



The Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard
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The lights of Christmas are brightening the Face of Fillmore once again. As the Christmas decorations have been attached to the new light poles, we are all excited to a great new look this Christmas. The lighting ceremony took place Saturday, November 28th with the annual program of Christmas favorites sung by the Fillmore Middle School Sixth Grade Chorus. A stroll through the winter wonderland of lights in the Territorial Statehouse Park is highly recommended. This is certainly the time of year that the Face of Fillmore sparkles the most.



Accounts of Earthquake 108 Years Ago

While reading through some interesting articles about early Fillmore, I stumbled on a natural event that happened 108 years ago and, if the epicenter had been closer, might have altered the Face of Fillmore.

Small earthquakes are recorded in the area on a frequent basis, but those large enough to be felt and do any damage are few and far between.

The first earthquake was recorded by the early settlers in the spring of 1896.

On November 14, 1901, a larger quake shook many locations in the state. The epicenter was recorded at near Mt. Baldy in the Tushar Mountains above Beaver. The main damage done was in the town of Beaver and others in the Sevier Valley, although the quakes were felt all over the state of Utah and into Nevada. While there was extensive damage in some areas, there was no record of serious injuries or death.

The written account of the temblor's effects in Fillmore recorded in the flowery writing style of period is quite entertaining:

“ RAN SCREAMING

Women at Fillmore Rushed Frantically Into Streets in Night Robes

Fillmore, Utah, Nov. 14--An earthquake of considerable violence visited this city last night at 10:45 o'clock. Windows, doors, dishes and individuals got a severe shock. In many instances the plaster was shaken from the houses and it was almost impossible for a person to maintain a standing position.

Some women ran screaming into the street, others attired in their night robes ran for their neighbors, while brave men gave unmistakable signs of fear. There were three distinct undulating waves, accompanied by a roaring noise, the duration of which has been variously estimated at from one to three minutes of time.”
[Deseret Evening News; November 14, 1901]

Another account was slightly different, although interesting to read:

“FILLMORE AGITATED
Women in Garb of Night Fly From Tottering Houses

Fillmore, Utah, Nov. 14--This place was visited by an earthquake last night that terrorized the people and wrought considerable damage to buildings, glassware and dishes. There were three distinct shocks at about 10:45, within a space of not less than three minutes. The earth seemed to have a waving motion and there was a roaring noise that added much to the terror of the experience. The worst shock came first; women ran screaming from their houses attired only in their night clothes and the bravest of the men showed unmistakable signs of fear. Windows were broken on all sides and many buildings were more or less injured, but so far as known no individual was hurt. “

I couldn't help but get a chuckle out of the description of what happened in Kanosh, as well.

KANOSH
Echoes Of The Earthquake Sensational Experiences

Special Correspondence.

Kanosh, Millard Co., Nov. 14--Our little town last night had a very enlivening experience from quite a severe shock of earthquake which took place at 9:35 o'clock. Many people were much frightened, some jumping from their beds and rushed screaming into the streets for help, while others shouted fire, fire! One widow lady, Mrs. Ida Penny, went into hysterics, and remained in that condition for hours. It is quite amusing to listen to the ludicrous experiences of some people. So we will simply narrate our own.

We were sitting reading the "News", wife nearby had dropped her paper into her lap and entered the land of nod. Suddenly a noise like unto a band of cats galloping upon the porch; this soon developed into the rush and roar of stampeded cattle, then the whole house appeared to be dancing upon troubled waters, the chandelier swung like the pendulum of a clock, the glass and crockeryware danced and chattered. This continued for several seconds, ample time for wife to be very wide awake, jumping to her feet and looking for the source of disturbance, then exclaiming, "It's an earthquake," and looked at me and added, "How white you are." And the general action and effects upon the various people seem to plainly indicate that if the modern revivalist could command a little earthquake rattle there would be a great scramble for the penitent seat.

[Deseret Evening News; November 15, 1901]

Even at that early date the people of Utah were being warned about the “big one” that would hit the Salt Lake Valley. Again from the Deseret News: "Grove Karl Gilbert of the U. S. Geological Survey, has repeatedly declared that the western base of the Wasatch is on an earthquake line, and that Salt Lake City is likely to suffer from earthquake shocks at any time.”

Luckily, there has never been a quake in Fillmore or nearby serious enough to alter the Face of Fillmore.