



Cedar City Chapter of Sons of the Utah Pioneers

DUP-461 EN-3 Johnson's Fort on Jones Lane west of Tomahawk Drive, Enoch, Utah

QR to get to this Location:



QR to List of SUP Monuments: QR to get to this page:

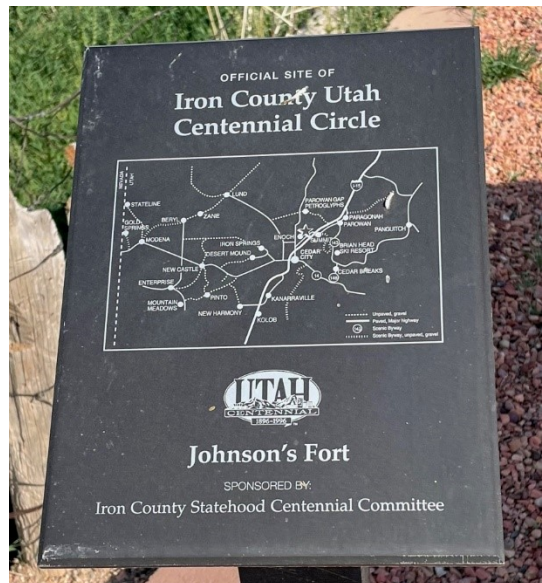


Longitude: -113.032222; Latitude: 37.771944; Elevation 5,510'; DUP-461 En-3; Johnsons Fort



Daughters of Utah Pioneers #461 Johnsons Fort erected 1991 by Iron Company and Johnson Fort Camp

At the same location is an Iron County Utah Centennial Circle marker, sponsored by the Iron County Statehood Centennial Committee. These plaques were part of the Utah Centennial Celebration, 1896-1996. There are 24 of these Centennial Markers in the County.





Johnson's Fort: During the summer of 1851, a small company of men was exploring this area and discovered the springs on the bench one-fourth mile to the east. Joel H. Johnson was so impressed with the spot, that he sought and received permission from George A. Smith to build a house and corral at the springs and care for the cattle belonging to the settlers of Iron County. In 1854, Brigham Young called other families to assist in this endeavor and to help build a fort for protection. The fort was named after Johnson who built his home inside the fort.

The fort was 10 rods square (165-foot X 165-foot). The 9-foot high walls, made of clay, were 2 ½ feet thick at the bottom and 19 inches thick at the top. There was a large gate made of logs on the north side and a smaller gate on the south. For drinking water a well was dug in the center of the fort. Apple orchards and vegetable gardens were planted. A large two-story building, called the Bastion, was built with portholes for defense. Some of the cottonwood trees planted near the fort, now enormous, survive to this day.

In 1881, the fort became a mail station between Milford and Silver Reef. Ownership of the fort has changed many times. It was always a favorite gathering place for holiday celebrations like the 4th and 24th of July and May Day.

Some remains of the fort are visible one-half mile north of this marker.

Cedar City Chapter of Sons of the Utah Pioneers



Joel Johnson was born in Grafton, Massachusetts, March 23, 1802 and grew up in a religious family. He wrote in his journal:

“I was so carefully instructed by a pious mother, that I dared not do anything that would displease the Lord or my parents. As soon as I could read, she gave me a small New Testament which I carried in my pocket. I neglected few opportunities of studying it, and often committed some of it to memory.

My attention was early drawn to the ancient ordinances and blessing of the Church. I believed, as far as my limited comprehension allowed, in baptism for the remission of sins, in laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and in signs following the believer, as mentioned in Mark 16: 17 & 18: ‘And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.’

I believed that the order established by Jesus and his apostles in the primitive church was the only true one. I sought among the sects for it, but found it not.

“My testimony for the last forty-eight years has been and still is: That I know that God lives, for I have felt his hand and heard his voice, and I know also that the dispensation or fullness of the Gospel brought forth through Joseph Smith is God’s handiwork!” -Joel H. Johnson

That all changed in 1830 in Ohio when he met missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Shortly after meeting the missionaries he was baptized and called to preside over about 100 members of the Church in Amherst. Johnson would spend the rest of his life engaged in spreading the message of the restored gospel. In 1832 he served a mission to New York. In 1835 he was sent to Ohio and parts of the South.

When he arrived in Utah with other early members of the Church, Johnson was active in the organization of a government and was elected to the House of Representatives. Brigham Young sent him to assist in forming settlements, including Parowan and Enoch.

In 1853 Johnson operated a sawmill in Mill Creek Canyon as part of his church calling. It was at this time he wrote the lyrics to “High on a Mountain Top”. The lyrics came to Johnson as he glanced up at Ensign Peak considering the words of Isaiah:

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, ‘Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the god of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: . . . He will lift up an ensign unto the nations . . . He lifteth up an ensign on the mountains. . . .” (Isaiah 2: 2-3, 5:26, 18:3)

<https://www.thetabernaclechoir.org/articles/joel-johnson.html>

220314_DUP-461_EN-3_Johnsons_Fort.pdf