

WILLIS, EDWARD BANKER, born in New York City, N.Y., January 9, 1831; married, May Bennett (1846-1917) in Pottowattamie County, Iowa, November 11, 1871; they had no children.

Went from New York to California in 1850; enrolled, age 30, at Oroville, Butte County, August 15, and mustered in at the Presidio of San Francisco, August 24, 1861, to serve 3 years as 1st. Lieutenant, Captain E. A. Riggs Company A, 1st. California Infantry; promoted to Captain, September 5, 1861; left San Francisco, September 16, with the Company on the U.S.S. Shubrick and landed 3 days later at San Pedro; stationed at Camp Latham, near Los Angeles, until February 10, 1862, and then marched to Camp Wright at Oak Grove in San Diego County.

Left Camp Wright, March 30 and arrived at Fort Yuma, April 8, 1862; marched from Fort Yuma May 9, and arrived at Tucson, June 6, 1862; assisted in the arrest of Sylvester Mowry and Palatine Robinson at the Mowry Mine, Patagonia, A.T., at 3 A.M. June 13, 1862; was placed in charge of the mine and other property with a command of 24 men and remained there until June 30; left Tucson on July 21 and marched to Fort Fillmore, N.M., arriving there August 14, and moved on to Hart's Mill, Texas, August 21, 1862; marched with the Company to Las Cruces, New Mexico, in April and was there promoted to Major on May 5, 1863; left Fort Wingate, New Mexico, September 15, 1863, with 40 men each from Company H., 1st California Infantry, and Company F., 1st New Mexico Infantry; at Jacob's Well, A.T., two Navajo Indians were captured and several fields of pumpkins and watermelons were destroyed; the following

paragraphs are a part of General Orders No. 27 issued at Santa Fe, N.M., October 23, 1863, by Brigadier General James H. Carleton:

The recent discovery of gold near the San Francisco Mountains, within the District of Northern Arizona, and the flocking thither of many citizens of the United States, both from the Atlantic and Pacific slopes of the country, and the coming in to that point of many of the people from the Republic of Mexico, renders it necessary that a small military force should be sent to these new gold fields to protect the miners from the Indians, and likewise to preserve order and give security to life and property in that region until the civil officers of Arizona now en route from the East, shall arrive within that Territory, and shall establish and set in motion the machinery of a civil government, and organize courts for the administration of justice.

The troops to go to the new gold fields will establish at or near them a military post, which will be known as Fort Whipple, in honor of the memory of Brig. Gen. Amiel W. Whipple, who fell in the battle of Chancellorsville, and who, as a first lieutenant of Topographical Engineers in 1853, explored the road leading from Albuquerque, N. Mex., through the country of these new gold fields. Since that period this road has been known as the "Whipple Route." A board of officers to consist of Maj. Edward B. Willis, First Infantry California Volunteers; Capt. Herbert M. Enos, assistant quartermaster, U.S. Army, and Capt. Joseph P. Hargrave, First Infantry California Volunteers, will fix the exact site for the post (one suitable for two companies of infantry and a company of cavalry) and will submit a plan for the same, with an estimate of the cost. The troops will live in huts during the coming winter.

The following are the troops who will proceed to the new gold fields as above indicated: Maj. Edward B. Willis, First Infantry California Volunteers; Capt. Herbert M. Enos, U.S. Army; Dr. Charles Leib, acting assistant surgeon, and Companies C and F, First Infantry California Volunteers, under Captains Hargrave and Benson, and Captain Pishon, with thirty rank and file of Company D, First Cavalry California Volunteers. They will start without delay.

Pursuant to this order he left Fort Wingate on November 7, and arrived in the Little Chino Valley, A.T., December 23, 1863, where Fort Whipple was first established; as stated in the following article dated at Fort Whipple, May 11, 1864, he relocated that post near what became the town of Prescott:

The inhabitants of this portion of the Territory will be pleased to know that Fort Whipple is to be removed to a point where it will afford them better protection. The site chosen is upon Granite creek, 22 miles south of this place, and a mile north of Sheldon's Granite ranch. Capt. Hargrave and Lieutenant Pomeroy with the men of Company C of the Californians, left here on Monday morning to begin work upon the new site. Major Willis is also there at present.

He was in command of a detachment of the 1st. California Infantry which attacked a band of Apaches near Salt River and killed 4 of them on June 30, 1864; returned to New Mexico and was mustered out at Santa Fe, September 5 by expiration of his term of service; the following day he was appointed Major, 1st New Mexico Infantry; promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, February 3, 1865, and honorably discharged at Santa Fe, N.M., October 1, 1866.

After his discharge he traveled through New Mexico, Arizona, California, Oregon and Washington Territory as a Civil Engineer and then went to Nebraska; he settled in Omaha in 1871 where he was a member of the Volunteer Fire Department; in 1874-75 he was Assistant to the County Clerk of Douglas County and during the next two years he had private employment as a bookkeeper; in 1878 he became Justice of the Peace of Douglas County and ex-officio City

Magistrate of Omaha and served as such until the time of his death.

Being in poor health he went for rest and quiet to Fontenelle, Adair County, Iowa, where he died on December 7, 1879, aged 48, buried there; an obituary in the Fontenelle Observer described him as "a man of fine education and rare talents, a perfect gentleman, honored and respected by all who knew him"; Willis Street in Prescott, Arizona, was named for him.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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 Records of the Rebellion, Series 1, Vol. 15, 26, 34, 41, 48, 50.
 Orton, R.H. - Records of California Men, pp. 335, 336.
 Report on Condition of the Indian Tribes, 1867, pp. 253, 258, 260, 261.
 Lockwood, F.C. - The Apache Indians, p. 148.
 Barnes, W.C. - Arizona Place Names, p. 410.
 Twitchell, R.E. - Leading Facts of New Mexico History, p. 280.
 W.P.A. Writers Project - Arizona, A State Guide, 1940, p. 269.
 1st. Arizona Territorial Legislature - Journals.
 The Adjutant General of the Army - Military Service Records.
 U.S. Veterans Administration - Pension records, W.C. 401,054.
 Tuttle, E.D. - Arizona Historical Review, April, 1928, p. 54.
 The Sacramento Union, June 13, 1864, 3:3.
 The Observer, Fontenelle, Iowa, December 9, 1879 (obituary).

WANTED

Any references to him in the Arizona Miner.

*OK to Jones
 Park on 1/1/40 R.R.*