



Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard

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During the past week, we have had the opportunity to visit Southeast Utah and see some of the Anasazi ruins there. Hanging to the sides of cliffs or tucked up underneath huge overhangs, these dwellings are in some cases very well preserved and fascinating to visit.

Trails to get to some of them were intense for someone like me, but worth the white-knuckled ride. One particular trail we traveled before the ATV club ride was especially “interesting” and had to be constructed by the group to get to the ruin. It was all a plan to scare me, I am sure, as there was a well-traveled dirt road nearby and a main highway within less than half a mile.

At any rate, early Native Americans and their way of life are especially interesting to me.

When it came time to begin this column, I decided to read up on the Indians who lived in the area when the white settlers came. Many comments are made of dealing with them and are mostly very positive.

Anson Call wrote in his journal of October 29, 1851: “The new Pahvant Indians who visited us professed great friendship.”

In a letter to the editor of the Deseret News, Mr. Call reported life in Fillmore and added, “The Indians have visited us frequently and have not disturbed the least thing, to my knowledge.”

One incident took place the year after the settlers arrived. On December 29, 1852, there was some trouble with one of the Indians named Watershub. He had been employed by the King brothers to chop wood, and became dissatisfied with the way he was being treated. Seeing Mrs. King bringing a pail of water from the creek, Watershub followed her and would have gotten into the house if she had not slammed the door in his face. The Indian quickly ran to the window and thrust his knife through the glass. Charles Robison, a brother of Mrs. King, was working in the next room of the cabin. When his sister screamed, he rushed to take the knife away from Watershub. In the struggle, Mr. Robison was stabbed between the ribs. The Indian yelled so loudly that all the men and boys and many Indians, including Chief Kanosh, came running to see what was going on. One Indian, Toatsoche, had a gun but before he could shoot it, Bryon Warner, John Eldredge and Noah Bartholomew grabbed him. Kanosh begged the men to settle the affair peacefully. They agreed that Watershub



should be jailed until they could determine if Mr. Robison's wounds would be fatal. He was confined to the blacksmith shop and a week later he escaped. The Indians were camped near Third South and First West. He hid behind a teepee under some cedar boughs, but a posse recaptured him. This time he was chained and guarded.

A message was sent to Brigham Young, telling him of the incident and asking his advice. On January 27, D.B. Huntington, a famous Indian interpreter, arrived in Fillmore and a conference was called between Kanosh and his braves and the settlers. It was decided that Watershub should receive twenty lashes from one of his own tribe. After the incident, a council was held with both groups and the bonds of friendship with Chief Kanosh and his braves was strengthened.

Certainly the peaceful solutions to this problem and any others were because of the wisdom of Chief Kanosh and his friendly methods of dealing with his new neighbors.