

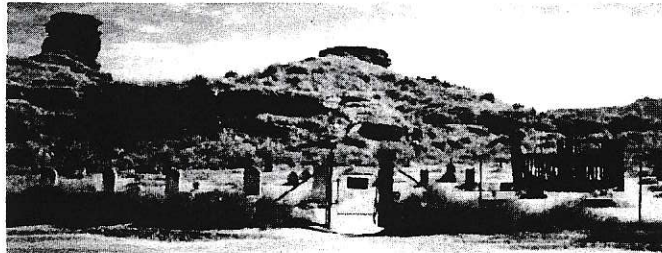
Grafton

1862-1944

Schoolhouse 1886



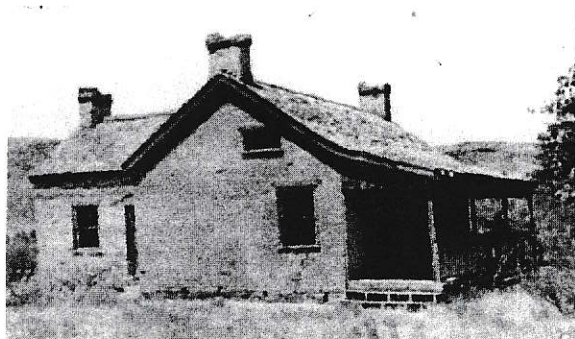
Russell House 1862



Cemetery 1862-1924



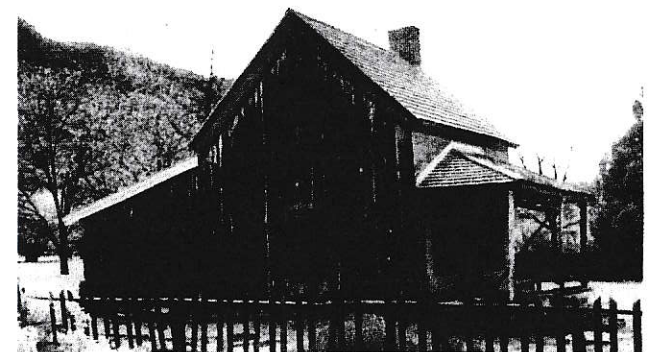
Cabin 1873



Wood House 1877



**Wood Road built by
Settlers 1885**



Ballard House 1907

GRAFTON HISTORIC DISTRICT

Grafton was one of several settlements along the Virgin River colonized under the direction of Brigham Young for the purpose of growing cotton on a commercial scale. Settled in late 1861, early residents planted crops and fruit trees, dug irrigation ditches and built homes and a school-meeting house. The town thrived in spite of intermittent Indian troubles and devastating floods that washed away dams, homes and irrigation ditches. Residents slowly drifted away and the town was finally abandoned in 1945.

Although deterioration and vandalism have taken their toll, five principal historic buildings remain. Still identifiable are a number of outbuildings, foundations, fields, orchards, a system of irrigation ditches and related walls, roads, fences, the remnants of a bridge, a cemetery and Wood Road which ascends the cliff wall.

Several structures were built beginning in the 1920s for movie sets at Grafton. The ruins of only one such building remain.

Following are brief descriptions of the five principal historic buildings and their original owners; the Grafton Cemetery and Wood Road.

1. THE JOHN WOOD HOME - 1877

John Wood was a blacksmith and carpenter and these specialized skills may be the reason that he was called to Grafton by Church President Brigham Young to help settle the struggling community. He took up farming and ranching while living here. The 1880 Census listed five people in the household; John, his wife Ellen and their children - John, Jr., George Henry and Emily. Constructed of soft-fired brick, this one story house is a fine example of a Mormon regional home. An historic split rail fence surrounds the property.

2. THE CHURCH-SCHOOL HOUSE - 1886

This Greek Revival style adobe building was begun in 1886 and dedicated in 1888. The adobe was culled from a mud hole at the west end of town, and the lumber came from Mt. Trumbull in Arizona. The townspeople used this building as meeting house, church and school, as well as a community center for dances and plays. The last classes were taught in this building during the 1918-19 school year at which time the enrollment had dwindled to nine students. The following year students transferred to the school at Rockville.

3. THE ALONZO AND NANCY RUSSELL HOME - 1862

Alonzo Haventon Russell and his wives Nancy Briggs Foster and her sister Louisa Maria Foster arrived in old Grafton in December of 1861. Upon their arrival Alonzo, Nancy, Louisa and their children lived in a large tent which also served the community as a meeting house for church and municipal purposes. Dances were held there as well. Several months later they moved to new Grafton and Alonzo built this one and one-half story, Greek Revival style adobe home for Nancy. He also built a house for Louisa Maria (now gone) across the street and to the west. Following Alonzo's death in 1910, his son Frank and his wife Mary Ellen bought the house for \$200 and a cow. The last people to live in the house, they moved to St. George in 1945.

4. THE LOUISA FOSTER RUSSELL HOME - 1879

In 1866 the town was evacuated because of problems with Native Americans and all of Grafton's residents moved to nearby Rockville for two years. Alonzo and his first wife Nancy returned to Grafton in 1868, however his third wife Louisa remained in Rockville, giving birth to three more children while there. Between 1873 & 1879 Alonzo built this one story, gabled log home for Louisa Maria. In 1879 she returned to Grafton and their six children were raised in this home. Louisa Maria owned one of the first weaving looms in Grafton, having brought it from New Hampshire.

5. THE DAVID AND MARIA BALLARD HOME - 1907

David and Maria Smith Ballard built this home and barn around 1907. It is an excellent example of a Mormon, regional frontier home. David was born at Grafton in 1867 to John Harvey and Charlotte Ballard. He grew up in the adobe home (now gone) across the street and east from the Alonzo H. Russell house. Maria, born at Rockville in 1867, married David in 1891 and they subsequently raised six children in this home. Like most of the other residents at Grafton, David worked as a cattle rancher. Cattle raising had become Grafton's principal industry decades earlier because of the difficulty and unpredictability of growing crops. Electricity, plumbing and other modern utilities were never introduced to Grafton, however, it is said that David and Maria had the only telephone in town.

6. THE GRAFTON CEMETERY - 1863-1924

The Grafton Cemetery is located approximately one-half mile south of the town site. Many of the headstones date back to the mid and late nineteenth century and are badly deteriorated; however, some of the markers are modern replacements, and some are merely movie props. Near the center, a small wooden fence surrounds several stone markers commemorating the Berry family who were killed by Indians outside of Grafton. According to local legend, several loved and respected Native Americans are buried in the cemetery.

7. THE WOOD ROAD - 1890s

Named for its purpose, Wood Road was used by the pioneers to haul large timbers from both the Mt. Trumbull sawmill in nearby Arizona and the mesa above town. The road follows a deep arroya and then follows switch-backs up the mountainside. Excavated into the rocky hillside, the wagon trail is further fortified by numerous rock retaining walls, many of which are located on steep unstable drainage paths. A substantial wall near the mesa is engineered with both wood and rock and remains in very good condition more than one hundred years after it was built. The road is badly deteriorated and is now impassable except on foot.

(NEW) GRAFTON SETTLED 1862

North

Virgin River

Garden Area

Dedicated
July 1888
Church & School

Russell home & barn
Alonso & Nancy
William & Charlotte
Frank & Mary Ellen

Old log
Schoolhouse

Sarah Hastings
lived in one room
house (part dug out)

Constructed for filming of The
Arizona Kid in 1929

Road

Ed & Charles Jones
homes (3 log cabins)
Alton Jones home
Alfred Russell
home
Dove Ballard home
Adobe
Yard
Don Morris
home
Ed. H. Ballard
home

Blacksmith
Shop
Alonso Russell
home
Crooked
Lane
Indians
camped here
John Wood home
(Brick home still standing)
Granery
Log barn
George H. Wood
home (log)

Constructed for
filming of Butch
Cassidy & the
Sundance Kid
John Ballard &
Thad Ballard
home
Lewis Russell
home (log)
Original stonewall
home
J. N. Stanworth
home
James Ballard
home

End of street. Lane continues
on to fields to the west.

Henry Spendlove home
was in fields to west.

Street

Street

Wood & Gibson
Sorghum Mill.

Fields to
East

Fields

POPULATION-1864	1870	1880	1896	1900	1910	1920	1930
164	38	71	104	120	106	46	23

Sketch of Grafton, Utah
about 1900 as recalled by
George H. Wood, Eric Wood Ballard,
Bertha Wood Hall, Ether Wood &
Edgar Gibson on May 31, 1969.

1 W Wood - 4-10-70

Old road goes up
dugway on Grafton
mountain to Big
Plain

Some of the buildings and
structures were standing
and some were gone on
May 31, 1969 when we walked
around the town area to
make this sketch.

(At Wood Reunion
on that date)

To Rockville

Cemetery