



Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard
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Sometimes ideas for the Face of Fillmore come from unexpected places. Recently, while looking through some papers that had been given to me, I found a letter written by a home owner to a former resident of the same home, asking about its origins. I had already written a column about this home but found a few tidbits that had been omitted. I called the present owner and asked if I could again write about the home.

Samantha Pexton and I met for lunch and over a delicious chicken salad, I found out many interesting details, not only about that home but about other ancestral links Samantha has to Fillmore, it was amazing to visit with someone so enthusiastic about the history of our community.

In January 2015, Samantha bought what most of us know as the Wilcox home on the corner of First West and Fourth North. Samantha had great plans to renovate it and keep its original historic flavor. She was at a time in her life when she needed a project and there it was. She said she had intended to save the home but instead it saved her.



She and her husband, Woody, are presently in the process of redoing the upstairs into a master suite instead of individual bedrooms. It will be interesting to see the finished product.

Getting back to the history of the home, it was built in 1861 by a Mr. Morrison, who, according to some reports, lived there with his family. The actual construction took about three years as he did not have an oven to dry the bricks in. Instead they were sun dried.

Sometime between 1865 and 1867 G. Russell Rogers and his wife Lydia Ann Trumbull Rogers purchased the home and moved in. They had five sons: Joe, Orrin, George, Andrew and Emery. Andrew was born in 1865 in Cedar City and Emery in 1867 in Fillmore. It was between those two sons' births that the family moved to Fillmore.

A few years later, Rogers was called on an LDS Mission. The family had always been strong members of the Church and willing to do anything asked of them, but this was a little too much for Lydia. She felt they had done enough and she and her sons needed Mr. Rogers at home with them. Possibly this was the reason that

after completing his mission, Mr. Rogers never returned to Fillmore. Instead he sent for his oldest son Joe to meet him in Colorado and there the two established homes.

Lydia passed away in 1896, have spent several years alone.

After that the home was rented by several families.

At one time, it was occupied by Andrew Rogers' daughter Lydia and her husband William Bottomfield.

One family that occupied the home during the 1930's was the family of Bill and Freida Hare. At that time, there were two rooms upstairs in the home and two on the main floor with a steep stairway leading from the entryway to the second floor. It also did not have indoor plumbing.

Some of the Hare children were born in the home. Lila was born there in 1937, but she only lived a few months and died of pneumonia, as did her sister Blanche.

The story of Blanche and her twin brother Blaine's birth is extremely unusual. Blaine was born on the family farm a few miles west of Fillmore. After his birth, the mother's labor stopped and she was transported, bed and all, in a pickup truck to Fillmore, where Blaine's twin sister Blanche was born two days later in Fillmore.

In about 1940 Lenore and Arnell Jackson completely renovated the inside of the house. The upstairs banister came from the old Millard County Courthouse, which was torn down about that time. Lenore is the daughter of Andrew Rogers. The home remained in Russell Rogers' name until about 1947 when it was sold for taxes and acquired by Lenore and her husband Claude Holbrook, thus keeping the home in the family. An addition was added to the back of the house by them in 1955.

In recent years Don and Thora Wilcox and their family have lived in the home. They added the gingerbread trimmed porch. With the huge yard to care for, it became too much for Thora, so the home was sold to Troy and Amy Crosland and more recently to its present owner.