



Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard
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Throughout Fillmore's history, several of its early citizens stand out for their contributions to the community.

One such man was Joseph Vickory Robison. As a prominent citizen in our community during the late 1800's, he was mentioned in an early Face of Fillmore as the young man who brought his mother's favorite peonies from their farm in Illinois.

Joseph Vickory was the son of the Joseph and Lucretia Hancock Robison who built the first stone structure outside of the fort, which lies a half block to the north of the Robison Hotel. It is now part of the Spinning Wheel Motel.

Joseph first came to Fillmore in 1854 and a year later was called on a mission to England. Upon his return, he was elected mayor of Fillmore, serving three terms in office.

Deeds to the properties in Fillmore began with Joseph V. Robison, who as mayor at the time, held the deed to every property in town before they were deeded to their individual owners. In reading the old abstracts, it is interesting to note that the property was originally deeded to Mayor Robison by Ulysses S. Grant, President of the United States.

Mayor Robison held many other prominent civic and church positions during his lifetime, including being a representative to the state legislature, senator, probate judge and a member of the stake presidency.

In 1868 he married Martha Jane Olmstead and the couple were the parents of ten children, nine of which lived to adulthood. In 1883, Joseph V. married a plural wife, Elizabeth Wright Marshall Robison, widow of his brother, Albert. A son Joseph A. was born to this union in 1889.

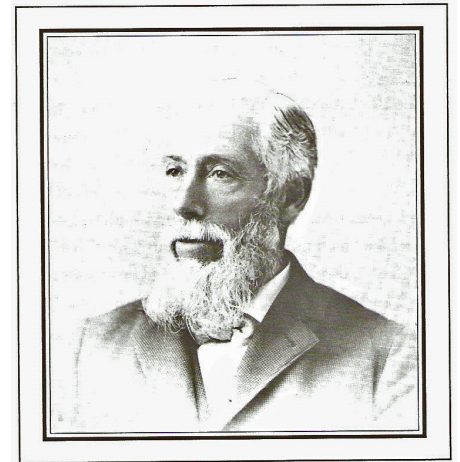


Figure 13. Joseph Vickory Robison, Almon's third oldest brother.



Polygamy was a common practice at the time and Joseph V. was involved in it. He made plans for what to do when the law came to his house. Through a trap door hidden in the kitchen area of his home, an escape tunnel led to the hidden cellar underneath the tithing house next door. This he used to hide from officials when they came looking for him. He was, however, arrested in 1889 but escaped from U.S. Marshals at Juab County, traveling to Arizona where he and his brother Alonzo had livestock interests. He stayed there until 1894.

Joseph V. returned to Fillmore later on where he died in 1914.

While the life of Joseph V. Robison is packed with achievements and adventures, one fascinating aspect of it is lesser known.

When Joseph V. went on a mission to England, he met a man named W.S. Treskett. He persuaded Mr. Treskett to come to Fillmore and teach he and his brother Benjamin the art of tanning leather.



It took a large investment in terms of both time and money to get the tannery operating. A frame and stone building was built in the north end of Main Street. This included a shoe and harness shop.

The fascinating fact about the whole matter is that Benjamin made for his second wife, the first pair of shoes in Fillmore that had a right and left pattern. Before that, shoes for each foot were identical and interchangeable.

And, as you have heard before, that's the rest of the story...