

CAVANESS, MATTHEW

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CAVANESS, MATTHEW, born at Bentonville, Benton County, Arkansas, April 27, 1843; son of Jerry and Kisiah (Huckaby) Cavaness; married (1) Alice Rowe, daughter of Frank Rowe, at Phoenix, A.T., December 7, 1871; divorced June 14, 1877; children, Albert Truman, Anson Royal, and Aaron Matthew (1876-98); married (2) Laura E. Jackson at Carlyle, N.M., October 8, 1888; children, Daniel Clay, Drais Oscar, Mattie Laura (Mrs. _____ Hahn), Dorcas Melia (Mrs. _____) and Maude Bertha (Mrs. _____).

He enlisted, age 17, at Fort Mason, on April 4, 1860, to serve as Private in Lieutenant W. Charles Lewis' Detachment, Texas Minute Men, for defense of the border; occupation when enlisted - Cattleman; honorably discharged when the Detachment was mustered out at Fort Mason on June 15, 1861.

Moved from Texas via southern Arizona to Visalia, California, with his parents accompanied by his younger brothers, William, Louis and Silas E. and his sisters Sarah (Mrs. George Roberts), Rebecca (Mrs. Abraham H. Peeples), Amanda (Mrs. _____ Sutton) and Christina (Mrs. Josephus Phy and afterwards Mrs. _____); he came to Prescott, A.T., with his brother Silas in 1864; listed, U.S. Census, 1870, at Maricopa Wells, Pima County, A.T., occupation - Butcher, property valued at \$200; according to the Farish History of Arizona he and Frank Cosgrove purchased a saloon in April, 1872, at Phoenix, where they had a good wagon and blacksmiths shop; they were also partners in a stage station on the Agua Fria and freighted government stores with ox teams until the death of Cosgrove in 1875; the following announcement of the birth of his son, Albert Truman, appeared in the Prescott Arizona Miner of November 30, 1872:

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Mrs. Matt Cavaness has the honor of giving birth to the first white child, in Phoenix, Salt River Valley, Maricopa County, and this child, a bouncing boy, was born November 5, 1872.

An obituary in the Phoenix Arizona Republican stated that:

Shortly after Mr. Cavaness was married, he entered the freighting business and operated freight wagons from Yuma to Phoenix, Fort McDowell, then a thriving army post, Tucson, Prescott and other points in the Territory.

After the famous Silver King mine was discovered in 1875, Matt Cavaness hauled the first load of machinery and supplies to the mine. He also hauled the first load of ore from the mine to San Diego.

The arrival of his train from Yuma bringing 45,000 pounds of assorted merchandise was reported on March 25, 1876, and the Phoenix Herald printed the following items about him:

February 9, 1879 - -Matt Cavaness writes us that Picket Post was visited by a fine rain last week. (Disturnell states that the name of Picket Post was changed to Pinal in 1880).

June 21, 1880 - - Matt Cavaness advertises in the Pinal Drill that he wants from two to three hundred thousand pounds of barley, to be delivered at Picket Post at from ten to twenty thousand per month. Payment made monthly. Bids will be received up to July 10.

June 22, 1880- - Matt Cavaness will be a candidate for Sheriff of Pinal County.

March 9, 1882- - Matt Cavaness of Pinal is in town.

In 1886 he moved to Duncan, Graham County, A.T., having obtained a contract to haul supplies to the mine at Carlyle, N.M., with return loads of ore; about 1895 he moved from Duncan to Globe and later went into the cattle business as is indicated by the Globe Arizona Silver Belt of March 8, 1900;

Matt Cavaness, who, while riding after cattle, three weeks ago, came in collision with a tree and was unhorsed, sustaining an injury to his back, is able to be about again.

The Phoenix Arizona Republican of August 16, 1904, printed the following:

The Republican has received a letter from Matt Cavaness which locates him at Gisela post-office, Gila county, Arizona. He writes that people in that section are feeling joyful since the late rains and the ranges are now covered with grass, ample to fatten what stock is left. He says though that the stockmen previous to the rains lost possibly forty per cent of their horses and cattle.

Of the old timers Mr. Cavaness speaks most kindly, for he was one of the early settlers of Arizona. He writes that he has learned with great regret of the death of his old friend John Y. T. Smith. He also makes kindly mention of George E. Mowry, J. D. Monihon, C. H. Gray, and various other pioneers of the earliest times.

It was August 1, 1864, forty years ago, when Mr. Cavaness first found himself in Prescott, and thereafter he was through all the Indian troubles of the territory, having visited this valley long before its first settlement. He says that at that time Fort McDowell was furnished with wild hay, cut with hoes, and that the government furnished the hay cutters with military escorts to keep the redmen from confiscating the hay teams. He says that many a time he has gone through McDowell canyon with his hair standing as straight as the quills on a porcupine fearing that each minute would be his last on earth.

In 1910 he moved from Tonto Basin to Mesa and is said to have "accepted a contract for the construction of a dirt reservoir near Casa Grande"; he was in Miami in 1917-18 and later went to Los Angeles; admitted to the U.S. Soldiers Home, Sawtelle, California, January 5, 1927, where he died on January 12, 1929, aged 85; buried in the Soldiers Home Cemetery.

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- The Arizona Miner, Prescott, April 27, 1:1, May 11, 1:4, June 8, 3:3, July 20, 2:4, August 17, 1:4, November 16, 1:2, November 23, 1:2, November 30, 1:5, and December 21, 1872, 1:1, November 11, 1879, 3:4; February 13, 1880, 3:2; October 14, 1881, 4:2.
- The Arizona Citizen, Tucson, April 20, 1872, 4:2; July 4, 2:4 and December 26, 1874, 3:2; March 19, 1876.
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- The Phoenix Herald, July 19, 3:1 and August 6, 1879, 3:3; February 9, 4:1, May 25, 1:2, June 21, 4:1 and June 22, 1880, 4:1; March 9, 1882, 4:1.
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- The Arizona Silver Belt, Globe, March 8, 1900, 8:1.
- The Arizona Republican, Phoenix, August 16, 1904, 4:4; April 14, 1926, 8:2-3; April 13, 1927, sec. 2, 3:1 and January 13, 1929, 1:2-3 (obituary).
- The Arizona Enterprise, Florence, October 29, 1881, 3:3; January 28, 1882, 3:1; January 6, 3:1, July 21, 3:5, September 15, 3:2, December 1, 3:2 and December 8, 1883, 2:4; January 5, 3:1, April 5, 3:1 and May 31, 1884, 3:1; May 9, 1885, 3:4.
- The Arizona Gazette, Phoenix, July 9, 3:1 and July 12, 1882, 3:1; February 5, 1885, 3:1; January 20, 1912, 9:2.
- The Phoenix Gazette, January 14, 1929, 14:3 (obituary).