

# O'REILLY, MICHAEL

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O'REILLY, MICHAEL, born in County Meath, Ireland, \_\_\_\_\_, 1836; enrolled, age 25, at Auburn, Placer County, September 13, and mustered in at Placerville, El Dorado County, to serve 3 years as Sergeant, Captain C. W. C. Rowell's Company A, 4th. California Infantry; served as Quartermaster Sergeant after February 15, 1862; went with the Company to Fort Walla Walla, Washington Territory, and remained there until September, 1862; stationed at Benecia Barracks, California, until March, 1863, and then moved to Camp Drum, in southern California; was on detached service in August, 1863; honorably discharged at Drum Barracks, California, October 13, 1864.

Came to Arizona in 1865; when applying for a pension he stated:

"I cannot furnish the testimony of witnesses to show the incurrence of my wound as the two men who knew the circumstances were killed by the Indians on the same day that I received my wound. I received my wound in the latter part of the year 1865 about one year after I was discharged from the army...At the time I received the wound I was mail carrier from Tucson to Fort Bowie, Arizona. The horse fell while the Indians were in pursuit of me & I fell against a rock causing a bad wound in the Head from which I have suffered since."

Listed, U. S. Census, July, 1870, age 34, occupation - Stationkeeper, property valued at \$2,300; in an affidavit made on February 17, 1871, he testified that he was keeping a station 18 miles northwest of Tucson in August, 1870, when the Apaches stole a horse and 6 mules; later that same month the Indians stole a mule and killed William Bloom (a native of Germany, aged 40) who

was working at the stage station; the following references to him were printed in the Tucson Arizona Citizen:

September 2, 1871 - - Mathew Stevenson and Michael O'Reilly, the popular station-keepers at Point of Mountains, have dissolved partnership. O'Reilly has gone out to the junction of the Bowie and Crittenden roads to establish "Crittenden Station" where he has commenced digging a well.

July 4, 1874 - - Mr. O'Reilly, of Kennedy's Wells, near Camp Grant, is in town. He says he sunk a well 70 feet deep on his premises, and that is full of water which constantly flows out at the top. If there is a man in Arizona who deserves to have a well of flowing water, O'Reilly is that man. He has vainly spent years of labor and the earnings of years to find water by digging in other advantageous localities.

June 26, 1875 - - For Sale: O'Reilly's Station (Kennedy's Wells) 13 miles south of Camp Grant on the main road to San Carlos and Camp Apache. "This ranch is in good order." For information, address M. O'Reilly, Kennedy's Wells, A.T.

October 1, 1885 - - There is now confined in the County jail, charged with having sold liquor to Indians, a pioneer who has done more good for Arizona in his individual capacity than the United States government has seen fit to do for this frontier Territory, and his life is a part of the history of Arizona.

His name is M. O'Reilly, and he first arrived in Tucson in 1865, in government employ. He then engaged in running the express from Tucson to Bowie, and in 1866 he built the station at the Point of Mountains, and accumulated quite a sum of money. In 1870 he dug a well about fourteen miles east of Tucson, between this place and the Cienega, nearly four hundred feet deep. This cost him a large sum of money.

Three years later he built a station twelve miles south of Camp Grant and dug a well and in 1875 he sunk twelve wells between the San Pedro and Camp Grant, and made sixteen miles of road from Three Oaks to Dos Cabezas and built a station

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two miles south of Croton Springs. In 1878 he built a station on Turkey Creek, eighteen miles from Camp Rucker and made eighteen miles of road to the same place.

All these were more in the nature of public than private improvements, and they have benefited the Territory very much. The wells that he sunk are of great assistance to travelers and to the government troops and a generation has enjoyed the benefits of his money and labor.

Since 1880, he has engaged in prospecting and mining in various portions of the Territory, chiefly in its southeastern portion. Mr. O'Reilly is well known to nearly all the old residents of this portion of Arizona, and has borne an excellent reputation all these years of toil and danger.

Became a member of the Society of Arizona Pioneers at Tucson on \_\_\_\_\_ 18\_\_\_\_; was living in Bisbee, Cochise County, A.T., when he applied for a pension on December 21, 1891, which was not granted.

Died at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, buried, \_\_\_\_\_ Cemetery.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- Orton, R. H - Records of California Men in the War of the Rebellion, Sacramento, 1890, p. 602.
- The U. S. Veterans Administration - Pension records, 501,081,013.
- The Arizona Citizen, Tucson, September 2, 1871, January 17, and July 4, 1874; June 26, 1875; October 1, 1885, 4:2.
- The Arizona Enterprise, Florence, March 10, 1892.

WANTED

1. The date and place of his death which perhaps can be supplied by Mrs. Mary Davidson, Deputy Registrar of Vital Statistics.
2. Obituaries and other references to him in the Arizona newspapers.