

# BOWERS, GEORGE WASHINGTON

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Born at Greenfield, Hillsboro County, New Hampshire, \_\_\_\_\_, 1829.

Son of Herbert and Phoebe (Taylor) Bowers.

Married, Gertrude Smith (1840-1911), a native of Baltimore, Maryland, and daughter of Charles A. and Matilda (Lasell) Smith at San Francisco, California, April 16, 1865; no children.

Came from California to Prescott, A.T. in 1865, where his brothers Herbert, Nathan B. and Edward F. were then residing; in 1869 he paid \$100 Federal tax on his net income of \$2,000; listed in the U.S. Census, 1870, at Prescott, age 42, occupation - Trader; The Prescott Arizona Miner of April 15, 1871, reported that he had paid \$5,000 for 240 feet each on the Tiger and Lion Mining Claims in the Bradshaw District and on February 24, 1872, stated:

They have "struck it" richer than ever before in the Tiger and every person in any way connected with that great silver mine feels "happy as a big sunflower." We have gazed with wonder and pleasure upon several pounds of the ore--recently brought here, from the mine, by Messrs. E.J. Cook and G. W. Bowers, and have had our usually hopeful spirit exalted "muchly," by so doing. It is not ore; it is silver, and should the mine continue working of it, its owners will be Rothschilds, in point of wealth.

On numerous occasions the Yuma Arizona Sentinel made mention of him among the earlier of which were the following:

December 12, 1874 - - George Bowers and Hugo Richards, Esq., two of the-leading citizens of Yavapai County, and well known enterprising businessmen, arrived in Yuma last Thursday by the yacht Dinah, from Ehrenberg. Mr. Bowers acted as Captain and Mr. Richards as mate. They only had two men before the mast, but navigated their craft in gallant style.

September 20, 1879 - - George Bowers, the popular agent of Kerens & Griffith's stage and mail routes returned on Wednesday from his visit to California. We heard of him at San Diego where through his donations to the museum there, he has become to be considered quite a naturalist, bugologist as it were. We constantly hear traders speak of their obligations to him.

About 1882, he became associated with Anthony G. Hubbard in various mining ventures, the most successful of which was at Harqua Hala in northern Yuma County, about 12 miles west of the Maricopa County line; the following account of what they accomplished there was printed in the Yuma Arizona Sentinel of October 14, 1893:

Chas. Pickenback, the well known foreman of the Bonanza mines at Harqua Hala, since they were first started, made the Sentinel office a very pleasant call Sunday. Charlie's experience at the Bonanza is worthy of more than a passing notice. When the ten-stamp mill first started, he made a bet of \$500 with the late Geo. W. Bowers, co-owner with A. G. Hubbard, that it would turn out \$180,000 in gold in the first six months. He won the bet. There was cleaned up in the mill during that time \$196,000 in gold.

It run two years and three months while Charlie was foreman during which it turned out \$1,300,000. It was then sold to English capitalists for \$1,250,000 cash, making \$2,550,000 for the property, which Hubbard and Bowers owned for a little more than three years and which cost them \$30,000. They also expended on the mine, pumping plant, hoisting works, mill and buildings \$120,000.

When they sold the property, Hubbard and Bowers presented Charlie with \$10,000 in gold, as a reward for his faithfulness while in their employ. This was in addition to the salary of \$8 per day which he received.

Among the reports with reference to the Bonanza Mines, the following are taken from the Sentinels

March 17, 1888 - - The Red Cloud, familiarly called "The Bonanza," is an immense ledge with seams of high grade ore and an abundance of low grade rock. The mine is down 510 feet, and at the 500 foot level struck water, which will be handled by pumps that are now on the way from San Francisco. The Red Cloud was discovered in 1878, and the three original locators took \$68,000 from the surface. The mine is now being worked by Messrs. Hubbard, Bowers and Levy, and continue to prove profitable.

November 21, 1891 - - The Sentinel was the recipient a few days ago, of a magnificent specimen from the Golden Eagle mine, owned by A. G. Hubbard and George W. Bowers. The specimen is encrusted with gold on every side and shows the rich ore which the Harqua Hala bonanzas produce. The Golden Eagle is only one of the several mines owned by the above named gentleman, which continue to turn out an abundance of high grade ore.

May 21, 1892 - - The Bonanza mines are yielding from \$1,800 to \$2,000 per day, that the waste rock which at first was thrown aside as worthless, but which turned out \$60,000 in gold, at the rate of nearly \$1,500 per day, that the new discoveries now being developed, grow richer and better as they are opened.

January 28, 1893 - - A huge chunk of gold, the largest ever seen on this coast, arrived here (San Francisco) yesterday by Wells, Fargo & Co's express from Harqua Hala, Yuma County, Arizona, for the Selby Refining and Lead Company.

The piece of gold weighed 309 pounds, and had a value of \$81,200. It was the product of four weeks' run of the Harqua Hala mines, and was forwarded by Hubbard and Bowers. A big crowd soon gathered around the Selby refining office on Montgomery Street, and for some time the dome of gold, for it was in that form, was discussed with enthusiasm and interest. Big chunks of gold have been unloaded here for more than forty years, but this, by common agreement, was admitted to beat them all.

It has been hard to handle, being so heavy

and at the same time so valuable. It came in a very strongly built box or cage, and was at length delivered at the office by the help of several men and landed on a strong iron-framed cart, with very strong wheels, and a bed made of a thick plank.

The pudgy dome of gold was ten and a half inches high, nine and a quarter broad at the base and about eight inches over the rounded top.

---S. F. Chronicle

June 24, 1893 - - Judge Curtis of San Francisco, who has been examining the titles to the Bonanza mines at Harqua Hala, said yesterday morning; "The mines sold to an English company for \$1,250,000 in gold coin. I have been here for four days examining the titles to the mine, which I find perfect. Upon my report the English company (the Harqua Hala Gold Mining Co. Ltd.) will accept the title and pay the coin for the property.

Died at San Francisco, California, June 16, 1893, buried, Laurel Hill Cemetery; the San Francisco Chronicle printed the following in July, 1893:

The will of the deceased mining man, George W. Bowers of Arizona was filed for probate yesterday by his widow and A. N. Drown, who are named to serve respectively as executrix and executor. They represent that the estate consists of improved real property, money, stocks, and general property. The value of the estate is not stated, but it is believed to be worth at least \$4,000,000.

The testator made bequests as follows: to his sister Jane, wife of Charles S. Eaton of this city, the house in which she lives, on Jackson Street, west of Fillmore, and \$20,000; to his brother, John T. Bowers, \$10,000 and a discharge from all debts and obligations due the deceased; to Nathan B. Bowers, a brother in Arizona, \$15,000, and a release from all indebtedness; to his brother-in-law, Charles S. Eaton, release of such proportion of all debt as \$10,000 shall bear to the amount of the debt; to Catherine Zapp, who resides with Mr. and Mrs. Eaton, \$500, and \$5,000 to each of the following nephews and nieces: George A. Bowers, Stella Bowers, Charles Bowers and Edward Bowers, children of a deceased

brother, residing in Arizona with their mother, who is now the wife of Hulbert B. Crouch; Herbert S. Bowers, Edward B. Bowers, Phoebe R. Bowers, Stella T. Bowers, Frank T. Bowers and Nathan Bowers, children of John T. Bowers; Edward Cook, son of a deceased sister, residing in Arizona. The nephews and nieces are to receive their several requests upon attaining the age of 25 years. All the residue of his estate testator bequeathed to his widow, Gertrude S. Bowers.

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- University of Arizona Bulletin, August 15, 1934 - "Arizona Lode Gold Mines", p. 128
- U. S. Geological Survey - Ore Deposits in Northern Yuma County, 1911, pp. 12, 106.
- McClintock, J. H. - Arizona, The Youngest State, 1916, p. 407
- Barnes, W. C. - Arizona Place Names, 1935, p. 198
- California Vital Statistics - Death Certificate 390, 481-1911.
- The Arizona Miner, Prescott, July 10, 1869, 2:2; April 15, 2:3, June 24, 3:1 and December 2, 1871, 3:2; February 24, 1872, 2:1-4; May 7, 1875, 2:3.
- The Phoenix Herald, June 28, 3:1, October 10, 3:3, and December 8, 1891, 3:2.
- The Arizona Sentinel, Yuma, December 12, 3:2 and December 19, 1874, 3:2; August 30, 3:2 and September 20, 1879, 3:3; March 17, 3:1 and September 1, 1888, 3:1; July 27, 3:2, August 31, 1889, 3:2; November 21, 1891, 3:4; January 16, 3:1, April 30, 3:2, May 21, 1:4, July 2, 3:5 and November 26, 1892, 3:1; January 28, 1:3, March 25, 2:3, May 20, 3:3, June 24, 1:3 and 3:2 (obituary) July 8, 1:3 (will), August 12, 2:3, and October 14, 1893.
- The Journal Miner, Prescott, May 17, 3:3 and June 21, 1893, 3:6 (death notice).
- The San Francisco Chronicle, June 18, 1893, 21:5 (death notice).

## WANTED

1. Obituaries in the other Prescott newspapers, also Phoenix and Tucson.
2. Additional newspaper references to him prior to 1889 - I have all that is needed relative to the Harqua Hala mines.
3. Anything in regard to his operation of the Clip Mine in Yuma County.
4. Any mention of his marriage.