

Namesake of Millcreek City

Utah's Oldest-Standing Home

HISTORIC HOME OF ROBERT GARDNER, JR 1819 - 1906

The Home

This 1848 home and the former mill nearby are the namesake of Mill Creek Canyon and Mill Creek City. This home and site are architecturally and archaeologically significant as Utah's earliest remaining examples of adobe residential construction, early farm, and early mill operations.



Robert built this adobe home for his family in the winter of 1848 with a riverstone foundation, bark-skinned timbers, and saw-bladed lumber. It witnesses the resourcefulness of early settlers driven by faith and stewardship to forge the tools and create the communities in a newly-settled valley despite rugged terrain, dire hunger, and limited resources.



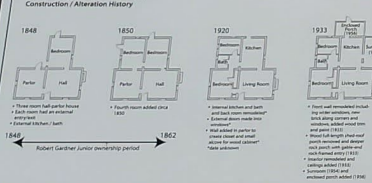
 The original foundation, built with rocks from this creek, still stands with 15" walls and rafters featuring original beams with raw cut-marks hewn by sawblades of the original mill.

The original 3-room hall-parlor home built by Robert Gardner for his family has been continuously-occupied with several additions, renovations, and a full restoration in 2018.

The Robert Gardner Home stands as a living artifact of a man - and a people - with vision and a foundation "Built to Last."



Robert Gardner, Junior House
1475 Murphy's Lane, Millcreek, Utah



In 2012-2018, a full restoration commenced at the request of Al Gardner, a direct descendant, together with the Robert Gardner Trust and Redfish Builders. Seismically-updated with a new roof, triple insulation, and ultra energy-efficient systems, this historic adobe dwelling is now a high-performing masterpiece that will remain Utah's oldest home for hundreds of years to come.



Robert Gardner, Jr. was a trailblazing Scot born near Glasgow, and was a prominent settler, mill-maker, community builder and church leader in the Intermountain West.

This rugged boy lamented that he only had 6 weeks of schooling; but, he learned to read the Bible and feasted the rest of his life. He became the best speller in his school and at age 14, "he cut grain with a sickle or hay with a scythe with the best of men."

He and his family joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and emigrated to Utah in 1847 by way of Canada and Nauvoo. He married Jane McKeown, Cynthia Lovinia Berry, Mary Ann Carr, Leonora Cannon, and had 37 children.

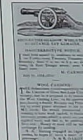
He built multiple sawmills together with his father, Robert Gardner Sr., and his brother, Arhricbald. He sawed timber for the Salt Lake Tabernacle Organ and St. George Temple. He served several missions, settled St. George, was Mayor, Bishop and in the Stake Pres.

George Albert Smith told Robert a "man not to be stopped by trifles." Robert and President Brigham Young once had a sharp disagreement and Brigham declared: "Now, Robert, go off and sulk, and apostatize, and leave the Church." Robert retorted: "Brigham if this was your Church, that is just what I would do. But this is the Church of God, and it is not my Church as much as it is yours, so I shall do nothing of the kind." Brigham admired Robert for his courage; he always called him "to positions of responsibility & trust!"



The Man

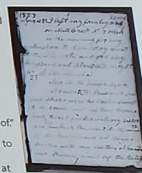
Robert was an excellent journal writer and kept a detailed record of his life and adventures. Despite limited time and resources, he prioritized sharing his experiences through the pen. Much of what we know today about Robert is because of his personal journals.



Regarding life in this area, Robert said, "We moved back to Mill Creek, worked hard... in good spirits to make home pleasant. I had plenty of house room and had my entire family under one roof."

"We ate at one table and had plenty to eat. There were 16 of the family old enough to eat with a knife and fork at the table, besides a number of little o-

"This was the happiest time of my life for all was peace & good feelings."



The Robert Gardner Family Trust is a non-profit 501(c) 3 that allows donations to be tax free.

This Trust is founded to realize Al's vision that the Robert Gardner Jr. Home stands as a living artifact witnessing that our foundation is "Built to Last."

www.robertgardnerhome.com

Living Museum & Tours
This home is on the National &
State Historic Registries

As a symbol and to preserve the past, this home remembers the Legacy of Robert Gardner. It is available for private showings and group tours upon request.

www.robertgardnerhome.com

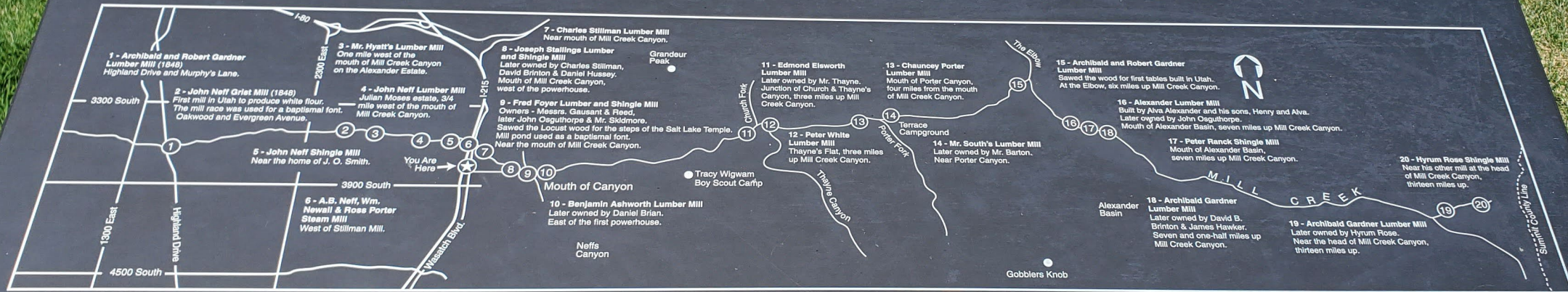
UPPER DISTRICT MILL CREEK PARK

Dedicated 2002

After the pioneers arrived in the Salt Lake valley in the summer of 1847, many spent the first winter in a fort on Pioneer Square. In the spring of 1848, a few families settled on "Upper Mill Creek." Even though the soil was rocky, the creek flowing from the Wasatch mountains gave great promise for the future. The water would be diverted over the land for farming; it would provide power for mills, and above all, furnish clear clean water for their homes.

Major mills along Mill Creek from Highland Drive to the top of Mill Creek Canyon are represented on the map below. Some of these mills were used for many years and modernized several times. Some were used for other processes over time, using the power of the water of Mill Creek. Others stood only a short time. All were built by hand with faith and determination to make the land "blossom as a rose."

This park commemorates the courage, commitment and creativity of those early pioneers who chose to settle in the beautiful pristine wilderness surrounding "Upper Mill Creek." The names in the park celebrate the goodness and generosity of our neighbors and friends and the heroism of our forefathers. The pioneer spirit lives on in the community of the "Upper District Mill Creek."



NO

ERECTED

Official Members
Utah Pioneer
Trails and
Landmarks
Association

64

JULY 4, 1936

PIONEER FLOUR-MILL SITE

445 FEET WEST OF THIS MONUMENT IS THE SITE OF THE PIONEER FLOUR MILL ERECTED IN THE SPRING OF 1848 BY JOHN NEFF, 1847 PIONEER, THE BURRS WERE BOUGHT BY HIM AT WINTER QUARTERS FROM BRIGHAM YOUNG AT WHOSE REQUEST THEY WERE BROUGHT TO UTAH. THE GRANITE BLOCK IN THE MONUMENT IS PART OF ONE OF THE MILL STONES.

THE MILL BEGAN OPERATIONS IN MARCH, 1848, AND WAS THE FIRST IN THE VALLEY TO PRODUCE REFINED FLOUR.

THE BUILDER, NOTED FOR HIS HUMANITARIANISM, REFUSED \$1.00 A POUND FOR FLOUR, FROM EMIGRANTS TO CALIFORNIA, SELLING IT TO THE NEEDY POOR AT 6 CENTS A POUND AND FREQUENTLY GIVING IT TO THOSE UNABLE TO BUY.

DESCENDANTS OF JOHN NEFF, SR., EAST MILL CREEK BETTERMENT LEAGUE
AND THE UTAH PIONEER TRAILS AND LANDMARKS ASSOCIATION

Early East Millcreek Schools



The pioneers of East Millcreek built the log schoolhouse in 1854 on bench land above a creek, later named Millcreek. Drinking water was carried up the hill from the creek. Logs were brought from the nearby canyons, and members of the community furnished the labor to build the school. The children wrote on desks of wide pine slabs with charcoal gathered from a kiln in the canyon. The teacher removed the writing with a wood plane. The school was located on Millcreek Road, about one-half mile east of this site. The building was sold to Moses Wilkinson in 1878 and moved; it became his family home.

The second school was housed in the adobe chapel of the East Millcreek Ward that stood directly across this intersection, perhaps 30 yards east of the mill marker. Completed in 1878, the building housed worshipers on Sunday, young students on weekdays, and people of all ages at social gatherings. A curtain divided its single 25 by 40-foot room to give two teachers their own classrooms. As was the case with the earlier log school, parents were required to pay in cash, produce, or other goods for their children's schooling. Serving students until 1893, the building was razed in 1974.

In 1890 the Territorial Legislature passed the Free School Law, making education available to all children. Three years later, the 33rd District School opened one-half block north of this site on the east side of 2700 East Street. This tax-supported school of brick, with a small bell tower, covered porch, and its date and name embossed proudly on its front, housed an increasing student enrollment until 1910 when the larger Sherman School was constructed.



Salt Lake Canyon Trails Company

No. 502

1999



Sons of Utah Pioneers

LEGACY OF THE BLACK PIONEER

In 1824-26 the first black man came into Utah Territory. He was a trapper for the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. His name was James Beckwith. In succeeding years many black people would follow to contribute to the development of Utah, socially and economically.

In July of 1847, three (3) black men, slaves, were selected to journey with Orson Pratt, Mormon apostle, onto the Salt Lake Valley. They were: Great Fubler, Great Crobo, and Hank Lay, each in turn provided by their owners, James Fubler, William Crobo, and William Lay, members of the pioneer groups of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Utah was a slave state and remained so until the Emancipation Proclamation was effected.



GREEN PLATTS
first to marry in the Salt Lake area.

Many black pioneers followed in pioneer groups. They assisted their owners in directed. When they were freed, the owners assisted them in acquiring land of their own in the Cottonwood, and Fox Union areas. They cultivated the land, built homes and raised families and in every way contributed to the socio-economic growth of the Salt Lake area.

In this, the Mill Creek Area, land was secured by Sylvester Jatten, Samuel Chambers, and Sylvester Perkins. Each proved to be successful farmers who would market their produce to leaders of the community.

In 1888 Paul C. Bennett and his family established their home in the 1200-1400 Ward in Salt Lake City. He became the first black policeman in Salt Lake City.

Our Blackhead Freeman was the first black child born in Utah.

The black pioneers of Utah have left a great and lasting contribution that is remembered and appreciated. Their descendants have excelled in the arts, athletics, and education.

Descendants of these pioneers reside in the East Mill Creek area at this time. They are respected and appreciated neighbors.

Dedicated November 20, 1987

Butler Chapter, Sons of Utah Pioneers

But No. 10

Utah Pioneer
Trails and
Landmarks
Association

NO

ERECTED

57

DEC. 7, 1935

GARDNER'S SAW MILL

WAS ERECTED BY ROBERT GARDNER AND HIS SONS, ARCHIBALD, ROBERT AND WILLIAM, ON WARM SPRINGS STREAM, IN SALT LAKE CITY, OCTOBER, 1847, WHERE THREE BOARDS WERE SAWED. THE MILL WAS MOVED TO THIS SITE IN 1848, PRODUCING THE FIRST COMMERCIAL LUMBER IN UTAH, ON THE FIRST FORMAL GRANT OF WATER FOR INDUSTRIAL USE. LATER, A FLOUR MILL WAS ERECTED A FEW RODS UP STREAM, THESE PLANTS GIVING THE NAME, MILL CREEK, TO THE STREAM AND CANYON. GARDNER'S FORT, DOMICILE OF THE GARDNER FAMILIES, WAS LOCATED A SHORT DISTANCE NORTHEAST, THE GARDNERS RECEIVING THE FIRST PERMIT TO LEAVE THE PIONEER FORT.

UTAH PIONEER TRAILS AND LANDMARKS ASSOCIATION,
THE GARDNER FAMILY AND THE PRIESTHOOD OF WILFORD WARD





THE WINDER WARD AND THE OLD MEETING HOUSE



The Old Meeting House was originally built by the Winder Ward congregation of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Winder Ward was named by Church President Joseph Fielding Smith to commemorate his First Counselor, John Rex Winder. The land for the meetinghouse was donated by William Wallace Cooper in 1904 and construction began in 1905. Much of the work was completed by the congregation. The Winder Ward grew, and in 1928, the congregation completed a remodel and expansion of the building. The remodel included adding north and south wings, a theater in the basement, and a new exterior facade designed in the Colonial Revival style. The expansion was overseen by Bishop Don Carlos Young, and his father, Joseph Don Carlos Young. One of Brigham Young's sons, Joseph was Utah's first professionally trained architect and served as the official architect of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from 1885 to 1935. The Winder Ward's expansion cost approximately \$45,000, a considerable sum considering that the congregation paid for the remodel in the depths of the Great Depression. The Winder Ward's final meetings were held in 1976 after 71 years as a Latter-day Saint meetinghouse. The meetinghouse was sold in 1978 to Edward R. Salzetti who would operate the building as a reception hall.

The Winder Ward building was a monument to the sacrifices of many Millcreek residents and the building. Even after its deconsecration, the building continued to serve many people along the Wasatch Front. The Old Meeting House served as a reception hall for 42 years, from 1978 to 2020, and was host to approximately 6,500 weddings, receptions, and events. This historic marker celebrates that history and makes use of repurposed brick and the capstone from the 1920's remodel.

Sources: Utah Division of State History; Winder Ward History: 1904-1976 by Maurine Stokes Cook (1977); Paul Gardiner



*Dedicated 2023 by the Millcreek Historic Preservation Commission
and Garbett Homes*

Staff Recommendation:

- Utilize the bull skull motif and colonial revival scroll motif used by the former Utah Pioneer Trails and Landmarks Association.
- Use the standard Millcreek font and the Millcreek Logo
- Give attribution.
- Do not include a QR code.
- Use a powder coated stainless steel plate, mounted on a simple monument.
- Incorporate materials on the monument that are similar to the historic asset being referenced.

Historic Preservation Commission Goals

- ☐ Archive what is happening now for future historic preservation efforts
- ☐ Uncover lost history in Districts 1 and 2
- ☐ Educate the public on the importance of history through events and engagement
- ☐ Innovate and find new outlets to communicate our history
- ☐ Include a historical interest story in each newsletter
- ☐ Promote an oral history campaign
- ☐ Find a partner to serve as our repository for historic records
- ☐ Identify partners in general to leverage our time and talents, and seek opportunities to work with them
- ☐ Participate in the 4th of July Parade
- ☐ Organize neighborhood walking tours
- ☐ Call out to the community about specific topics for the HPC to explore

Top 3 Historic Preservation Commission Goals	Votes
Uncover lost history in Districts 1 and 2	4
Educate the public on the importance of history through events and engagement	4
Include a historical interest story in each newsletter	2
Identify partners in general to leverage our time and talents, and seek opportunities to work with them	1
Promote an oral history campaign	1
Innovate and find new outlets to communicate our history	1
Archive what is happening now for future historic preservation efforts	1
Find a partner to serve as our repository for historic records	1



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The Winder Ward building was a monument to the sacrifices of many Millcreek residents and the building. Even after its deconsecration, the building continued to serve many people along the Wasatch Front. The Old Meeting House served as a reception hall for 42 years, from 1978 to 2020, and was host to approximately 6,500 weddings, receptions, and events. This historic marker celebrates that history and makes use of repurposed brick and the capstone from the 1920's remodel.

Sources: Utah Division of State History; Winder Ward History: 1904-1976 by Maurine Stokes Cook (1977); Paul Gardiner



Learn More about Millcreek's History



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