

Erastus Fillerup: A Life too Short

Teacher, Musician and Bridge Builder
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San Diego Unified School District

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- Erastus Kruze Fillerup was born in Lake View, Utah on Feb 16, 1875 of Mormon immigrant parents from Denmark
- He died in Pearson, Mexico on July 2, 1910 at 35 years of age
- His wife of 11 years, Lulu Johnson (daughter of Elmer Wood Johnson) lived until 1969. They had six children, one of which he never saw. She remarried twice
- His wife was his brother's cousin by marriage. Erastus and his older brother Charles married cousins

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- Erastus graduated in 1895 from Brigham Young Academy Collegiate Normal School with a Bachelor of Pedagogy (B.Pd.) degree (Third row – first on left)



Brigham Young University Lee Library University Archives, U073

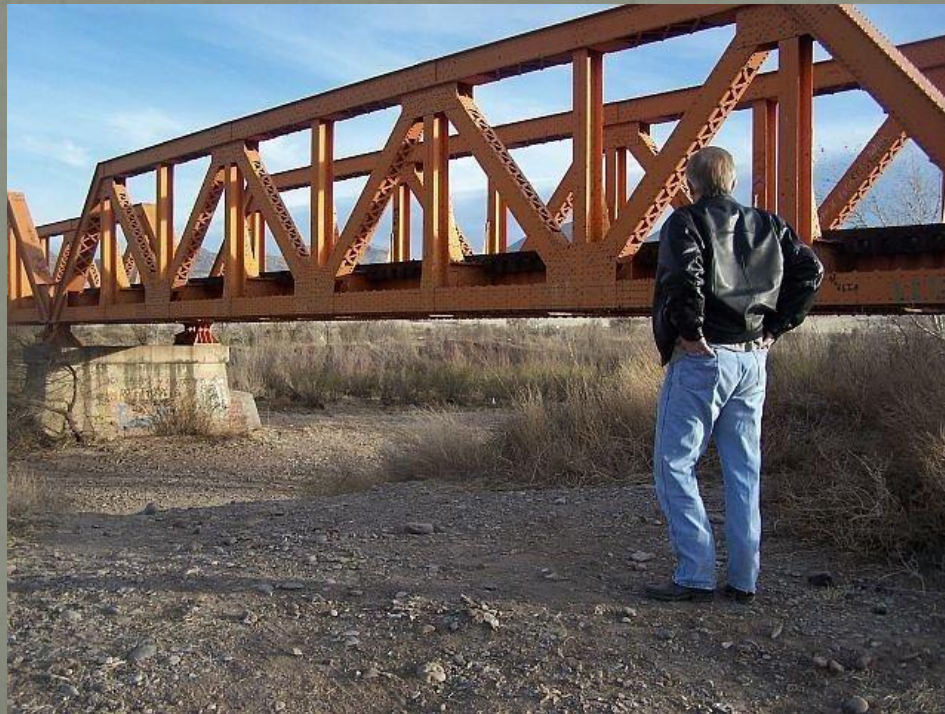
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- Erastus taught music at both the Diaz Academy and the Juarez Stake Academy. His older brother Charles was the principal at both



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- As many teachers must, Fillerup had to supplement his income with summer work. He went to work for the Massillon Bridge Company of Massillon, Ohio helping build the railroad bridge over the San Miguel River in the new town of Pearson a few miles south of Colonia Juarez



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- The Massillon Bridge Company was founded in Massillon, Ohio in 1869
- It merged with the Fort Pitt Bridge Works in 1930
- It is unknown how many bridges it built for Mexican railroads
- The company archives are at the University of Pittsburgh



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- Erastus fell from the bridge July 2, 1910 while working on a scaffolding 17 feet above the river. He fell head first, breaking both arms – dying without regaining consciousness – Deseret News July 15, 1910



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- Erastus Fillerup was buried two days later on the 4th of July in Colonia Juarez. His simple gravestone is unattended in stark contrast to many that surround it. We searched for hours before finding it
- His son Albert was born three days later in Colonia Juarez



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- Erastus Fillerup's descendants populate many rural areas in Utah centered around the small town of Lapoint
- Irva, his last child to die, was buried in Lapoint in 1987
- Speaking of Erastus, The Deseret News informs us:
 - He was a man of unusual intelligence, highly educated, devoted to his family and an indefatigable worker for the good of the community in which he lived
- Even though a young man, he was first counselor to Colonia Juarez Bishop Bentley
- May he rest in peace!