

DUNBAR, EDWARD E. _____.

Born at _____ on _____ 18____;
son of _____ and Catherine (_____) Dunbar.

Listed, New York City Directory, 1845-46, occupation "Agency" at 34-36 Exchange Street, residence, 21 Hammond Street with his mother and brother, Frederick.

Left New York December 23, 1848, on the steamer Crescent City and arrived at Chagres January 2, 1849; crossed the isthmus and left Panama January 31 on the California arriving at the Golden Gate February 28, 1849, completing the first voyage made by a team from New York to San Francisco; made a visit to New York in 1853 but soon returned to California.

In 1854 he organized a party of 20 men to engage in prospecting and mining in the Gadsden Purchase; in the group were Peter R. Brady, Berry Hill De Armitt and James Doten, who afterwards became permanent residents of Arizona; they left San Francisco early in October on the steamer Senator, landed at San Pedro and, after outfitting in Los Angeles, crossed the Colorado River at Fort Yuma and then went on to Sonoyta, in Sonora; Brady had heard of a rich copper deposit at Ajo when he was en route to California in 1852 so they went there and began to develop the mine; in an address before the New York City Travelers Club in 1863 Dunbar said;

"When in Arizona in 1855, as the superintendent of a San Francisco Copper mining company, I opened and worked the Mina del Ajo, located in the desert, surrounded by stupendous mountains, and forty miles from living water. We were supplied with that article from natural and artificial tanks in the rocks, the rain filling them once a year.

I had as laborers about one hundred Mexican peons, most of them pure Indians, the relics of Jesuit Christianization, very good laborers, and belonging to the several Sonora tribes. The labor of a certain week had produced a large amount of very rich ore, and on the Sunday morning following, I happened to pass near a number of the peons resting from their work, and overheard their conversation which turned on the richness of a favor to lead they had named San Eduardo, in honor of the

Superintendent, and yet, a pure Papago Indian, known as Boca Prieta, or Black Mouth, feelingly exclaimed: 'Ah, que lastima este rica mina no pertenesca a nosotros los Christianos!' 'What a pity this rich mine does not belong to us Christians!'

There in that far off, and as my friend the Member of Congress called it, "God-Forsaken country", this Indian who deigned to wear nothing more than a wisp of cotton cloth around his waist, who did not know the letter A, and could not count beyond the number 10, believed himself and his surroundings of the most advanced and Christian order.

While the Ajo ore was rich in copper, transportation to market was so difficult that he left the mine to engage in trading along the Mexican border; was at Fort Yuma when the Crabb filibustering expedition came there early in March 1857, en route to be massacred at Caborca on April 7; in a letter dated at Guymas, August 27, 1857, Dunbar stated;

At this time I had trading posts at Fort Yuma, the house near Sonoyta and at Calabasas, all in the Gadsden Purchase. When Mr. Crabb and party arrived at Fort Yuma I was engaged in the general superintendence of the business and more especially at that period attending to the transportation of goods from Rio Colorado to Calabasas, going back and forth myself.

Application was made to me at the river Colorado by Mr. Crabb, through one of his officers, for a credit of six hundred dollars worth of provisions. This was positively and decidedly declined.

I left the river Colorado with a mule train of goods for Calabasas, via Sonoyta, about a week before Mr. Crabb and party. On arriving at Sonoyta I found Jesus Ainsa, a young man (one of the Sonora Ainsa family) brought up in the mercantile house of my partner, Mr. Bellmap, in San Francisco, who had come to act as clerk in Sonoyta.

My advice to Ainsa was, not to join his brother-in-law, Crabb, under any circumstances. To this he agreed, at least until I returned from Calabasas. Leaving Ainsa in charge, and with directions to give credit to no one, I proceeded on to Calabasas with the train. After remaining at that point some days to regulate business, I returned to Sonoyta with the mule train, arriving at that point on or about the 10th of April, 1857. Here I learned that Crabb and party had passed to Caborca about the 25th of March.

My original intention had been to go to the Rio Colorado with the train for goods to Calabazas, but the mules being somewhat poor, and my abiding conviction that disaster would come to the Americans and all business at Sonoyta be broken up, at once caused me to decide to pack the goods in the Sonoyta store to Calabazas, and close the same. Accordingly, all, with the exception of some articles that could not be conveniently packed, were dispatched for Calabazas on the 14th of April. I then made arrangements to leave for the Rio Colorado.

As I was about to leave, rumors more distinct reached me by two Papagos, who appeared to have come direct from Gaborca. They stated that the Americans had all been killed, and that troops might be expected at Sonoyta to kill the four sick Americans left by Craff on his passage. From a feeling of common humanity, I suggested that these four sick men be removed to my house, about two miles distant, and on the American side of the line, supposing they would be safe there.

This was done immediately. Their names were Long, (S.) Bunker, (J.G.) Harrison, and (Charles S.) Parker. The two former were somewhat feeble from fever, and the latter (Parker) was conveyed on a litter, being entirely unable to walk from the effects of a gun-shot wound in the knee. Harrison was in much the same condition from rheumatism.

After the removal of these men to my house, I waited three days for certain information from Gaborca, but nothing new arriving, provisions growing short, and my business being pressing, I put out for the Colorado on the evening of Friday, April 17.

This is the last personal knowledge I have of matters in Sonoyta. But I am informed by Captain A.J. Ankrin and Mr. Staler, residents of the Rio Colorado, who were at Sonoyta, en route for Sonora, at this time, that a few hours after I left there arrived a body of Mexican soldiers, with an officer, who stated that he came with authority from the State of Sonora to search for and take all filibusters there. In the night he proceeded to my house, seized and bound all found therein, viz; the four Americans and Jesus Ainsa. About 5 o'clock the next morning Messrs. Ankrin and Staler state that they heard the firing, at which time the Americans were shot. Jesus Ainsa was taken prisoner to Altar.

John Kilbride, an American blacksmith, who also resides at Sonoyta, stated that he passed from my house about 8 o'clock the next morning, on his way down from the Mina del Ajo, whither he had been with a load of provisions. He states that he found the four dead bodies of the Americans some distance apart, down a steep bank, west of the house. From the tracks on the bank, the feeble men appeared to have slid and rolled down the bank and all scattered to different

points, and thus shot. Thus their bodies lay with gun-shot wounds. Some Papago Indians, sent by the said Kilbride, soon came up and buried the bodies near the well.

Early in 1858 a petition was signed by numerous residents of the Gadsden Purchase praying that Congress create the Territory of Arizona out of the southern part of New Mexico; in his "Mexican Papers" published at New York in 1860 Dunbar wrote:

In the spring of 1858, I came from Arizona to Washington, the authorized bearer of a memorial to Congress from the inhabitants residing in that wild Indian country, and near the Mexican frontier.

Congress was wrangling over Kansas, and myself and the Arizona memorial, so far as we attracted any attention, were absolutely held in derision. I was, in one sense, a phenomenon. That I should appear in Washington, the representative of the honest and legitimate interests of a people, residing in a distant and unorganized portion of United States territory, with no political influence, and go to headquarters in the expectation of rousing attention and obtaining any relief, was attributed to the hopeless verdancy of a frontiersman.

My experience in Arizona had convinced me that in the acquisition of that domain known as the "Gadsden Purchase," we but added to the territory of New Mexico a wild region of country, (and without the port of Guaymas) very difficult to get into, and much more difficult to get out of -- a dreary district which, in fact, has proved to us nothing more or less than a trap, in which bands of wild and murdering Indians catch emigrants and settlers, with their horses, cattle, and other property. † This forlorn purchase of territory also gave the United States Government the opportunity to increase its patronage, by extending its worse than useless Army and Indian Agency system, and adding several millions to the amount squandered yearly by the War Department, under pretence of protecting the frontiers.

I then became satisfied that our frontier regions were at the mercy of hordes of wild Indians and gangs of white outcasts on the one hand, and an inefficient, incompetent administration on the other hand; and between the two evils, the chances were ninety-nine out of a hundred that a bona fide pioneer in those regions would, sooner or later, sacrifice his labor and his life. I concluded, therefore, not to return to the frontier at present, but continue my business connection with that region, and watch from this point the progress of events on the frontier, the Pacific coast and Mexico, all of which interests are, to a certain extent, identical.

As Mexican correspondent for the New York Times and the London Times he arrived in Vera Cruz on April 1, 1859, and remained there 3 months; was on a friendly and confidential footing with Benito Juarez, being present at the ceremony when he was recognized as the Constitutional President of Mexico by the American Minister, Robert M. McLane; in June he went by stage coach via Jalapa and Pueblo to the City of Mexico; for the space of 6 months his letters from Mexico appeared in the New York Times over the signature of "Mitla"; returned to New York in 1860 and wrote a series of five papers on the Mexican question and the future of that Republic which were republished in 1861 with his observations on the rise and decline of commercial slavery in America; in 1867 D. Appleton & Co. published his "Romance of the Age; or the Discovery of Gold in California".

His name appears in the New York City directories from 1865 to 1869 but not in 1870; the 1869 directory lists him as "Editor" at 34 Pine Street, residence 158 West 2d Street; Hinton's Handbook to Arizona, published at San Francisco in 1878, states that he "died in Pernambuco in 1868, and is buried on the Island of Flores, on the Coast of South America".

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- Dunbar, E.E. - The Mexican Papers, N.Y., 1860, pp. 46, 83, 86.
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 DeLong, S.R. - History of Arizona, S.F., 1903, p. 63.
 Hinton, R.J. - Handbook to Arizona, S.F., 1878, p. 36.
 Bancroft, H.H. - History of Arizona and New Mexico, S.F., 1889, p. 519.
 Farish, T.E. - History of Arizona, Phoenix, 1915, vol. 1, p. 278; vol. 2, p. 3.
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