, and these girls were the first employees of the factory, Andrew Sorenson and Lemoni Alexander went out to Paccasin, north of Pipe Springs, and obtained some maple with which to make the wooden cogs for the driving wheel, from which the machinery was driven.

It maybe of interest to know that Brother Davidson, his wife and son, died of thirst between St. Thomas and the Beaver Dam Wash, May 12, 1869.

Some time after the factory was started Joseph Birch was sent East where he purchased some woolen machinery which was installed in the factory and thereafter cotton and woolen cloth were manufactured therein. Joseph Birch succeeded A. R. Whithead as Superi tendent and he in turn was succeeded by Thomas J. Jones and Richard Bentley, and 1890 the factory was leased to Thomas Juss who had it for ten years, and after he was called to Whit River, Nevada, to colonize the Church Farm. D. H. Morris had charge of the business for one year, during which

time the affairs of the company, as far as manufacturing of goods was concerned was cleaned up and the factory closed for good.

During the time prior to the leasing of the factory to Thomas Judd, the manufacturing of goods was suspended from time to time, but during the time it was leased to Thomas Judd, it was run continuously and was of great benefit to the people, especially during the panic of 1893, for during that time the goods made at the factory were sold for the raw material the products of the farm as they could be used.

In the early days of Dixie when rugs and carpets were luxuries, the warp was made at the factory, which enabled the people to make their carpets and rugs. These could be seen in nearly every home and the women used the cotton batting for making their quilts while the farmers obtained cotton ropes manufactured there at a time when it was impossible to get the money to buy other kinds of rope.

While Thomas Judd took care of the business he installed a new turbin wheel which cost \$1,000 and a steel pipe to convey the water to the wheel, he also secured a 5000 fly wheel to regulate the speed of the machinery and made a general re-arrangement of the machinery and crowded production as much as he could. He had business fairly under way when the panic of 1893 overtook the people. And during the period of years when he had charge of the business, money being out of the question, no money was paid to his employees, but all were paid in the products of the factory, or produce taken in exchange for the same.

He employed between sixty-five and seventy-five hands and crowded the output as much as possible, finding a ready market for all the goods made, as started, by exchanging the goods made for other products such as cotton, wool, potatoes, flour, molasses, cheese, butter, beef, pork, garden products, lumber, shingles, lath, rocksalt, etc.

The district served by the factory extended from St. Thomas on the south to Panguitch on the north. He not only exchanged goods for such products, but exchanged these products for other products, making the factory a business center, but machinery extras, oils, eyes, etc., that were necessary and these were obtained from the Z. C. M. I. in Salt Lake City, Utah, and also the Clark Eldridge

and Company and Scow Crofts Company, in exchange for cotton batting.

It is also true that nothing but the purest of materials used in the making of the goods and this made it difficult to compete successfully with the shoddy made goods, but the condition surrounding the people and the scarcity of money made the factory a great benefit to the people, creating means by which they might obtain clothing, etc., without having to pay the cash for it, and while the people were receiving these blessings, the stockholders received 100% dividend on their capital stock during the period Thomas Judd had charge of the business. The church was a large holder in the company, and when the people began work on the Washington Field New Dam across the Rio Virgin, the church made a liberal donation from the factory to assist in the enterprise, and it was from the factory that most of the food supplies were obtained to supply the men engaged in that work.

The factory was shut down for good during the latter part of 1900, and part of the machinery was afterwards sold to a company that organized at Beaver to which place it was shipped, and afterwards destroyed by fire. The factory was first established through the efforts of President Brigham Young, who took a great deal of interest in its success, not only assisting in its establishment, but worked continually to keep it running. The factory was one of the great helps in establishing the Dixie Mission.