



The Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard
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The Face of Fillmore this week looks at the family connections of the home at the corner of Third West and the Flowell Road. Located at 280 West 400 North, this is the home of the Carl Peterson family and has belonged to their extended family since it was built in the 1800's.

The home was constructed of red brick made here in Fillmore. The builder and owner was Franklin Cooper, who earned his living making bricks, and he did the work on the home himself. Originally, it consisted of two rooms downstairs and two rooms upstairs, with a flat front to the home. This was a common style of the day.

Here Franklin and his wife Vilate Brunson Cooper lived with their five children; one son and four daughters. When Duane, their youngest, was still in elementary school, Franklin died, leaving Vilate to raise their young family alone.

Fortunately for Vilate, she lived in a neighborhood of family members. Her sister Evelyn, her husband Edward Peterson and their large family lived just to the east, and her father Seymour lived diagonally across the street to the southwest.

This Seymour Brunson is the grandson of the famous Seymour Brunson who was the bodyguard to Joseph Smith in Nauvoo. When the older Seymour was dying, he was taken to the home of Joseph Smith because he needed a quieter place to rest comfortably in the last days of his life. His son, also Seymour, crossed the plains with his mother and other family members and eventually came to Fillmore. It was the third Seymour who lived in the red brick home across from his daughter Vilate. After his family had grown and his wife passed away, he lived alone for years and was often looked in on by the relatives in the neighborhood.

The Franklin Cooper home was purchased from "Aunt Vilate's" son Duane by Carl and Ivie Peterson about 1990, years before his retirement from the military. Carl was the son of Edward and Evelyn next door and was anxious to move back to his hometown. Vilate continued to live in the home until she was no longer able to stay alone in it and Duane's family enjoyed spending extended periods of time there, as well.

Carl and Ivie did extensive remodeling to the home before moving in, including the addition of a kitchen, bathrooms, and a living room to the north of the original structure. They added attractive siding to the home and also dug a basement under the new section for another large family room and a bedroom. The old section of the home still has its original pioneer era staircase and has not lost that historical touch many homeowners try to maintain and in doing so preserve our pioneer heritage.

