

# CHAVES, JOSE FRANCISCO *10002*

CHAVES, JOSE FRANCISCO, born at Los Padillas, Bernalille County, New Mexico, June 27, 1833; son of Mariano and Dolores Peres de Chaves; his grandfather, Don Francisco Xavier Chaves, was the first Governor of New Mexico under the Mexican Republic in 1822; married, (1) Mary Bowie at San Francisco, California in 1857 who died in 1878; children, Francisco Mariano and Dolores (Lola) who married Mariano Armijo y Otero; married, (2) Josephine Whittington at Albuquerque, N.M., March 19, 1892.

His father said to him, "The heretics are going to overrun New Mexico. Go and learn their language and come back prepared to defend your people"; attended preparatory schools in St. Louis, Missouri, and then took a course at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York City, 1850-52; made overland trips to California in 1853 and 1857; served as Captain of a Company of New Mexico Mounted Volunteers enrolled at Peralta, N.M., September 17 until discharged at that place on December 3, 1860; was away with the Company on a campaign against the Navajo Indians when elected from Valencia County to the lower house of the 9th New Mexico Territorial Legislature.

Mustered in at Fort Union, N. M., August 5, 1861, as Major, 1st New Mexico Infantry; promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, September 20, 1861; participated in the battle of Valverde, N.M., February 21, 1862 and was commended by General R. S. Canby for his "Zeal and energy"; transferred to 1st New Mexico Cavalry, May 5, 1862, and was in command for over a year at Fort Wingate, N.M.; left Albuquerque December 8, 1863, in command of the escort to Governor Goodwin and other Arizona Territorial officials which consisted of 50 men of Company E, 11th Missouri Cavalry (Captain John H. Butcher) and 30 men of Company E, 1st New Mexico Cavalry (Captain Rafael Chacon); at Fort Wingate on December 20, nine men of Company C, 1st California Infantry, under Sergeant William R. McCormick joined the escort.

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Marched via the Little Colorado River and the southern slope of the San Francisco Peaks to Fort Whipple arriving on January 22, 1864; listed there in the Territorial Census taken in April as a Soldier, resident in Arizona 3 months; in a letter written at Tucson on March 2, 1864, to the Department Commander, Major Nelson H. Davis mentions "the route that Col. Chaves is about to explore from Tucson via the Pima Villages, Antelope Creek and the mountains"; the following item was printed in the Arizona Miner, then published at Fort Whipple, on March 23, 1864, which indicates that he had returned there from Tucson:

This morning, Colonel Chaves with Co. H, 11th Missouri Volunteers, started for fifteen days' exploration in search of a direct road from here to the Little Colorado, or Zuni. It is the general belief that such a route, practicable for team, can be found.

The Arizona Miner printed an account written by Henry Clifton of the second expedition headed by King S. Woolsey against the Apaches in which is the following passage:

We met our pack train on the evening of May 31 at the Cienega, or the head of the east branch of the Agua Fria, where we camped until the 5th. While we were camped at the Cienega we met Col. Chaves with a detachment of the Missouri Volunteers. He was returning from an exploring expedition towards the Little Colorado and reported having found a feasible route, making the road to Wingate a great deal shorter.

Having determined the feasibility of the route, he left Prescott in August with an escort and probably passed down Copper Canyon to the present site of Camp Verde thence to Stoneman Lake and over the divide to Mahan Spring; went via Chaves Spring and Chaves Pass, which still bear his name, to the Little Colorado at Sunset Crossing; honorably discharged from military service at Santa Fe, N. M., November 22, 1864.

Elected Delegate to Congress from New Mexico in 1864 and served 3 terms from March 4, 1865 to March 3, 1871; engaged in farming and stockraising;

studied law, was admitted to the bar and became District Attorney for the 2d Judicial District of New Mexico 1875-77; served as member from Valencia County, New Mexico Territorial Council, 1875, 1878, 1882, 1884, 1894 and 1897; President of the Territorial Council 1880, 1886, 1888, 1890, 1892, 1901 and 1903; member and President of a convention which prepared a constitution for the proposed State of New Mexico in 1889; was Superintendent of the Territorial Penitentiary, 1891-93; appointed Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Territory in March, 1901 and was filling that position at the time of his death.

Was in Prescott, A.T. on legal business in February and March, 1888; addressed a statehood convention held in Phoenix, on October 26, 1881, in which he said:

My first experience in this Territory was in December, 1853 when there was scarcely an oasis in the desert or a station for the accommodation of man or beast. The only enterprising people in the land were savages who were ready to scalp you when opportunity presented and rob you of all your worldly goods. At that time I bathed in Salt River and it was the only thing here worth having.

Miguel A. Otero, the then Governor of New Mexico, also attended the Phoenix Statehood Convention and afterwards said:

When the time came for Colonel Chaves to begin his address, he told of his visit to Arizona when, in command of soldiers, he accompanied the foremost officials of the Territory in order to organize and establish the new Territory, which had recently been created. The Colonel, coming to the front of the platform and stretching out both hands toward the boxes said, "We did not receive the welcome from the lovely ladies which I see here now and which inspires this great occasion, on which we are asking the privilege of becoming a State and to which they add their grace and charming presence." This caused great applause and many of the ladies threw American Beauty roses to the Colonel.

Colonel Chaves was a man of magnificent talent, notwithstanding the fact that he was always the personification of dignity, and never gave his audience the impression that he was concerning himself with things outside of the ordinary. When he spoke he was serious and rarely smiled in addressing a convention or a great number of people.

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Assassinated at Pinos Wells (near Cedar Vale) Torrance County, New Mexico, November 26, 1904; aged 71; buried, National Cemetery, Santa Fe, N. M.; a bronze bust of colonel Chaves was placed in the state capitol at Santa Fe in March, 1925.

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## SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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