

# Commentary on Grafton by Mary Phoenix

*From the book (Pages 32-33)*

*Historical Buildings of Washington County*

*Sketches by Jon Bowcutt*

*Text by Mary Phoenix*

The church and the cemetery are almost all that is left of Grafton, once considered the most promising of settlements in southern Utah. It seemed to have everything in its favor, good soil, water easily available and a breathtakingly beautiful location.

It is interesting to note that many of its early inhabitants did not see this beauty. Fresh from the rolling green hills of England, they could see nothing of beauty about them. Miles Romney, church architect sent by Brigham Young to oversee the St. George Temple construction, was sent to Grafton until the temple work was to begin. He wrote in his diary: "When I studied Milton's Paradise Lost in school I never intended to spend the last part of my life in it."

To those who loved the location it seemed a paradise with constantly changing scenery on all four sides. The raging Virgin prevented the town from ever reaching its full potential. Every year this untameable force washed a little more of its fertile soil away and every year people had to leave to make a living elsewhere until there was no one left.

The church was dedicated in July of 1888. Wanda Truman, one of the last people left who spent their early life in Grafton, says that it is impossible for one not a native to understand what the church meant to the people. They were educated there, they attended church services in it, they held weekly dances and socials there and they were buried from there.

Everyone worked on its construction. Even the adobes were made right on the site. It is a symbol to these people of the Golden Rule as they lived it, where everyone did love their neighbors as themselves. Just looking at this old building can make us feel as these people did.