

STEVENS, LEWIS A.

01

STEVENS, LEWIS ALEXANDER, born in Franklin County, Mississippi, December 25, 1815; son of James and Mary (_____)Stevens; married Fannie A. Cave in Calaveras County, California, November 4, 1858; children, Robert, Mary (Mrs. _____Maxey), Ida (Mrs. _____) and _____(Mrs. George Bonner).

The following account of his early life is compiled from statements .
printed in the Prescott Arizona Miner:

"His father removed when Lewis was quite young to Yazoo County, and as the country was new and educational advantages meagre, Lewis was sent to Tuscaloosa, Alabama, to College where he remained two years. At the age of 19 his parents died, leaving an estate valued at \$84,000, but by the bad management of the Administrator and the rascality of the Attorney, Morgan L. Fitch, he received but \$750 therefrom.

He first went to Illinois where he followed farming until he heard of the discovery of gold in California. In November, 1848 he sailed from New Orleans for San Francisco and in passing 'round Cape Horn the vessel encountered a storm and came near being wrecked. In 1851 he returned to Mississippi, by way of the Isthmus of Panama, but, the same year came back to California to resume the pursuit of mining.

In 1854 he went to Sonora, Mexico, on a prospecting tour and was taken prisoner and kept several months when he was released and returned to California and engaged in mining and freighting, in which he was quite successful, but lost all by the breaking of a bank. In 1858, he settled on a farm in Calaveras County where he remained until he learned that placer gold had been found in what is now Arizona.

Came to La Paz late in 1863; listed, Territorial Census, April 1864, 3rd District (Yavapai County), occupation - Trader, married, wife in California, resident in Arizona 4 months, property valued at \$46; returned to California for his family in 1864 and then settled on a ranch which he located north of Prescott; Councilman from Yavapai County, 3d and 4th Territorial Legislatures, 1866 and 1867; he was attending a session of the Legislature in Prescott when his home was attacked by Apaches as reported in the Arizona Miner of September 21, 1867:

"News was brought to town last evening from the Point of Rocks, about four miles from Prescott that about 20 Indians had made an attack

upon Honorable Lewis A. Stevens' home with the evident intention of murdering the inmates and stealing the stock. At the time of the attack there were on the place but two persons, Mrs. Stevens and a hired man. The house is situated about a hundred yards from an immense pile of rocks.

Mrs. Stevens and the man saw the murderous villains as they emerged from the rocks, and ran for their guns, opening fire upon the thieves, who returned the fire for some time, trying at every turn to get possession of the horses, but the quick eyes and steady fire of Mrs. Stevens and the hired man, cowed the savages and they were forced to skulk back to their hiding places without accomplishing the object of their raid. Many a man placed in the same position as Mrs. Stevens would have taken to his heels and ran for dear life, but she stood her ground and fought them like the heroine that she is.

Shortly after the Indians left, Mr. Johns, who lives on a neighboring ranch and heard the firing, started with some men for Stevens' and followed the Indians into the rocks, but failed to find them. He then started to town bringing the news, and a request from Mrs. Stevens to her husband, who is a member of the Legislature, not to come home but to send her some buck shot.

A little more shot, Mr. Stevens.' Bully for Mrs. Stevens; she is our favorite candidate for the Commander of the District of Arizona."

Elected a member of the Board of Supervisors of Yavapai County and served as Chairman, 1869-70; appointed on January 21, 1872, as one of three commissioners to receive applications for titles to town lots in Prescott; again represented Yavapai County in the 8th and 9th Territorial Councils at Tucson, 1875 and 1877 and at the latter session of the Legislature, materially assisted in the return of the Territorial Capitol to Prescott.

The Arizona Miner printed the following announcement of his death:

"As we went to press yesterday afternoon, news came that Hon. Lewis A. Stevens, one of Arizona's very best and most reliable citizens, was dying, at his ranch, five miles north of town; and in a short time afterwards a messenger arrived with the sad announcement that he was dead.....

He has several times represented Yavapai County in the Legislative Council, where his name has ever been a synonym of honesty and fairness. We can call to mind no man, within the boundaries of Yavapai county, whose death would have been so universally regretted. A good citizen, a good neighbor and good friend is dead.....

-3-

Since his arrival here in this Territory his history is part of the history of Arizona, and is too well understood by our Arizona readers to require further statement from us. Nearly every important public enterprise in Yavapai County bears some evidence of the interest, either moral or material, taken in it by Lewis A. Stevens, while the laws on our Statute books are many of them of his framing. "

Died at his ranch five miles north of Prescott, Yavapai County, A. T., March 7, 1878, aged 62; buried, City Cemetery, Prescott, Arizona; his estate was appraised at \$17,570 and consisted principally of personal property and 910 acres of land in Yavapai County.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Kelly, G. H. - Legislative History - Arizona, 1926, pp. 24, 33, 66, 72.
 Farish, T. E. - History of Arizona, Vol. 3, p. 211; Vol. 4, p. 165;
 Vol. 5, pp. 293, 294.
 W. P. A. - Roster of Yavapai County Officials, 1942.
 Probate Court of Yavapai County - Docket No. 105
 The Arizona Miner, Prescott, October 27, 1866, 1:2; September 21, 1867;
 July 24, 1869, 2:4; January 21, 1872; March 8, 3:3-5, (obituary)
 March 15, 1878, 3:3 (funeral). //

Lewis A. Stevens - memo. from probate court record, docket 105

Fannie Ann Stevens, widow, executrix

estate valued about \$24,000 --- real estate, \$9,000 -- personal property, \$15,000

heirs:

Ratliff Stevens, aged about 60, brother
 Mrs. Margaret Wade, aged about 54, sister, both residing Yavapai county
 Mrs. Mary McCoy, aged about 30, residing at Brandon, Mississippi
 Robert Stevens, aged about 23 - Fort Rice, Neotoma Territory
 Ida Stevens, aged about 50 - Oakland, California
 (children of Joel Stevens, brother of deceased)
 Mrs. Georgie Bonner, aged about 32 - Tusk, Texas
 Mrs. Aggie Stephens, aged about 30, Brandon, Mississippi
 (children of Mrs. Emily Loz, sister of deceased)

From the above it would seem that L. A. Stevens had no children, but that those named in your paper were children of his brother and sister.