

MIDVALE - A CENTURY OF REMEMBERING

by Kathy Carr

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As the wagon caravan wound its dusty way down the last rocky hill, on that particular day in 1881, the green valley must have looked like a haven to the tired travelers.

Tall cottonwood trees along the winding Weiser River welcomed them with cooling shade. The promise of things to come, the fertile land, waiting to be tilled, so enticed the Towells that they decided to stay, although the Lindsays soon hitched up and continued toward Indian Valley, their chosen destination.

What would they have thought, could they have looked one hundred years into the future? I think they would have been pleased. For Middle Valley and Indian Valley have remained solid-citizen farming and ranch communities, with many of their descendants staying right on, carrying their high ideals and industrious work habits on down through the generations.

So much of the world has gone bad. So much of it is cemented over and filled with violence. But our valleys are filled with peace, busy purposeful days, and quiet restful nights, sparked by stars, and cricket calls. There is the uncrowded feeling of belonging to the land.

Aren't you all thankful to be living in Idaho?

On Saturday, August 15, over 600 descendants of Middle Valley pioneers, plus many friends and visitors will converge on Midvale to help celebrate the passing of a century. And from the time the parade with its honor cargo of "first families" starts, at 10:00 a.m., right up to the 9:00 p.m. square dance, there will be a round of visiting, wagon and buggy rides, tours, and reminiscing - something to do for everyone with pioneer dress the mode of the day.

And don't forget dinner in the Park!

What an experience it is to come back to one's roots.

What would it have been like to be the first white family in Middle Valley? And when did it happen?

J.H. Reed, who apparently felt "crowded" and preferred seclusion, thought he had found just the place in the Fall of 1868, when he brought his family into the small valley tucked like a bowl among towering mountains, with bunch-grass and sage-covered hills stretching away from the river.

Even the Reeds were not the first to inhabit the valley, for the Indians has long ago discovered its usually mild weather and abundance of game.

Without a chance to raise a garden, the Reeds quickly built a small cabin . . .