

MOWRY, GEORGE EWIN

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MOWRY, GEORGE EWIN, born at Stafford, Tolland County, Connecticut, 1832; probably a son of Stephen Mowry; at age 20 he went to California via Panama; for the next 12 years he resided in central California engaging in mining and other occupations; enrolled at Downieville, Sierra County, California, November 4 and mustered in at San Francisco November 21, 1864, to serve 3 years as Private, Captain J. H. Shepard's Company K, 7th California Infantry; occupation when enlisted, Laborer; stationed at the Presidio until March, 1865, and then went by sea to Wilmington in southern California; marched to Fort Yuma, in April and remained there until July; arrived at Maricopa Wells August 12 and at the newly established post of Fort McDowell, on September 7 the buildings of which his Company constructed; late that year he was sent to Fort Mason, A.T., where he was promoted Corporal to date from November 1; returned to Fort McDowell and was promoted Sergeant January 1, 1866; left there in March and was honorably discharged with the Company at the Presidio of San Francisco, April 26, 1866.

Returned to Arizona in 1867 and went via Yuma to Fort McDowell where he was appointed as Assistant to W. A. Hancock who was in charge of the post farm; he had known Hancock when they were both soldiers in Arizona and went with him to Camp Reno, an outpost of Fort McDowell near Tonto Creek, where they started a sutlers store in 1867; in 1869 they moved to the Phoenix townsite where they erected the first building and opened a store on what is now the Northwest corner of Washington and Second Streets; when Hancock was appointed Postmaster at Phoenix on February 13, 1871, Mowry conducted the store and Post Office, the "Captain" having outside matters to occupy his time; it was he who opened the first mail sack to arrive in Phoenix; was appointed by Governor Safford as the first Treasurer of Maricopa County, February 21, 1871; elected as the fifth Sheriff of Maricopa County and served from 1874 to 1878; appointed Postmaster at

Phoenix, August 19, 1879, to succeed Hancock and served until July 18, 1888, when he was succeeded by William A. Hall; Colonel James H. McClintock, who was Postmaster at the time of his death, wrote this about him:

He could in those days have made more money at most anything else than being Postmaster. The office was small and the salary smaller for the service performed, even the rent and incidental expenses of the office and the clerk hire at that time having to be subtracted from the salary. But he was such a faithful and efficient Postmaster that the people would not permit him to give up the office even when he contemplated it. He knew personally almost every one who lived between the Grand Canyon and Calabasas and the population of the country was then more shifting by far than in these days, but every Arizonian knew that if a letter for him ever got to the Phoenix Post Office, "Old Mowry" would deliver it to him somehow, sometime.

An equally strong reason for his lack of accumulation was his personal liberality, for no more free hearted or sympathetic man ever lived, notwithstanding an exterior that seemed rough to strangers, and a personal manner of address intended for good humor, that the unknowing sometimes took for an affront. Never did a worthy case of distress appeal to him, when he had money in his pocket, that a response most liberal for one in his circumstances was not forthcoming. One man in speaking of Mr. Mowry said, "I don't believe that he would steal in any circumstances and I know he wouldn't unless it was to get something to give to a friend." A rather rough expression but one that carries a most flattering sentiment with it.

His successor persuaded him to remain in the Post Office as clerk and he served in that capacity or as Assistant Postmaster under five different Postmasters from August, 1888, until his death at his home in the Montgomery Addition on south Center Street, Phoenix, January. 21, 1907, aged 74; buried in Greenwood Cemetery, Phoenix, Arizona; never married and was not survived by Juana Mowry, born August 25, 1889, whom he named as his daughter by a common law wife in a written statement made in 1898.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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