



Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard
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As you drive south on Main Street in Fillmore crossing Second South and looking to the east side of the street, you will notice a few cement steps leading up from the main sidewalk and through an old gate.

The subject of the Face of Fillmore this week takes a look at the past beyond that gate.

Not long after the turn of the 20th century, a masquerade ball was held in the Territorial Statehouse, a common event for the day. The couples, young and old, came wearing their masks and enjoying exchanging dances throughout the evening. Fannie Dearden was there with a group of friends and found herself especially enjoying dancing with a young man dressed as a Dutchman complete with wooden shoes. At the appointed hour the masks were removed, and she found she had been dancing with Charles Ashman. She was shocked to have been enjoying dancing with “an older man”. (He was six years older than she was.)



Old picture of Charles and Fanny Ashman home

The age difference obviously made little difference as time went on. The couple fell in love and were married on May 27, 1903 at the home of Bishop Neil Stewart in Meadow.

This marriage brought together original pioneer families.

Charles was the son of John and Ann Steele Ashman who built the home at 185 North 200 West. (Many will remember this as the residence of Ula Maycock.) Mr. Ashman was a stone mason. The home was built in 1867 of rocks carried by hand from the creek bed, put in place and stuccoed over.

Fanny was the daughter of Thomas and Charlotte Davies Dearden. Her original home was a log cabin at 185 West 200 South, which has been occupied by family members since it was built in 1865.

The couple moved into the brick home on Main Street in Fillmore complete with the gate that still remains today. The home was surrounded by a beautiful yard, lawn and flowers which Fanny especially loved. There were several trees including box elder, cherry and walnut and Fanny's favorite flower, Black Eyed Susans. There are even a few of her lilac bushes still alive.

Charles was a hard worker and worked in a local service station.

The couple was blessed with seven children: Charles, Everett, Albert, Dale, Lucille (Jense), Thomas and Elvin.

Sadly, Charles became very ill at an early age and after being bedridden for months, died in 1929. This left Fanny with the children to raise. Some were already on their own but three were still in school. Life was not easy for her, but she worked hard and lived out her life in their family home.

In recent years, Kary Kesler and his wife Susan have acquired the property and plan to build a new home there in the near future. Kary took me to the property where we looked at what is left of the old home. He told me that he has memories of mowing Fannie's lawn and others in town told of picking apples for her. The young people of that generation enjoyed her company and helping her with her yard.

With a little imagination, one can tell the outline of the old home and see the remains of some of the cement work. It will be a great location for the new one that will take its place.



Old gate to Ashman yard



Remains of old Ashman home