



The Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard
June 4, 2014

Memorial Day is a time for remembering those who have served our country and especially those who have paid the ultimate price for that service. We also remember fondly family members who have gone on before.

I find myself thinking of the beautiful cemeteries I have visited around our state.

Certainly Fillmore's cemetery is among the most beautiful in Utah. We are grateful to Oscar Anderson for planting the stately pine trees that surround it and for the dedicated service from him and his grandsons as they watered each tree by hand before a water system was put in place.

Our thanks goes as well to Rustin Brunson, the current sexton, for his continual work that gives such a well-kept appearance to the our cemetery.

A walk through the cemetery gives one a feeling for those who lived throughout the history of Fillmore and makes the headstone reader curious about the people who are interred there.

In making our annual Memorial Weekend trek, we visited the Roosevelt Cemetery to decorate the graves of my husband's family members – his parents, brother, grandparents, aunts and uncles and a well-remembered cousin. A stop was also made in the Price Cemetery to visit the graves of my parents, my brother who died as an infant and my grandfather who was killed in the Sunnyside Mine Explosion of 1945.

Here in the Price Cemetery, a favorite stopping place is quite a hike from our family plot, but an interesting grave is located there. The monument, obviously donated by a local monument company, tells the story of the people buried at the spot. (Yes, that is plural.) It reads:



C.J. Gunplay Maxwell also known as John C. Carter
Drifted into Green River in early '90's.
Hired as mine guard during the strike in Carbon
County coal mines.
Killed after 1019 by Shoot 'Em Up Bill Hatfield
Or a guard for Castle Gate Mine.

Joe Walker
Cowboy turned outlaw originally from Texas.
Born in the 1850's.
Died Friday May 13, 1898, Hill Creek, Grand
County, Utah
Of wounds received during a gun battle with a
posse.

John Herring also known as Johnny Herron.
Cowboy riding in Wyoming and Utah
Headstones

Birthday probably early 1870's.
Died Friday May 13, 1898, Hill Creek Grand County, Utah
 Killed by posse who mistook him for Butch Cassidy.

 John Montes also known as Jack Swasey.
 Indian cowboy and bronco rider.
 Born late 1800's.
 Died about 1907 of food or blood poisoning.
 Foster son of Charles Swasey family of Green River, Utah

My fascination with headstones began when my brother and I went on a hike some years back to the remote Marsing Ranch on the Price River. Here atop a lonesome bluff overlooking a gooseneck bend in the river is the most isolated grave I have ever visited. Carved into a wood slab behind the monolith are the words:

 Mrs. Annie Bell
 Marsing Born
 July 7, 1877
 Died Jan 11, 1919
 (Note the backwards J's.)

While reading headstones and photographing them may seem like a morbid hobby, it is one you may enjoy as much as I do and is another source of the history of our pioneer heritage.

