



Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard
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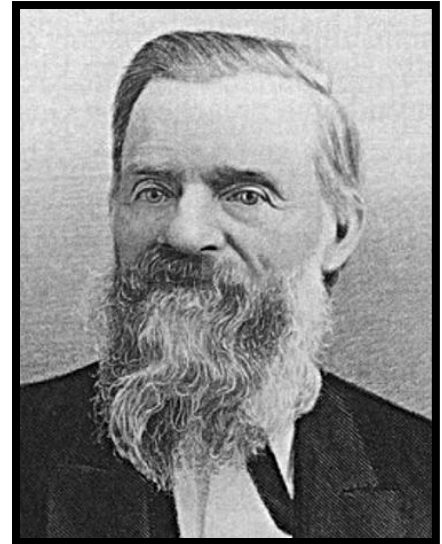
In the past the Face of Fillmore has noted groups of people who have made a difference to life in Fillmore. These have included such people as mayors, sheriffs, doctors, fire chiefs and others who we all consider public servants in our community.

This week we will look at another group who have played an important part in our lives – the postmasters.

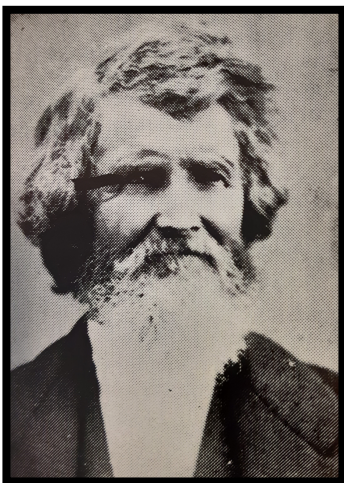
I asked the present Fillmore postmaster, Thomas Gray, if there was a list of the people who had served in that capacity. He went to his computer and printed an impressive list, which I will share.

Upon opening *Milestones of Millard* by Stella Day when I returned home, I immediately found a discrepancy. I feel it is only fair to share both accounts.

According to the United States Postal Service, we find in Postmaster Finder, the list I mentioned. It tells that the post office here was originally established as Corn Creek on December 19, 1851 with Anson Call as the postmaster. The name was changed to Fillmore City on December 3, 1852 with Anson Call still as postmaster. On October 17, 1853 the post office in Fillmore was discontinued but reestablished again on April 12, 1854 with Anson Call still as postmaster.



Anson Call



Levi H. McCullough

In *Milestones of Millard*, Stella wrote: “Early in 1852, a post office was established in Fillmore with Levi H. McCullough as postmaster. The mail service was the only connect with outside world that was had by the early settlers. In those days nothing was more important than the mail service.” She then continued with a list of postmasters up to the time the book was written, when Wells Starley was the postmaster. She also had listed as his “deputies”, Newel Day, Maurine Wilcken, Delores Brunson, and Clara Frampton.

In the book *A History of Millard County* by Edward Leo Lyman and Linda Kay Newell, we read, “Fillmore received a post office early in 1852. Levi McCullough, father of the first Burtner-Delta postmaster more than half a century later, initially held the position.”

From that point on, the list is almost exactly the same with Lafayette Holbrook and Jane McBride left out of the *Milestones of Millard* list.

Following Anson Call or Levi McCullough, whichever you chose to decide, Thomas R. King became the postmaster in 1854, followed by Reuben McBride in 1866, Alfred Henry in 1870, Lafayette Holbrook in 1876, Andrew Henry again in 1877, and John Kelly in 1879.

At this point the official name was changed from Fillmore City to Fillmore in 1884 with John Kelly still as postmaster. In 1893 Ira N. Hinckley became postmaster, Frank E. Hanson in 1897, John C. Kelly in 1906, Miss LaVieve Kelly in 1914. The list notes here that her name was changed to Mrs. LaVieve K. Day by marriage on June 17, 1915.

In 1918 Jane McBride became the acting postmaster, followed by James F. Day as postmaster in 1919, then Horace E. Day in 1921, Wells P. Starley in 1933. In 1960, the present-day post office building was constructed. Newel D. Day became postmaster in 1963, Lawrence Barnes as officer-in-charge in 1969, then Garr B. Ashby in that same position. In 1971 William V. Freeman became the postmaster, then Dan Jones was officer-in-charge in 1983 and Alma Rhodes in that position in 1983. That same year Pauline Elmer became postmaster, then Vaughn Mankin as officer-in-charge in 1992.

Scott Drummond was made postmaster in 1993. During this time door to door mail delivery was begun. In 2005 Cheryl L. Polzin became the postmaster, Sheri L. Cluff and Greg S. Daley were officers-in-charge in 2009 and 2010, then Greg became the postmaster in 2010. Carolann S. Christensen and Ruth Ann Fowler were officers-in-charge in 2011 and then Carolann became the postmaster in 2012. Laurie A. Pace was officer-in-charge in 2013, Linda W. Whatcott was the postmaster in 2014, and Darius J. Joyner in 2019, with the present postmaster being Thomas M. Gray in 2019.

Thomas Gray is new to our area. He was born in Kailua, Oahu, Hawaii and lived for several years in Nevada where he began his postal career in 1995, holding several positions in various communities through the state. From there he moved to Springville, Utah then on to Fillmore in 2019.

A favorite postmaster story involves William “Vern” Freeman who became the postmaster here in 1971 until his retirement 20 years later.

Vern was born in 1916 and graduated from Pleasant Grove High School in 1936. Upon completing high school, he drove gasoline trucks until he married Elda in 1940. After moving to Aurora, he built and operated a gas station and sandwich shop. Following World War II, where he served in the Navy, he renovated and operated a grocery store. On December 31, 1951, Vern was sworn in as postmaster of Aurora. The next day he placed a chain around the existing post office building and used a tractor to slide the building on the ice-covered road one block south and placed it next to his store so he could operate both at once.

Our thanks to these men and women who have been an important part of the Face of Fillmore



Thomas Gray