



Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard

October 5, 2016

Standing near the corner of First North and Main Street, the home of Helen Payne Winget Richey is an island of history among its more modern neighbors. A large, ancient sugar maple in the front yard shades the well-kept lawns and a sign near the porch reminds us of the owners past and present. (The sugar maple has actually been tapped and used to make maple syrup.)

This two-story home constructed of brick has always been a showcase in Fillmore.

Years of modernization has brought normal changes like indoor plumbing and well-insulated windows, but the overall historic architecture remains intact. A comparison of before and after picture shows the metal awning in place of the balcony. Plans for one day restoring the old balcony are just one the present owner has in mind.

Recently I spent an enjoyable afternoon with Mrs. Richey and her son Mike Winget. I was impressed with book after book of genealogy and important letters and other documents Helen has collect over the years as well as dozens of family pictures, most well labeled for future generations to know who they are looking at. What a treasure trove of history! She also told me story after story of her family's past. I was overwhelmed with all of the information.

The home was built in 1877 and the builder and first owner of the home was Thomas Callister, Helen's great grandfather. Thomas was born in 1821 on the Isle of Man and was first person baptized in the Nauvoo Temple. He married Helen Mar Clark, the sister of his first wife Caroline. They were married by John Smith, who was Joseph Smith's uncle.

The following February they were forced to leave Nauvoo. The company began in the morning to cross the Mississippi on the ice, but by afternoon when the Callister's crossed, the ice had broken up



Sign in front of home



People in front of the old Thomas Callister home:
Back row on the left, Amasie Lowder, on the right Porter Hatton and in the center his wife Zina
Front row: Thelma Trimble, William Eber Hatton, Lafond Trimble, Helen Mar Callister, Florence Hatton, Lloyd Trimble, Catherine E. Hatton and Mildred Trimble

and they had to use rafts which were tossed from one chunk of ice to another.

They made their home in a covered wagon in Winter Quarters for over a year and that is where their first daughter was born. She was named Helen Mar after her mother.



Thomas Callister home as it looks today

In 1861 Thomas was called to go to Fillmore shortly after crossing the plains and became bishop here in Fillmore, serving for 16 years as well as serving as Stake President. It was my privilege during my afternoon's visit to read a copy of the letter from Brigham Young calling him as Bishop. On December 3, 1880, Bishop Callister's funeral was held in Fillmore. Among the speakers was Chief Kanosh. Bishop Callister has throughout his time in the area been instrumental in keeping peaceful relations with the Indians.

The descendants of Thomas and Helen Mar Callister at the time of her death in 1917 was an enormous group of people including 12 children, 81 grandchildren, 178 great-grandchildren and 15 great great-grandchildren.

Among their children was a daughter Catherine who married William Eber Hatton. It was this couple who were the next residents of the home. This couple had a daughter named Hazel who married William Clark Payne and they were the third couple to reside in the home. Mr. Payne, Helen's father, served as deputy sheriff in Fillmore for many years.

William and Hazel's daughter Helen is the present owner of the home. She lived here and raised her family of four sons with her first husband Lono Winget. After he passed away she married Darrell Richey and they also enjoyed the home.

It is interesting to note that while many homes passed from father to son, this one has been passed on to daughters. In reading the names of the owners, one would think the home had left the family because of the different surnames of the owners. Thanks to the clever sign in front of the home, visitors soon realize what really happened.

The property the home is on was once much larger and contained a big wooden barn in the location where the car parts store is today. Helen tells of the many memories on playing there as a child. If anyone has a picture of this barn, please contact me.

My sincere thanks to Helen Richey for the great afternoon's conversation and for setting such a great example to all of us of preserving family histories.