

# MOUNTAIR LEGACY

## Historic District



Preserving Mountair's Legacy - 1850's to Present  
Parleys Canyon



### Mountair Canyon

As visitors traverse up the canyon, they experience the excitement of an escape so close to the valley, unaware of the fragility and history that the canyon holds. The prophets, pioneers, and settlers who would make their mark on the Salt Lake Valley. Temple builders, physicians, business owners and leaders, who would raise generations of families. There were hotels, tent rentals, a store, milk wagon, church meetings, theatre, dances and legendary hikes. These screened porch cabins built on stilts located high in the tree canopies express the peacefulness and nature of what the families honor. The canyon is a celebration of the late 1800's and early 1900's preserved in a time capsule hidden in Parleys Canyon. For those who take the time to learn its history, it is a place to never be destroyed.

# Al Pratt, landscape architect Mountair

## Deseret News August 3, 1906

### INCOMPARABLE MOUNTAIR.

This ever-delightful mountain canyon is fast assuming place with the finest and most exclusive country home parks of the West. Former campers who were familiar with the willow beauty and charm of the "Old Armchair" when it was first opened in 1900, are now amazed to see comfortable country homes, costing from \$200.00 to \$5000 each, all along the shady driveway, from Hazel Dell to Royal Park and Lotensale.

Each house is surrounded by its own private park and grounds, standing well away from and above the smooth, evenly graded drive, and only partially glimpsed through dense green bowers of aspen, maple, birch and pine. On the cool spacious verandas and flowery terraces are hammocks and rustic rockers, from whose comfortable depths one may contentedly read, or rest with pleasant friends, the happy hours away; or one may dreamily watch the ever-changing play of sunshin, and shade in and out of the cavernous opposite, or on the blue hills of Parley's, Red Butte and City Creek, far away.

From the deeply hidden or sparkling brook wells up the laughing splash of falling water, while shy, wild birds in the verdant foliage overhead sing sweetly in the woodland songs that cities never hear.

These delightful places usually have their own—or mutual—piped water systems, and studios, bathrooms, convenient kitchens, cool, open, screened dining-rooms, and wide verandas, are considered most certainly essential.

Smooth, well-made trails give easy access to the very heart of the deep forests, and farther, to Pine Top and Dragon's Head peaks, on the very crest of the Wasatch range.

All lots are one-half-acre or larger; one to two miles from railway station and public road; eight miles from city limits. Independent telephone connection to each house if desired.

Some thirty of Salt Lake's nicest people are already interested in and enjoying the pleasures of this "Incomparable Mountair." There is room for a few more. Al Pratt, the landscape architect, at 48 E. Second South st., would be very glad to tell you who of your friends are already located there; what it will cost to buy a country home place, and how to improve it. He is agent for the Horsback & Sorenson subdivision of "Mountair" which he would be pleased to have you see, without any expense to you.



...Some thirty of Salt Lake's nicest people are already interested in and enjoying the pleasures of this "Incomparable Mountair".

## Summary of Historical Context



Ownership of land in Mountair Canyon was granted by Brigham Young to Willard B. Richards and Parley P. Pratt. Use of the canyon began approximately 1850 as a summer retreat area for the Richards and Pratt families as well as other prominent LDS Church leadership. The Richards' homesteaded the lower half of the canyon while the Pratt's homesteaded the upper half. Pratt developed and operated the Armchair Resort and hotel at the top of the canyon between about 1895-1930. The hotel had 12 rooms, a kitchen, lobby, and lodge. It was surrounded by three homes of Pratt family members. On other parcels, campsites were the norm until Richards moved a house he owned from Richards Street in Salt Lake City to the canyon and retrofitted it as a cabin.

Cabins in Mountair that are connected to family members of the following Presidents of the LDS Church.

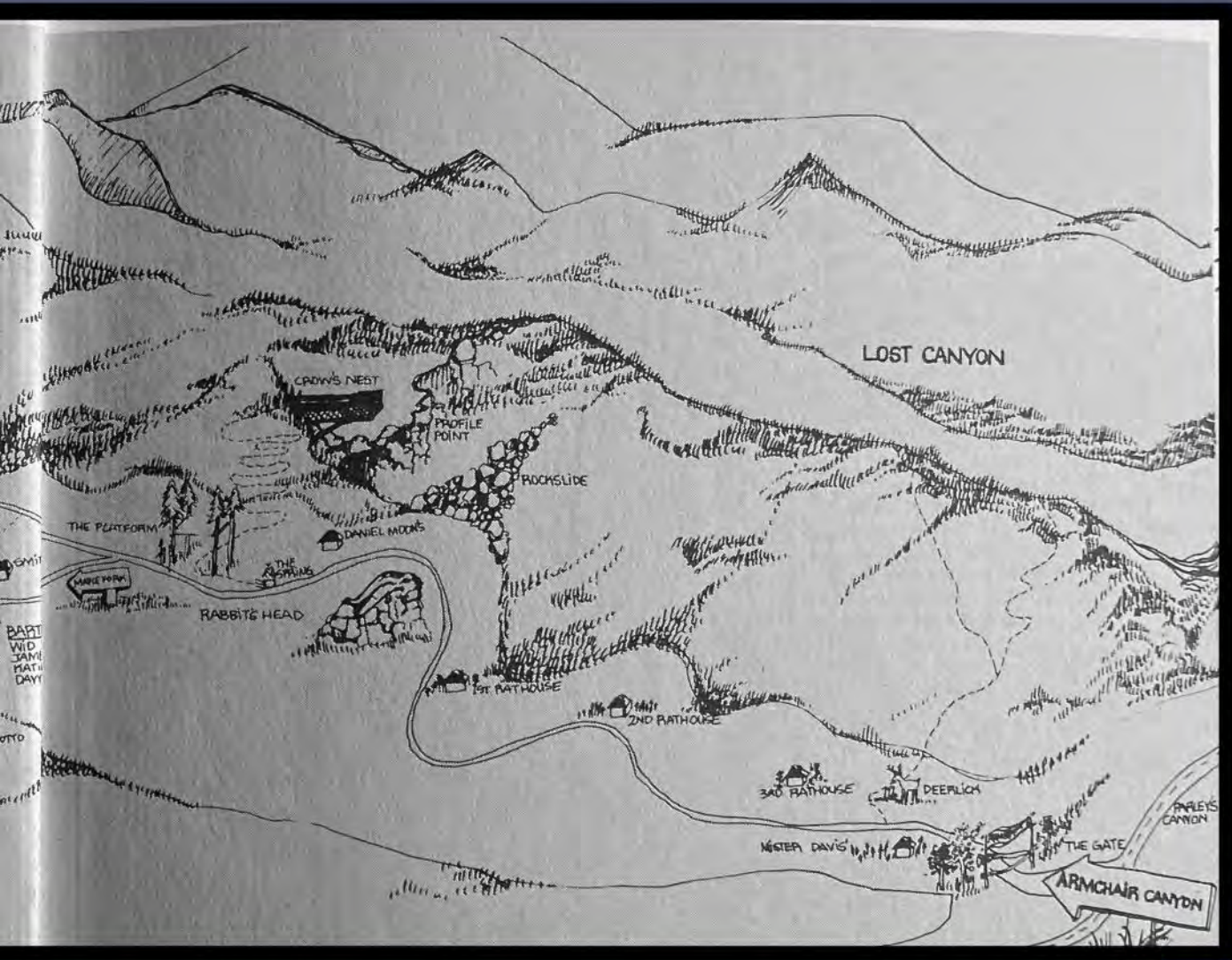
Joseph Smith, 1st President;  
Brigham Young 2nd President;  
John Taylor 3rd President;  
Wilford Woodruff 4th President,  
Lorenzo Snow 5th President,  
Joseph F. Smith 6th President and  
Heber J. Grant 7th President.



Joseph F. Smith, Philip 3 months, son of Stephen L. Richards (1917).



Mountair Cultural and Historic District



100+ Year old structures built by original settlers  
whose families still reside in the canyon.

"Colonel's Place" owned by the  
descendants of the  
Joseph F. Smith Family



Original 1890's Pratt brothers built stone cabin  
of rocks quarried within the canyon.



W. Cleon Skousen,  
Salt Lake Police  
Chief. Served 16  
years in the FBI  
under  
J. Edgar Hoover.

Cleon Skousen in  
1958 "Postum"  
advertisement





“The Cabin” was an original 1890’s Pratt brothers built stone cabin from rocks quarried within the canyon.



Dr. James Kirby, early radiologist in the Salt Lake Valley was an early owner adding the wood deck surrounding the stone dwelling. Martha S. Felt Family have been residents since 1951.



## PRESTON S. FREE, AGED UTAHN, DIES

Wednesday afternoon at 2 o'clock funeral services will be held in the Forest Dale chapel for Preston S. Free, who died yesterday at the age of 86 years. Mr. Free was born at Nashville, Tenn., March 13, 1831, coming to Salt Lake in 1848, driving the wagon which carried the family of Brigham Young. He took up his residence at that time in the Twelfth ward, but in 1873 he removed to the homestead where he was living at the time of his death.

Mr. Free is survived by the widow, Mrs. Mary T. Free; by four sons, Preston F., Huron R., J. R. and D. F. Free, and by four daughters, Mrs. T. Hendry, Mrs. Laura Hansen, Mrs. Ida Diefinger and Mrs. Gracie Ensign.

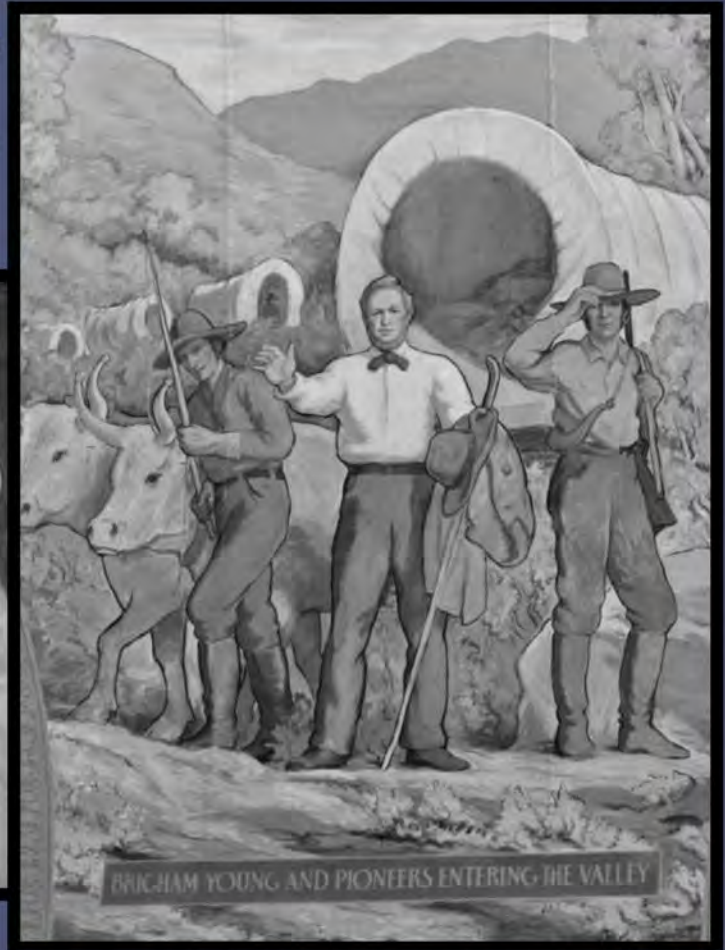


The Free Family Cabin

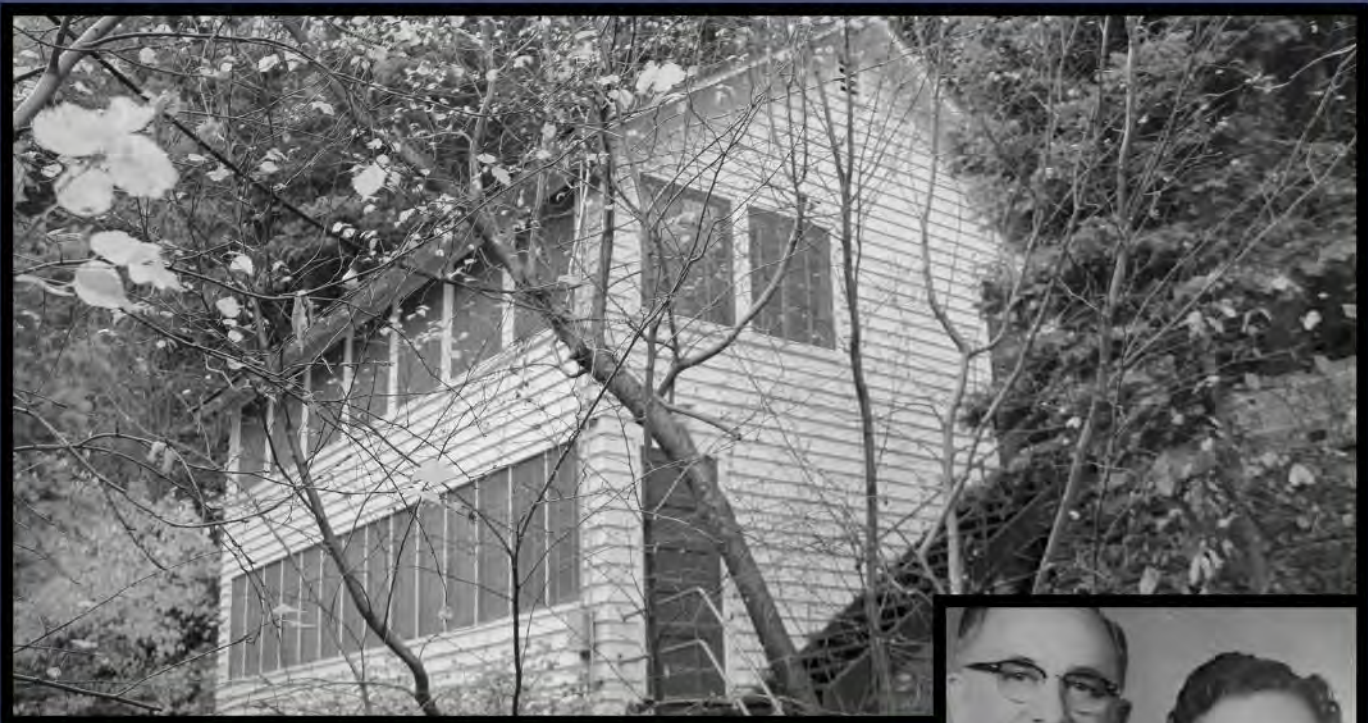
Preston S. Free at the age of 17 drove the wagon across the plains carrying Brigham Young's family in 1848. The Free family started Hygeia Ice Company.

Lee Greene Richards  
"Silver-Smith Property"

This property's original owner was Lee Greene Richards, who painted murals in the dome of the Utah State Capitol and portraits of the Presidents of the LDS Church. Lee also painted murals located in Cardston, Alberta Temple and the Mesa, Arizona Temple.



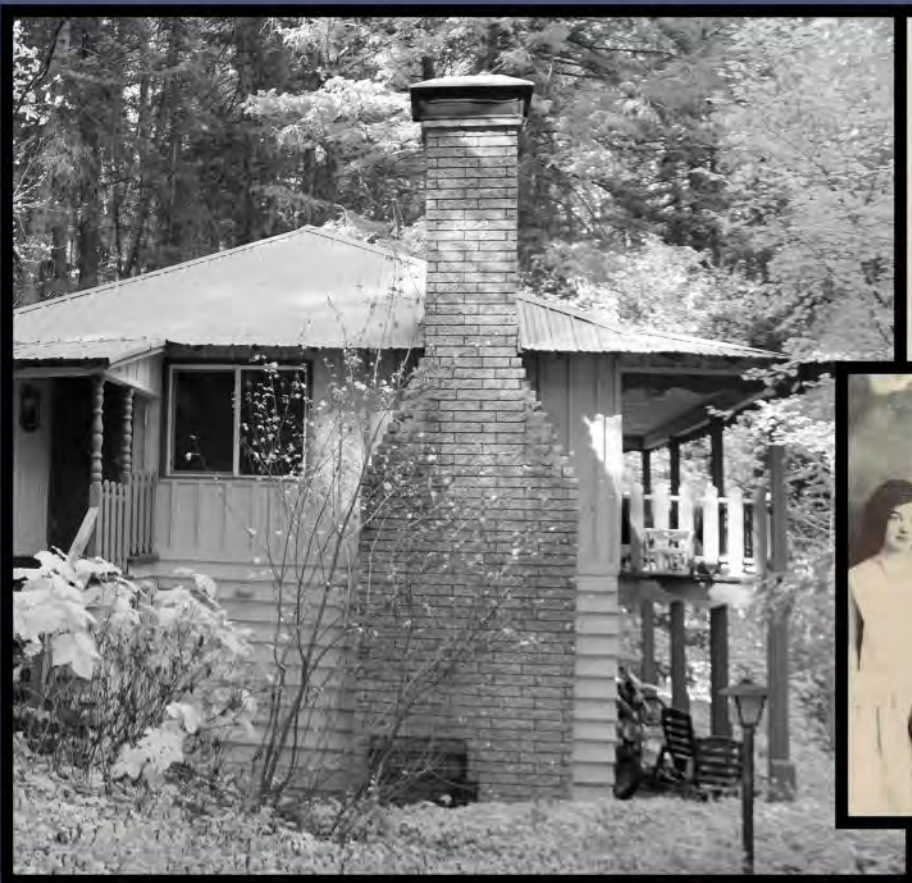
## C.W. Silver Family - "Silver-Smith Cabin"



The Silver Bros. Foundry was the largest iron steel and brass foundry in the Salt Lake area. They cast the 12 brass oxen for the baptistry of Salt Lake LDS Temple in the 1880's.



## Willard B. Richards, Jr. and Alice Coulam Richards



Willard B. Richards, Jr. was the founder of Granite Furniture in Sugar House. He was a leader in the Sugar House Chamber of Commerce in developing a suburban shopping center.

This is one of the original 1890s cabins with a remodel in 1950s and has been enjoyed by his family for over 130 years.

## Albert Zabriskie Richards, Sr.

A.Z. Richards Sr. was one of the first engineering graduates from the U of U. He was the founder of the oldest civil engineering firms in the intermountain states. Foley Richards started the first production facility in Utah, harvesting salt from the Great Salt Lake.



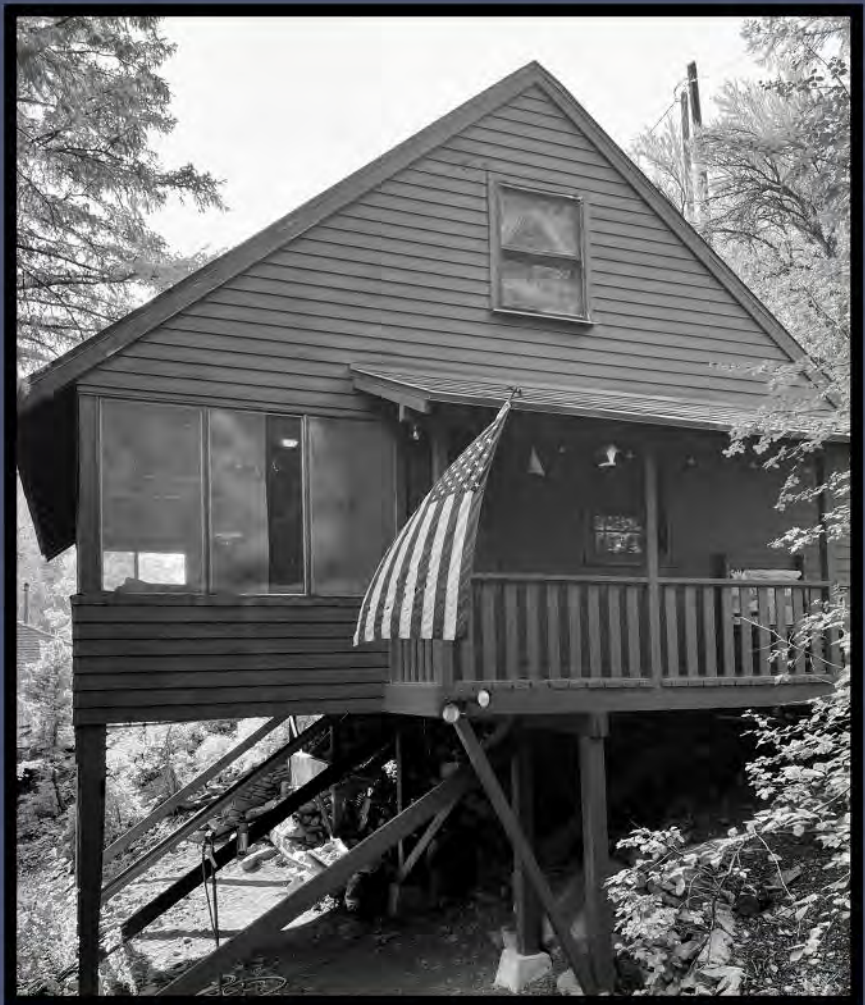
This cabin was built by the A.Z. Richards family in 1920 showing off their civil engineering skills.



Example of the Mountair screen porch floor plan.

## Preston D. Richards

Preston Richards was a member of the Utah Legislature and Republican Nominee for U.S. Senator in 1950. Preston worked as a law partner of President J. Reuben Clark, Jr. of the LDS first presidency and Elder Albert E. Bowen of the Council of the Twelve. He was the Assistant Solicitor of the State Department of the United States, under J. Reuben Clark in the William Howard Taft administration.



Example of the Mountair screen porch floor plan.

Preston Richards authored the proclamation of Statehood for Arizona in 1912. Preston was supervisor of Granite District Schools and the faculty of the U of U Law School. He was instrumental in the creation of “This is the Place Monument” and negotiated the land purchase for the LDS Los Angeles Temple.



PRESTON D. RICHARDS

# Maple Fork



Photos from the Smith family descendants.



Willard B. Richards' cabin was originally a home that was located at 47 Richards Street in downtown Salt Lake City in 1890s. It was brought up by wagons to Mountair and reassembled. The family added screened porches which started the Mountair screen porch tradition. Many cabins in Mountair still belong to the descendants of the Willard Richards lineage.



This is a Mountair Family Legacy cabin that the family has owned for 130+ years.

# Willard B. Richards Family



Willard B Richards was born in 1847 in Winter Quarters Nebraska. Son of Willard Richards who was in the Carthage Jail with Joseph Smith when he was martyred. Willard Richards was the first Editor of the Deseret News, June 15, 1850.

SALT LAKE TEMPLE  
 DEDICATION SERVICES.  
 • • • ADMIT ONE • • •  
 Saturday, April 22, 1893.  
*W. Woodruff*

# Dr. Charles F. Wilcox



Dr. Charles F. Wilcox contracted with Brothers Alvaro A. Pratt and Parker B. Pratt to build this stone cabin in the 1890s. Dr. Wilcox was a prominent physician in Salt Lake whose patients included the early prophets of the LDS Church.



## "Mary's Place"

During the Great Depression, this cabin was sold to daughter Claire Wilcox Noall and son-in-law Matthew F. Noall, who then passed it to the Mary Louise Noall Strommness family. The family at Mary's request, restored the original stone structure, now enclosed with a modern cabin. This is a Mountair Family Legacy cabin that the family has owned for 130+ years and fulfills Mary's wish to celebrate family.



## Joseph F. Smith, 6th President of LDS Church



Joseph F. and Sarah Ellen Richards Smith. This family home affectionately known as “Coolorosa” was part of the heart of Mountair Canyon located in Maple Fork. Many members of the Smith family built their own cabins or refurbished other structures in the canyon.



## Stephen Longstroth Richards



The Stephen and Emma Louis Stayner Richards Family. Stephen was a prominent physician and founded the Salt Lake Clinic. This cabin built in 1904 holds an honored place in the Richards family and was where granddaughter, Emma Lou Warner Thayne grew up and spent her childhood summers. Those memories inspired her 1975 novel "Never Past the Gate". A story based on the year 1935, about a 10-year olds summer journey spent in Mountair Canyon.

This is a Mountair Family Legacy cabin that the family has owned for 120+ years.



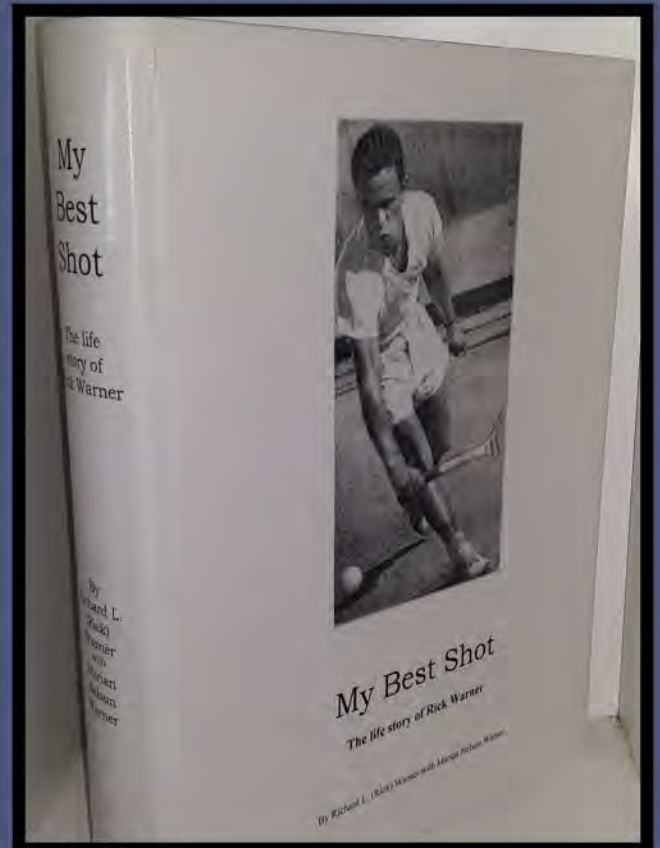
Claude Richards... He was an author, teacher, realtor.

### Claude Richards - Author, Teacher and Realtor.

Stephen's son Claude Richards built multiple cabins in Mountair Canyon along with the Highland Park and South Gate Park subdivisions. Claude's descendents are current owners of this cabin.

## Richard Longstroth Warner

Rick L. Warner was one of Utah's leading businessman and owner of Rick Warner Ford and Warner car franchises. Rick was a community philanthropist and optimist that is still remembered fondly in the Salt Lake Valley. He wrote "My Best Shot" the life story of Rick Warner.



This cabin with its screened porches was built by Claude Richards.

## LDS Apostle Stephen L. and Irene Smith Merrill Richards



"Pioneer Camp"



Boarding the train. Left to right:  
Joseph Fielding Smith, J. Reuben  
Clark Jr., Stephen L Richards, and  
David O. McKay.

Stephen was an attorney and member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of the LDS Church. Elder Richards also served as first counselor in the First Presidency of the Church under President David O. McKay, 9th President of the LDS Church. Irene Smith is the granddaughter of George A. Smith.

## Homer "Pug" and Grace Richards Warner



Emma Lou Thayne, Rick, Homer R. and Gil  
Grace and Pug Warner



This cabin was designed by Utah architect, Taylor Woolley. He was an understudy of Frank Lloyd Wright during his studies at Taliesin East and Italy. The cabin represents the tradition of the Mountain screen porch.





## Lynn Stephen and Lucille Covey Richards



Lynn S. Richards, son of Stephen L. Richards, was a Salt Lake lawyer and former State Senator. State Chair of The Utah Cancer Society, President and Trustee of Wasatch Lawn Cemetery and served on the Deseret Sunday School Union with David O. McKay. A fond memory of Lynn's was walking up and down the canyon Sunday mornings yelling "Sunday School at the Richards at 10:00 a.m.". Lynn lived to be 100 years old.



Lucille Covey Richards was active in business affairs as a partner, trustee, officer and stockholder in Little America which her father, Steve Mack Covey founded. She has fond memories of time spent at Mountair with their six children.



## Mel and Emma Lou Warner Thayne



Emma Lou Thayne was the first female board member for the Deseret News. The Thayne Center for student life, leadership and community engagement is located at Salt Lake Community College. She received many honors and awards for her involvement in the community and outreach through the arts. She published 12 books of poetry and one novel.



“Never Past the Gate” is a story based on the year 1935, about a 10-year-old’s summer journey spent in Mountair Canyon.  
(Emma Lou’s writing studio in Canyon)



“Pine Print”

Example of Mountair screen porch floor plan.

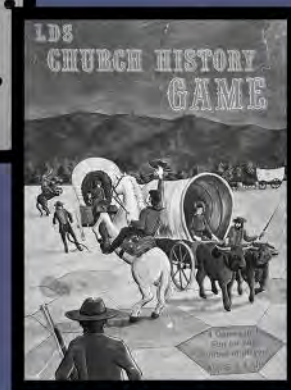
## Matthew Noall



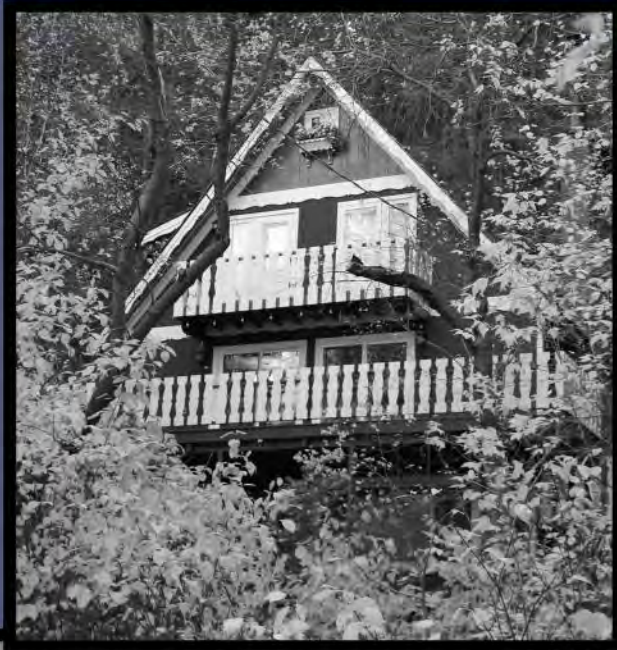
Matthew Noall was a pioneer Utah lumberman, Owner of Noall Bros. Lumber Company. Woodwork in the Salt Lake LDS Temple, Church Office building and Lion House was done under his supervision. Matthew built this cabin with his brother William Noall. This is a Mountair Family Legacy cabin that the family has owned for 120+ years.



**NB** MATERIALS  
FURNISHED BY  
↓  
**NOALL BROS.**  
LUMBER CO.



## Paul and Margaret Tanner



Margaret and sister Sally



Richards' Girls

Margaret Tanner, Sally Parkinson, Janet Stewart

This cabin was built in 1975 for Paul and Margaret Richards Tanner. Margaret was the daughter of Willard B. Richards, Jr. This cabin represents the next generation of families and the siblings' expanding connection to Mountair.

## Grant and Eva Morgan

Isaac Morgan's son, Grant bought the Affleck cabin in 1951. This cabin was built in 1921.



Wendell B. Affleck was a founding member of the Associated Food Stores. He owned and operated the family grocery store D.A. Affleck in the avenues for many years. The family owned multiple cabins in Mountair in the area name "Royal Park."



Wendell B. Affleck Family August 26, 1939,  
Salt Lake Tribune Society Page

## Isaac Morgan Family "Contrary Girl Camp"

Alvaro Pratt sold this property to brothers Charles and James Bell. The property known as "Contrary Girl Camp." This flat piece of property is where the Pratt brothers hosted guest in tent cabins. This was Utah's original glamping site. The Bell brothers sold the property to Isaac Morgan who built the original cabin around 1914 and hosted many Mountair Canyon honeymooners.



Martin and Melba Christensen Morgan

## Dr. Ralph C. Pendleton and Fish Pond



Example of Mountair screen porch floor plan.

Ralph was the Chief Naval Doctor at Pearl Harbor and invented a wax method to treat burn victims. He was a prominent doctor who lectured across the country and world. He would show videos of his adventures to the local Wasatch Mountain Club. Ralph's fish pond is an iconic spot in the canyon and the current owners have kept up the tradition of stocking the pond with trout.



### S. L. Navy Doctor Tells Method Of Wax Spray for Burns

Reporting rapidly-extending use of a new method of treating burns by means of wax sprays, Lieutenant Commander Ralph C. Pendleton, Salt Lake physician and surgeon, who has been on duty at the Mare Island, Cal., navy hospital, was home on leave Saturday.

The method, used successfully in treating sailors burned in the

Pearl Harbor attack, is in use not only among armed forces on many fronts, but is being taken up by civilian defense authorities, he reported.

Commander Pendleton will read a paper on the wax treatment before the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons at Chicago January 17. He then will return to Mare Island.

# The Old Armchair Summer Resort and Crow's Nest



Mr. C. F. Wilson Old Armchair, Utah, Aug 4 - 1909  
 To The Old Armchair Summer Resort, Co.  
 All bills due on presentation.

<u>Room House Guide</u>	<u>3 00</u>
<u>Outboard - 27</u>	<u>13 50</u>
<u>Swimming, Sun &amp; Park</u>	<u>1 25</u>
<u>Complimentary</u>	<u>1 00</u>
	<u>21 25</u>

8-4-09 RECEIVED PAYMENT, A. O. Pratt



# Mountair Private Road Company

Ledger of the meeting of  
Mountair property owners  
held at the Royal Cafe,  
March 19, 1906.  
Claude Richards, Secretary

C.F. Wilcox, Mountair Private Road  
Company stock certificate.  
dated June 29, 1909 \$25.  
Signed by Parker B. Pratt, Secretary &  
W.B. Richards, President.

1906.		Cash paid out 1906	
May 12	R. Smith	May 12	Expressman for delivering floor
" 12	Geo. Mueller	" 12	Wm. Haller Letter material
" 19	Jornansen Burman	" 14	John Lisher
" 19	Oreston Richards	" 18	Parker B. Pratt
" "	D. F. Free	" 19	Carl Capson
" "	Rehli. Hansen	" 21	John Lisher
" "	E. A. Wright	" 21	William Miller
" "	D. C. F. Wilcox	" 21	Parker B. Pratt
" "	L. B. Richards	" 21	Parker B. Pratt
" "	H. B. Richards	" "	Parker B. Pratt
" "	Dr. S. A. Richards	" "	Record Book
" "	Jos. J. Daynes	" 19	John Brown for making
" "	Clairide Richards	" 26	John Brown " 7th
" "	Total	" 26	Carl Capson
June 6	Frank R. Snow	" 26	Total June 26th
" "	Wm. Matthews Wall	" 5	Carl Capson
" "	C. Bell	" 5	John Lisher
" "	J. J. Dunbar	" 5	Joseph H. Adams
" "	E. M. Doreman	" 6	John Brown
" "	J. L. Bell	" 18	William Miller
" "	Friedman Tot.	" "	Total June 18th
" "	Friedman	" "	Parker B. Pratt
" "	Total to date	" "	Blow sharpening
			Hardware
			Patrol receipts, checks & slips

## THREE COMPANIES FILE THEIR ARTICLES

The Utah-Wyoming Consolidated Oil company of Salt Lake City, another million-dollar organization, came into the field Saturday with the filing of articles of incorporation with the county clerk. The company owns fifteen patented claims and fifteen leased oil claims, part of which are in Utah and part in Wyoming. The officers of the company are: B. F. Grant, president; Fred J. Paek, vice-president; H. E. Havener, secretary and treasurer. These, with Joseph T. Kingsbury, D. H. Livingston, W. S. Lamareaux and Robert A. Brighton, are the directors. W. X. Paek is the eighth incorporator, each one of whom holds 20,000 shares.

The Mountair Private Road company, organized to maintain a private road to the Mountair resort in Parley's canyon, has filed articles, showing a capital stock of \$5000.

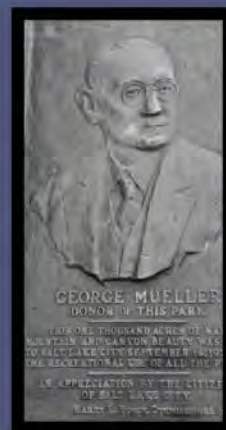
The H. S. Daynes Music company, with a capital stock of \$1000, filed its articles. The officers are: H. S. Daynes, president; E. C. Ashton, secretary and treasurer. These, with F. H. Fowler, are the directors. Other stockholders are R. R. Romney and C. P. Patten.



## Other Notable Canyon Residents



George Mueller, Owner of Royal Baking Co. and Royal Cafe. In 1927, George donated 1,000 acres of land to Salt Lake City for the recreation of people and to protect the watershed.



Joseph J. Daynes was the first organist at the Salt Lake LDS Tabernacle and for the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. Joseph wrote the music for many hymns for the LDS Church.

Homer R. Warner a physiologist whose research fusing engineering and medicine helped introduce computer analysis to diagnosing illnesses. A pioneer in a field that has come to be known as medical informatics. Served as director of the Cardiovascular Laboratory at LDS Hospital.



### Armchair Notes.

Mr. George Buckle came up Saturday, the 16th, and stayed over Sunday at the Waterfalls with his family.

Mr. Royal B. Young drove up Saturday evening, the 16th, with his children. He returned to the city Monday, but his family remained during the week.

Miss Della Buckle returned to the canyon Saturday, accompanied by her cousin, Miss Lulu Buckle.

Mr. and Mrs. F. H. Hawkins arrived Monday for a week's sojourn. They have taken Mountain cottage.

Mrs. George Buckle and her children returned to Salt Lake on Monday, after a month's stay at the Waterfalls.

Among the visitors on Sunday was a merry party composed of the Misses Anna Johnson, Louise Johnson, Hilma Johnson and Messrs. Carl Ekman, Albert Taylor and Joseph Turner.

Mrs. Patrick Ryan and family came up Monday and stayed a couple of days.

Miss Ivy Young was a visitor for a few days during the week.

Mr. and Mrs. Noall, their children, Miss Clara Noall and Miss Worthington drove up here and spent Tuesday.

Mrs. A. McDonald and her family, who have been guests of Mr. O. C. Bergback at Hazel Dell during the summer, returned to Salt Lake during the week. After a few days in the city they will go to their home in Chicago for the winter.

Miss Hornaday of Oklahoma was a guest at the Bonhomie for a few days during the week. While here she made the climb to Pine Top.

Misses Myrtle Fowler, Ruth Hammond of Omaha, Margaret Gibbons, "Nan" Gibbons and Mr. M. B. Holland of Omaha spent Wednesday in the canyon, and then drove back to town in the four-horse stage by moonlight.

A merry party, composed of Alice Richards, Mina Taylor, Gil Richards, Willard Richards, Zabriskie Richards, Creston Richards and several friends, picnicked in the grove Wednesday. They had an impromptu dance in the evening in the Bonhomie, and then drove back to Salt Lake by moonlight.

Mr. and Mrs. L. C. Smith and family arrived on Thursday for a ten days' sojourn. They are at the Birches.



Franklin Richards Smith was the manager for Salt Lake Knitting Works, owned by the Joseph F. Smith Family.



Joseph Nelson headed the Salt Lake Business College. Joseph was an early owner of Saltair Resort a popular bathing, swimming and boating resort for the Salt Lake Valley.

Mountair Family Legacy cabins represent every  
decade from 1890-1970



Mountair Canyon is currently under study for designation of the Mountair Legacy National Historic District. This effort is to protect and educate about the architecture and culture and its significance in the development of Utah and its history.

“Never Past the Gate”  
a novel by Emma Lou Thayne



Drawings by Shelley Thayne Rich

Much of this information is based on the oral histories, genealogy and newspaper publications.



## Mountair History

Think about a seven layer cake that each layer was made by a different chef. How do you explain the flavor and complexity of each layer. The seven generations of family history's that are found in Mountair Canyon are a fascinating look at the growth of the Salt Lake Valley. Family cabins that represent every decade from 1890 through 2020. But also the families who enjoyed the canyon in dugouts and tents. The Wasatch Mountains inspired these families and it is impossible to go anywhere in the valley without seeing the impact that they made. There is a lot of history still to be shared, we think this is the first of many volumes to be written.

Mountair Legacy Historic District 2023