

BOWERS, NATHAN BARKER

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Born at Greenfield, Hillsboro County, New Hampshire, July 12, 1830.

Son of _____ and _____.

Married, Theresa A. Crist (1846-1919) a native of Ohio and daughter of Henry B. and _____ Crist; at _____, May 12, 1868; no children.

Came to Arizona from California in the summer of 1864 and joined his brother Herbert in operating the sutlers store at Fort Whipple under the firm name of Bowers & Bro., they later engaged in farming a tract of land on the Agua Fria River, about 18 miles southeast of Prescott, a part of which had been previously cultivated by King S. Woolsey; his nephew, George D. Bowers, the only son of his brother, Dexter Bowers, a young man of 21 years old who came to Arizona in the spring of 1866, was mortally wounded by Apaches on October 26, 1868, as shown by two articles written by John H. Marion, editor of the Prescott Arizona Miner:

October 31, 1868 - - Monday about 10 o'clock, another of the same party of Indians attacked a party of five men, composed of George D. Bowers, Jos. C. Lemon and three soldiers, as they were coming from Camp Lincoln to Prescott. The attack was made upon this party at a point about a mile east of the Cienega. At the time of the attack, Mr. Bowers was in the lead followed by a soldier; next came Mr. Lemon who was followed by two soldiers.

The first intimation the party had of danger was seeing a blaze of fire issuing from the mouths of about 30 guns, which the Indians had leveled upon them from both sides of the road, accompanied by showers of arrows and deafening savage yells. Poor, brave George Bowers, was shot in the abdomen and the soldier who rode behind him was shot from his mule, wounded in six places. Mr. Lemon and

the two soldiers who rode behind him escaped.

After managing to get the wounded soldier upon an animal, the party retreated, (Mr. Lemon holding Mr. Barrows in the saddle and the soldiers doing the same thing for their wounded comrade) followed for a mile and a half by about 60 yelling, fiendish red-skins. They soon met Lieut. Derby and about twenty men, who were coming to Ft. Whipple with some wagons. The wounded men were placed in the wagons and all returned to Camp Lincoln.

November 7, 1868 - - George D. Bowers died at Camp Lincoln, in this County and Territory, on Friday morning, Oct. 30th at 15 minutes past one o'clock. Such was the sad news related to us by Johnny Behan, Recorder of this County, upon his return here from Camp Lincoln, after witnessing the death and burial of his brave, noble, generous hearted young friend.

George D. Bowers dead, killed by Indians! Great God, how long shall we be compelled to hear of the death of friends by these cruel wretches. The blood of 500 of the red scamps would not atone for the killing of "little George." How his mother and father will weep for the loss of their only child when the news of his death reaches them in their California home, can be imagined from the manner in which his relatives and friends here were affected by the sad news. Farewell, dear George, and may a just God give us a chance to revenge your death upon your cowardly murderers.

His name appeared a number of times in the Prescott Arizona

Miner including the following items:

February 20, 1869 - - Wednesday last, N. B. Bowers purchased from E. J. Cook, his frame dwelling on the west side of Granite Creek, opposite Prescott, for the sum of \$4,000.00, gold. The house is one of the neatest and most comfortable dwelling in Central Arizona.

July 9, 1870 - - N. B. Bowers and William M. Buffum got back here from California on the night of Saturday last and were welcomed home by their many friends. The Territory has within its borders no better men than William and Nathan.

May 13, 1870 - - We were present Friday evening last, at one of the pleasantest parties we ever attended, given by Mr. and Mrs. N. B. Bowers, in commemoration of the close of the third year of their married life. The affair came off at their cozy residence west side of Granite Creek.

June 4, 1875 - - We called upon Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Bowers at their ranch in Agua Fria Valley, on Saturday, and again on Sunday, 22nd and 23rd of May, and return thanks for kind treatment. The Agua Fria Ranch is one of the permanent institutions of the country. The buildings are of the most substantial character, and all the appointments of the place have the air of stability that seems to say "Come to stay." Corn is up and gives fair promise of a good yield. The meadow is so green that it is almost glossy and decked with bright yellow and red flowers is suggestive of "a sea of grass mingled with fire."

December 3, 1875 - - Leaving Fort Whipple on the 26th, I took my way over a beautiful and interesting country of rolling hills and upland plains, making a ride of 16 miles to the Agua Fria Ranch, where I received a warm welcome from Mr. N. B. Bowers and his pleasant and agreeable wife. Mr. Bowers being an old California friend of long ago, we passed a delightful evening in talking over old times, and discussing the past, present and future of Arizona. I find this beautiful valley quite productive and was surprised to learn of the large crop of corn raised here each year since its settlement. By careful inquiry I find the amount the present year to be as follows: N. B. Bowers, 55 acres yielded 75 tons; F. Hilderbrandt, 70 acres yielded 80 tons; H. Spaulding, 40 acres yielded 45 tons; J. Mars, 25 acres yielded 25 tons. Large quantities of hay also cut of good quality, a total of 150 or 200 tons.

March 23, 1877 - - N. B. Bowers, of the Agua Fria, is in town. Mr. Bowers reports the valley as very dry and thinks the chances for crops on dry ranches this year as rather dubious.

February 1, 1878 - - Mrs. N. B. Bowers, that excellent lady who presides over the household affairs of the first ranch settled upon by Americans in Yavapai County, is in town visiting

relations and friends of whom she has a host.

The records of the General Land Office show that at the Prescott land office on November 10, 1870, Nathan B. Bowers made the first homestead entry in the Territory of Arizona; homestead entry No. 1, final certificate No. 4 for the N.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ N.E. $\frac{1}{4}$, N.E. $\frac{1}{4}$ N.W. $\frac{1}{4}$, section 13, S.E. $\frac{1}{4}$ S.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ and S.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ S.E. $\frac{1}{4}$, section 11, Township 13 N. 1 E., 160 was patented to him on March 30, 1880; the Yuma Arizona Sentinel of May 24, 1879, mentions the place:

Eighteen miles south of Prescott, in the valley of the Agua Fria, is the fine grass and stock ranch of Nathan B. Bowers, Esq. This locality is peculiarly interesting, as upon this ranch, and in the immediate neighborhood, are found many ruins and evidences of the ancient people who once occupied these valleys. The massive walls of Mr. Bowers' house are built of stones taken from one of these ruins, portions of which still remain near by.

A short distance away there is what appears to be an ancient burial place. The graves, if such they be, are covered with flat stones, laid in a circle, raised but little above the ground and about four feet across. Over 500 of these mounds have been counted in a space of about an acre. Who were these ancient people and when did they occupy this land?

He was appointed as a member of the first Territorial Live-stock Sanitary Commission in 1887, and reappointed by Governor Wolfley in 1889; these items referring to him have been found in the Prescott Journal-Miner:

January 25, 1887 - - N. B. Bowers went out to his Agua Fria ranch today to superintend the delivery of four car loads of fat beef cattle to J. W. Sullivan, for shipment. The price received was two and a quarter cents per pound.

July 1, 1897 - - The house of the Bowers ranch on the Agua Fria valley, was destroyed by fire last Saturday. The origin of the fire is a mystery. The old house has a historical record, as during the early days of the Territory it afforded refuge to many a man from the murderous Apaches. The property belonged to N. B. Bowers, now living in San Bernardino, California.

Moved to San Bernardino, California, in 1896 where he died on July 15, 1906, aged 76; buried there in the City Cemetery.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Barnes, W. C. - Arizona Place Names, 1935, p. 58.
Farish, T. E. - History Of Arizona, Vol. 6, p. 229; Vol. 8, pp. 149, 171.

Kelly, G. H. - Legislative History, Arizona, 1926, p. 140.
U. S. General Land Office - Records of entries and patents.
California Bureau of Vital Statistics - Death Certificates, 1906-65, 388 and 1919-1004.

The Arizona Miner, Prescott, October 26, 1864, 3:1; October 8, 1866, 4:3; September 20, 1867, 3:2; October 31, 2:1 and November 7, 1869, 2:3; February 20, 3:1 and December 25, 1869, 3:4; July 9, 3:1 and December 3, 1870, 3:3; May 13, 3:1, June 10, 3:3 and June 24, 1871, 3:2; August 10, 1872, 3:1; June 4, 3:1 and December 3, 1875, 2:2; March 23, 1877, 2:2; February 1, 1878, 3:2.

The Arizona Sentinel, Yuma, May 24, 1879, 1:2.

The Phoenix Herald, April 21, 1880, 1:2.

The Prescott Courier, July 20, 1906, 4:3 (death notice).

The Journal Miner, Prescott, January 25, 1887, 3:3; July 1, 1897, 4:1; July 18, 1906, 1:5 (death notice).

WANTED

1. Additional obituaries and newspaper references to him.
2. A newspaper account of his wedding on May 12, 1868.
3. Please copy the full text of the earliest available advertisement of Bowers & Bro. printed in the Arizona Miner.