

Utah County

The first adobe making in Springville was in 1850 by three brothers, *John, Alex, and William Nichols*, who were called the “adobe brothers.” These early adobes were very large. The “adobe boys” built a two-roomed house of these adobes within the confines of the fort. The rooms were large enough to dance two cotillions in and they were used for all social gatherings until the log schoolhouse was completed. The main clay beds were located northwest of town now known as the city pasture, and another east to the foothills on fourth north. William Miller built the first adobe house outside the fort which was later turned into a tithing office.

Bishop Aaron Johnson, the first bishop of Springville, built, larger adobe house in the spring of 1852. This house, in its associations, became quite historic because it was the only place for several years that was large enough for meetings, dances and public gatherings. It was here that the teachers held their deliberations; that the choir practiced; that the band met to practice, and most of the business meetings were held. It was two stories high and had twelve rooms. The three lower rooms were very large and were connected by folding doors.

The adobe yard that was used in making this house was laid off in the eastern part of Bishop Johnson’s field, near which flowed, from beneath the bluff, a clear, cool spring, where often the laborers sat at noon time in the shade to eat their bread, which often had no other dressing than a dip in the sparkling water.

Abram Day was the first adobe layer in Springville. He laid the adobes for Bishop Johnson’s home and Thomas Tew was the tender. It was upon this house that Mr. Tew took his first lesson in the trade, which he followed for forty-eight years.

Myron Crandall, **Richard Bird** and several others built early adobe homes. Most of the people tried to build their own homes, but when necessary, they would exchange work and materials with others in order to get their homes built. After their regular day’s work was done they would go to the clay beds and work the clay or mould it, or would bring a team and wagon and load the adobes which had been thoroughly hardened and take them to their home site. Very often young couples would spend their evenings in this way, before and after they were married.

In 1854 the early settlers built the Old White Meeting Rouse, located on the southeast block of the intersection of Main and Center Streets, directly east of the City Park. It was built of these handmade adobes and plastered over them. The lumber for it was hauled out of the canyon by those who had teams and wagon. This building was used for a school house as well as for church services and for dramatic entertainments until the Big School House was built.

Early in the morning of July 4, 1856 work was started on the Big School house. Thirty teams went to gather the stone for the foundation from a spot then designated as the Second Bridge in Hobble Creek Canyon. The delivery of these thirty loads of stone was a prelude to their Independence Day celebration.