



Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard
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Although it is located some twenty-five miles to the south, Cove Fort has definite connections to the city of Fillmore.

As travelers followed much the same route as the present day I-15, the time spent on the road was much greater. There was a need for safe places to stop along the way, which is shown in the fact that towns were often located about a day's ride from the next. The site for Cove Fort was selected by Brigham Young because of its location halfway between Fillmore and Beaver. A town would have been constructed at that location, but the water supply was inadequate to support a sizeable population.

Another reason for the location was the existence of a wooden-palisade fort, Willden Fort, which provided shelter and safety for the work crews who constructed Cove Fort.

One of the unusual features of the fort is the use of volcanic rock in the construction of the walls, rather than the wood used in many 19th-century western forts. This difference in construction is the reason it is one of very few forts of this period still standing.

The assignment to head up the construction to build a fortified way station at Cove Creek was given to Ira Nathaniel Hinckley, grandfather of LDS Church President Gordon B. Hinckley. Ira was born in 1828 in Canada and joined the Church in 1844. Early on in the settling of Utah, he came west. In



Picture of Cove Fort before the restoration



Older picture of the Callister/Hinckley home

1867, while living on his farm in Coalville, Utah, he was called upon to travel south and head up the construction of Cove Fort.

Following his assignment at Cove Fort, Ira Hinckley moved his family to Fillmore where he bought the home across from the present-day National Guard Amory Building from Thomas Callister. The home was begun about 1870 and was not completely finished until after the Hinckley's moved in.

On June 24, 1996, President Gordon B. Hinckley visited Cove Fort to speak to more than 15,000 people who were attending a family home evening fireside. Not far from the fort grounds, he and his wife climbed into a horse

drawn buggy and rode to Cove Fort, leading a mile-long 75-wagon centennial wagon train, which was traveling across Utah to celebrate the state's 100th birthday. He remarked to the crowd, "I don't know of anything else that compares with the coming of our people to the valleys of the mountains. The boldness of bringing thousands of people to this mountain country when they had never seen it, except in vision, was an act of tremendous courage." He also shared several pioneer stories of faith and hardship and told of his grandfather being sent by Brigham Young to build a fort. He told how he carried a love in his heart for pioneers like his grandfather. "How much I want to live worthy of the inheritance that has been handed to us without cost or price of any kind on our part. Let us never forget the cost of our faith."

Each year in early August, a great pioneer event, Cove Fort Days, is held at the fort. This year it happens on Friday, August 3 and Saturday, August 4 from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. This is a great way for family members to experience some of the things our pioneer forefathers did. There will be a pioneer village, exhibits, free horse-drawn wagon rides, entertainment, and food. The opening and closing ceremonies will feature some very special guests.



Ira Hinckley home as it looks today