



The Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard
April 17, 2013

To a casual visitor to our fair city, it might appear we are very junky people. Piles of refuse line the streets. It looks like we would have more pride in the Face of Fillmore than to have such eye-sores in front of our homes.

When a person realizes what is happening, you find that quite the opposite is true. Fillmore City has scheduled their annual spring cleanup. Dividing the town into four sections, city crews use large equipment to haul off the unwanted remains of old sheds and other large items as well as the trimmings from spring pruning. This is indeed a great service to all who are endeavoring to make their yards more attractive and is certainly one of the perks of living in this great community. In a larger city, this would be too large an undertaking.

We are reminded of years gone by when Fillmore was recognized for its beautification efforts by then Governor Scott Matheson. This was in 1981 and this spirit of making Fillmore attractive continues as most residents are busy in their yards whenever possible.

Even the earliest settlers to Fillmore built fences around their yards so they could have flowers and lawns without livestock wandering through and ruining them. Picket fences were common in the early years of Fillmore. Some of the early perennials that were first planted by our founding fathers (and mothers) still thrive in the yards of today. An example of this is the peonies which bloom each year near the front porch of the Phil Robison home.

This touching story has been told before but certainly is a great one to repeat as yard beautification projects are at their peak along the streets of Fillmore. It makes a great Mother's Day story, as well.

The family of Joseph and Lucretia Robison left their prosperous farm near Crete, Illinois, with its comfortable home and beautiful gardens to join the Saints on their trek west, taking with them seeds for planting an apple orchard and other seeds and plant starts that would be the beginning of a new life. Lucretia was sad as she drove off, leaving a large field of her favorite peonies or "pinies" as she called them. These were her connection to her childhood home in upstate New York and the father that had disowned her when she joined the Church.



Leaving in the spring of 1854, they arrived in Salt Lake City on July 16th. They camped in the southeast part of the city and reported to Brigham Young. They were soon instructed to go to Fillmore and help the fifteen families already there build the fort. The Robison's were well supplied and were generous with the early Fillmore residents. They planted the first orchards in Fillmore and many of their seedlings were used in the first nursery.

After some time it became necessary for Joseph and his oldest son to ride back to Missouri to obtain supplies and feed for their cattle. While they were there, young Joseph thought what a wonderful surprise it would be for his mother to have some of her precious peonies at her new home. He rode horse back to Crete to their former farm and dug up some of the starts. He packed them in saddlebags and kept them moist on the long trip back to Utah.

It was snowing in Fillmore when they arrived, but he brushed away the snow and planted the starts in a protected spot near the barn. He told his mother nothing about them. In the spring, he was excited to see three green shoots appear. He kept them a secret until the following spring when a few of the large red blossoms appeared. Imagine her surprise as he presented them to her.

This story was told in an earlier Face of Fillmore. If you would like to read past columns, go to www.fillmorecity.org. Choose the one that says Fillmore was Utah's first capital. On the home page, click on community to find a drop down box. The second item is The Face of Fillmore. Click on it to read the past stories. Thanks to Teresa Alldredge for faithfully adding each column to those already there.