



Face of Fillmore

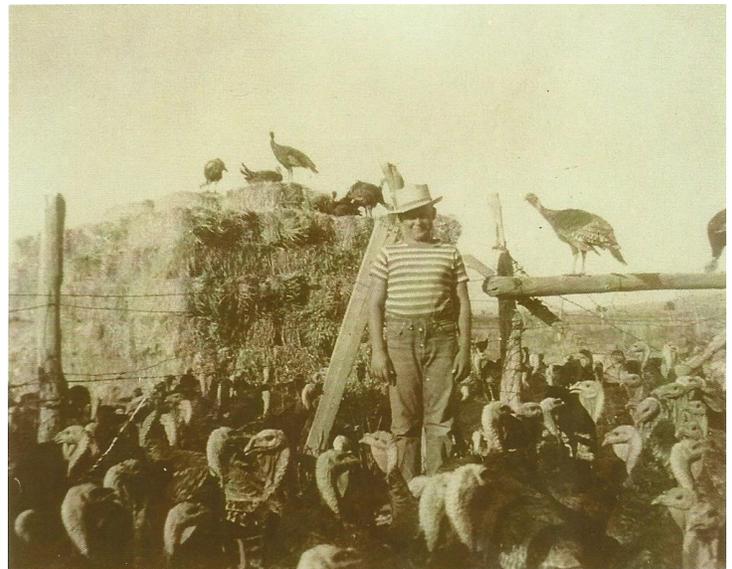
By Sherry Shepard
September 21, 2016

From time to time I begin to wonder where I can possibly find more historical places in Fillmore and then someone always seems to come to my rescue.

Fortunately, in a very busy month in my life, I received a phone call from Chad Carling, telling me about the turkey farms west of Fillmore. He sent me a detailed account of the people involved and some of the activities there. It seemed a shame to change anything, when he told it all so well. Because of that, this week's Face of Fillmore was written by him. Thanks so much for helping me out.

Turkey Farms of Flowell in the late 1940's

Claude Carling's ranch was located five miles west of Fillmore, and Alonzo Huntsman's ranch was on the southwest corner of the Clear Lake Junction heading west on the main road to Flowell. The Carling's and the Huntsman's built two large chicken type coupes on the ranches and installed several brooder heaters, which kept the one-day-old turkeys warm. Several hundred of these one-day-old turkeys were trucked in from California in a temperature-controlled truck and delivered to the two ranches. When the turkeys were nine weeks old they left the coupes to go out to the fields to eat grasshoppers. They had to have a herder with them at all times to keep them together and to keep the coyotes away. The herders lived in a camp wagon and put lanterns out at night to keep the coyotes away. I was a herder for the Carling ranch. My dad bought a 1931 Ford Model A pickup from Lauren Warner that I used for turkey support, water, and feeding. Harold Huntsman was the herder for the Huntsman's ranch and moved the turkeys much like we did. There was always well water in the ditches for the turkeys. In the early fall, we fed the turkeys ground corn and grain to get them ready to sell for the Thanksgiving market. Special trucks came from Gunnison to pick up the turkeys for the market.



Chad Carling as a young boy on the turkey farm

Alonzo Huntsman was my teacher in high school and his son, Blaine, was also a teacher in the Salt Lake area. Alonzo and Blaine went to Harvard University. Blaine and his son, Jon R., worked in the summer on the Huntsman Ranch. One of my good friends was Scott Huntsman; we hunted pheasant and ducks together. One day Scott, Jon R., and I went duck hunting at the Willard Hansen Ponds and the Huntsman's turkeys were in the area. Mankind knows Jon Huntsman today worldwide for his charity. Jon, being a man of integrity, sold his company for several million dollars and sealed it with a handshake. There were complications, and a great deal of time dragged on before final settlement. In the meantime, Jon's company nearly doubled again in value. The purchaser

said, “Jon, it’s only fair we renegotiate the deal.” Jon said, “I gave my word on this transaction and I’m not going to go back on my word.”

I remember one day working at the Huntsman ranch, in the 1940’s when the Fillmore railroad station agent delivered a Western Union telegram to Alonzo; it was from the war department, “Your son, Clayton Huntsman, was killed in a plane crash. Body will arrive tomorrow.” Later Alonzo told me how Clayton was killed. Clayton was a pilot in the U.S Army Air Corps in World War II, flying a T6 Aircraft Trainer in some area in the west. The plane started to have engine trouble and Clayton was looking for an area to bail out. He was near a grade school and tried to avoid the school, but by that time the plane was too low to bail out and he made a crash landing in a field. Clayton sacrificed his life and is buried in the Fillmore Cemetery. Scott Huntsman went to the University of Utah and became a geologist and worked as an engineer on the dam at Lake Powell. Scott Huntsman is also buried in the Fillmore Cemetery.