

MONROE, MOLLIE

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MONROE, MOLLIE (Mary E. Sawyer), born in Mississippi, about 1846; listed with George Monroe, U. S. Census, 1870 at Wickenburg, A.T. as Mary Monroe, age 24, occupation - Cook; and was his common-law wife.

Came to Arizona in 1865; the following references to her appeared in the Prescott Arizona Miner:

March 23, 1872 - -The Wickenburg "boys" were out last week prospecting. George Monroe, Joe Fuggit, Wm. Gellaspie, Tom Graves and Molly struck a galena lode and styled it the "Knock Down".

May 11, 1877 - - Mary Sawyer, better known as "Mollie", who has been a prominent character in this Territory for the last 12 years, generally dressing in male attire, was yesterday brought in from Peoples Valley by Frank Powers, and a charge of lunacy entered against her. She was confined in the county jail and after a medical examination was pronounced insane. Our Board of Supervisors held a special meeting last evening for the purpose of inquiring into the matter and decided to send her to Stockton, California to the Insane Asylum.

May 18, 1877 - - The stage which left this place on Saturday morning, carrying mails, treasure box and several passengers, arrived at Wickenburg in due time and after leaving that place and about two miles out, was stopped by four masked robbers, well armed, who demanded the treasure box, mail bags, and the loose change on the persons of the passengers. Our Sheriff, Ed. F. Bowers, who was aboard taking Mary E. Sawyer, an insane woman, to Stockton, was robbed of a fine gold watch and chain and \$450 in gold coin.

November 16, 1877 - - Mollie Monroe -- This unfortunate woman, now bereft of reason, once a kind-hearted, generous but wayward being, is confined at San Quentin, California. She was sent to the Asylum for the Insane, at Stockton, California, but became so violent, and intent on burning the Asylum, that it was found necessary, as a means of safety, to have her confined in the State's Prison. Molly, although she had

her faults, will be pitied and remembered by scores of persons for the kind offices performed for them.

That she was returned from the State Prison to the Asylum is indicated by a letter from Stockton published in the Arizona Miner of August 1, 1879, which referred to her among other patients from Arizona:

Of these I might mention Mary Sawyer and a Mr. Zeekey, who are quite rational and seemingly all right for weeks at a time, and then they will take a change and require constant watching.

In reporting her death the Prescott Courier of November 27, 1902, stated:

Mollie Monroe, a well known pioneer character of Prescott, died in the insane asylum at Phoenix Nov. 20th. Mollie was the first woman in Arizona who became sufficiently demented to be confined in an insane asylum. In May, 1877 she was examined in this city and found to be insane and was sent to the asylum at Stockton, Cal., Arizona having no asylum for such unfortunates at that time. She died at the age of about 80 years. She and one of her husbands are credited with the discovery of Castle Hot Springs as they were riding the range together.

George Monroe died late in December, 1898, at Wickenburg, and the following which is taken from an unmarked newspaper clipping was, no doubt, printed shortly afterwards in some Arizona newspaper:

The recent death of George Monroe near the city, while carrying a universal feeling of regret over the loss of another generous old-timer-- one of the very earliest, in short, of the pioneers of Northern Arizona -- has associated to it a chapter in the epoch of one's life on the border that reads almost fanciful, if not romantic, combining as it does the lives of two humans, a man and a woman, that time has earnestly and zealously shielded, until the curtain of today is drawn aside. So if we digress for the time and leave the dead to repose, in silence and

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confine our thoughts to the living of today, the reader will pardon the omission of anything further of this man, save this brief eulogy of the dead -- that he was true and loyal to friends and withal an energetic and good friend.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The Arizona Miner, Prescott, March 23, 1872, 2:6; May 11, 3:2-3, May 18, 4:1 and November 16, 1877, 2:2; August 1, 1879, 1:6.
The Prescott Weekly Courier, November 27, 1902, 2:1 (obituary).