



The Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard
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The Face of Fillmore takes a look this week at early transportation in Fillmore.

Transportation is the lifeblood of every community, whether to transport goods or people to their destinations. For nearly two years after the pioneers came to Fillmore, there was no railroad west of the Missouri River and the only mode of travel was by wagon of some type.

One of the first things people did was to build roads to link them with the outside world as well as to supplies of lumber and stone to use for building the homes and other buildings.

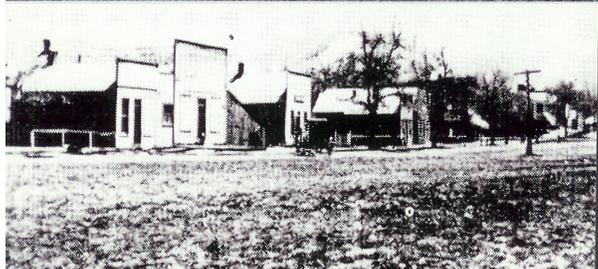
The first road into Fillmore was broken in 1849 when Partly P. Pratt was commissioned to lead a party into central and southern Utah to investigate possible locations for settlements. This early road became the route for freight wagons after the original towns were settled. It also brought later settlers to Fillmore and the legislature to its one and only session held in the Territorial Statehouse in 1855.

It is this transportation of people which we will take a close look at. Following the first settlers with their wagons and teams, visitors and travelers through Fillmore were brought here mostly by stagecoach.

The stagecoach would drop off passengers at their respective hotels, then the horses were taken to the livery stable behind the Robison Hotel where the firehouse is now located. Drivers spent the night in the Robison Hotel then picked up their passengers the following day to travel on to their various destinations.

The Roper Barn on the south end of town is part of that history. Moved there several years ago by Francis Kelly, part of the current barn was actually part of the old livery stable.

Early streets and roads were not nearly as smooth as the ones we enjoy today. This picture of early Main Street



shows the rutted, dirt surface. Take a close look and you will see that the traffic also had to dodge power poles.

With the invention of cars, busses to transport groups of people soon followed.

Long time residents of Fillmore will remember the Café Ilene, where the busses stopped and meals were eaten. Later the stop was at the Truck Stop Café on the north end of town, but bus service to Fillmore was discontinued years ago.

At one time there was even railroad transportation to Fillmore on a spur from Delta. The depot pictured here when it was a busy place is still standing west of town about ½ mile south of the Flowell Road. The railroad service began in about 1918, coincidentally very close to the same time as electricity was brought into Fillmore.

The depot property was purchased recently by a family who has plans for its refurbishing, and once again we see people with their plans to keep historic Fillmore alive and prospering.

