

## Someone had to pay for the dead horse

by Bart Anderson - Bart's Ballads

Brigham Young had three nephews, Franklin, John R., and Joseph Watson Young, who played a part of Dixie history.

Franklin was called by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to settle Grafton in 1861. He was an experienced bishop, but, by 1862, he said "...his efforts to establish the Grafton settlement were not appreciated." He resigned from being the Grafton bishop and moved to St. George. He was later called to settle in the Bear Lake Valley.

Joseph Watson Young was the beloved president of the St. George LDS Stake and the right hand of Erastus Snow. In 1873 he contracted "bilious remittent fever" and began to waste away. He felt hot weather caused it. On June 7, 1873, he was traveling north for cooler temperatures. He got as far as Harrisburg on his way north when he died.

John Ray Young came to Dixie in 1861 and set up a farm in Santa Clara, however it was washed away. A year later, he responded to the call to go back to Omaha, gathering "poor" pioneers while helping them cross the Rocky Mountain. He also returned to Santa Clara with the first "cotton" processing equipment.

In the 1880s he was called to Fruitland, N.M. As he entered the area, he noticed the education of the children was completely neglected. He desired a schoolhouse for the children and conducted a campaign among the residents to obtain funds for a schoolhouse. John R. Young was successful in getting the "School Proposition" for a county vote. The vote was taken but the issue was rejected by the majority of the voters.

But ironically, the following week after the school-bond was rejected, the county decided the area could improve the strain of their race horses. The men of the county called a special meeting and it was decided the matter should be brought to a vote of the citizens as to whether or not the county should secure a loan to purchase a race stallion.

The prize race horse was purchased at an outlandish price. The county floated a loan to buy the horse but their jubilation did not last long. The few colts produced were of a poor quality and said "to be so poor as not even to pull a wagon". And in a short time the stallion sickened and died. It took years to pay off the county debt of their "dead horse".

John R. Young said: "Anyone who will put their horse racing ahead of their childrens' education is just no very up-and-coming. I do not want to stay among such people and bring up my children!" And in a very short time moved away.

Among the few things more expensive than an education these days is the lack of it.

Bart Anderson is a columnist. The opinions expressed are the writer's and do not necessarily represent those of The Spectrum.

Illustration: The town folks taking a vote to buy the dead horse of Fruitland, N.M.