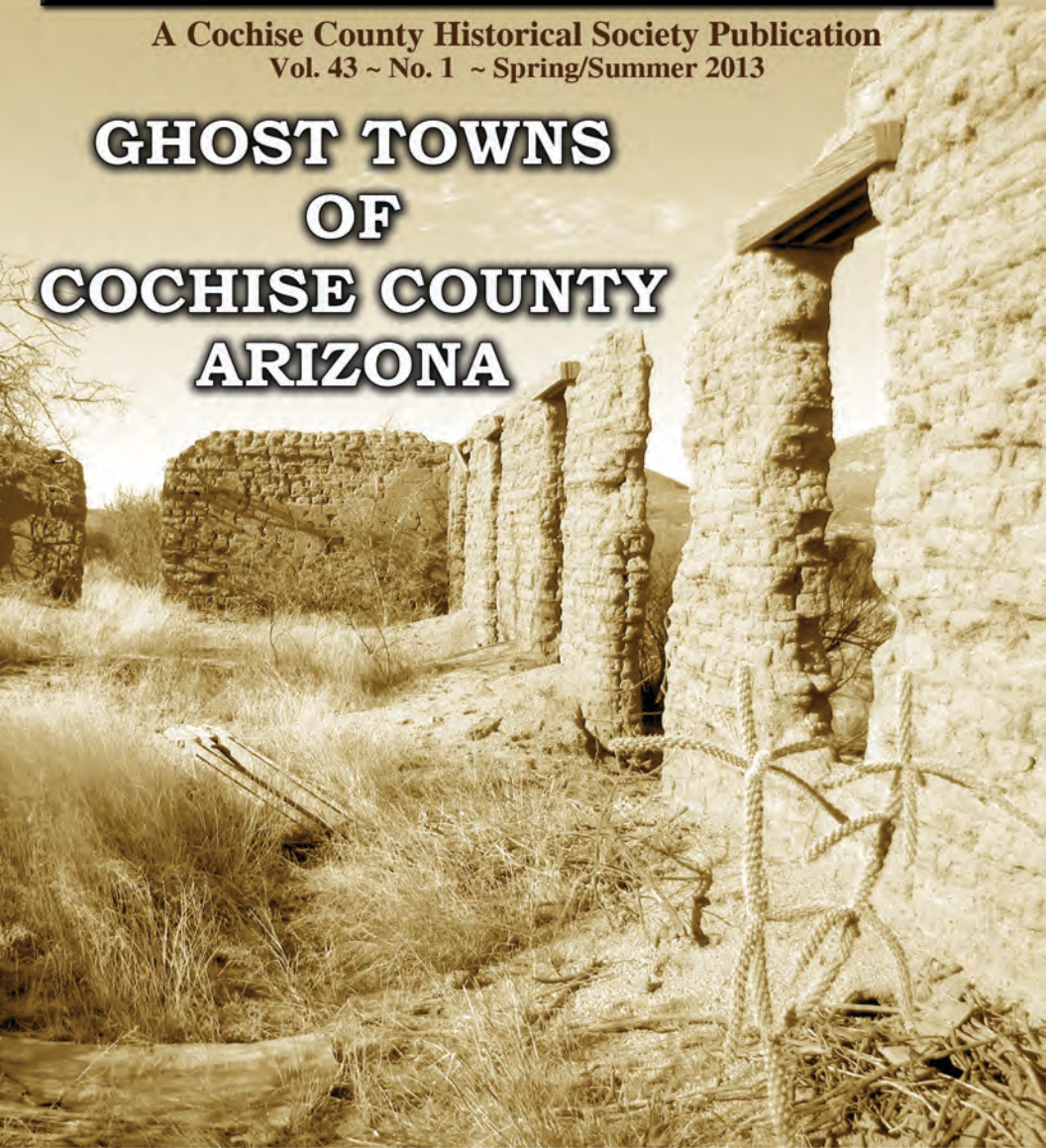


# THE COCHISE COUNTY HISTORICAL JOURNAL

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## GHOST TOWNS OF COCHISE COUNTY ARIZONA



Sunnyside - Gleeson - Courtland

# CCHS

## Cochise County Historical Society

Founded in 1966

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*To Preserve  
the Past for  
the Future*

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**From the Cochise County Historical Society  
President & Board of Directors**

I hope everyone of our members is enjoying the Journals. The members of the Board of Directors who are working on this project are doing a great job and we are putting out a great publication.

If you missed it we had a great Annual Meeting and a pretty good turnout. For all you members out there who have not renewed your membership please do so as soon as possible.

We would like to welcome our new board members Margaret Bemis from McNeal and Kathy Klump from Willcox. We want to also thank our outgoing Board Members for doing a great job over the past few years.

Again, I want to thank all of our members for supporting the Cochise County Historical Society so we can continue to keep the history of our county alive for future generations to come. If any member wishes to give input on our future Journals, we would appreciate hearing from you.

Thank you for your support.

W.F. "Bill" Pakinkis  
President, Cochise County Historical Society

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Gatrell house at Sunnyside

*Image courtesy of Bruce Peterson*

## **Sky Island Righteousness above a Desert of Sin: “Donnellite” Seeds in Sunnyside Canyon**

By Bruce A. Peterson

*[Bruce Peterson is a member of the residential faculty in communication at Mesa Community College. This article is a slightly revised version of a paper he presented at a conference of the Arizona Historical Society in 1999.]*

The Huachuca Mountains, “Thunder Mountains” the Indians called them, have retained their aboriginal name and have always been just a little off the path. On the East Side of their crest lies Fort Huachuca. On the West, where Sunnyside Canyon reaches up into the Miller Peak Wilderness Area, the mountains are remote, isolated, and what roads there are, are rough and rocky. The slopes that face the setting sun

overlook the San Raphael Valley, the headwaters of the Santa Cruz River.

The Spanish had mines in the Huachucas as early as the 1760s. When the Marqués de Rubí passed south of the mountains in December 1766, he noted that mines in the Huachucas were “producing good silver, notwithstanding the scarcity of people and the excessive risk.” The risk, even this early, was Apaches. The mines the Marqués referred to are in Cave Creek Canyon at the south end of the range. They would create excitement again when United States miners rediscovered them over a century later in 1879, but the Spanish miners did not stay long there in the 1760s. Most Spanish mines in the area were abandoned because they exhausted the minerals or the Apaches drove them out.<sup>1</sup>

The Huachuca Mountains resisted both missionaries and miners for a very long time, but after Cochise's death in 1874, Apache attacks in the area began to decline. By the time of Geronimo's surrender in 1886, miners and soldiers were high in the Huachucas, cattle filled the San Raphael Valley below, and a fierce missionary was about to find his way to the highest reaches of the mountains. His name was Sam Donnelly, a fundamentalist Protestant. Unlike the Catholic priests that skirted the mountains building missions before him, he was not there to convert pagan Indians. It was 1888, and the Indians were gone. Unlike other miners in the mountains, he was not there just for the precious ore in the rock. Donnelly believed he was climbing to the mountaintops of the

Huachucas to mine the mind of God, as well as His rocks.

Sam Donnelly came to Tombstone Arizona a few years before to establish a Holiness mission for the Salvation Army. Tombstone needed a “two-fisted preacher,” and Sam was no stranger to boisterous living and hard fighting. His father was Irish, a stern and sharp Presbyterian preacher who had migrated to Scotland, married a Scottish lass, and there, in the spirit of classic Protestantism, he fought the Devil and his Pope. The story is told that Catholics, especially the priests, dreaded and feared the severe parson. Sam was born to the couple in Barrhead, Scotland on November 16, 1852. When he was 12 years old, his father lay on his deathbed, consumed by an illness and too weak even to raise himself up. A Catholic woman who lived nearby was also sick and dying. A priest was called to minister the Last Rites to her. Somehow, the priest got turned around and stumbled into Parson Donnelly’s house by mistake. Upon entering the sickroom, the priest accidentally locked the door behind him. Approaching the bed to begin administering the Sacrament, old Donnelly opened his eyes and beheld the priest with his accouterments in hand. The sickened parson, as weak as he was, sprang from his bed yelling, “Thou son of darkness!” The priest turned in terror to flee, only to find the door bolted. The Reverend Donnelly yelled at his son, young Sam, who was there caring for his father, “Give me that knife!” pointing at a butcher knife on the table. Sam grabbed the knife, but used it himself to pry open the bolt and let the



priest escape. The exertion was too much for Sam's father, and he died shortly thereafter, leaving the boy to support himself and his mother by working in a textile factory.<sup>2</sup>

At some point Sam joined the English merchant marine. He worked his way to the position of chief engineer, traveled the globe, and tried to further his education during the long intervals at sea by reading. In port, he drank hard, fought hard, and achieved a reputation as a "scrapper."<sup>3</sup> Large and powerfully built like his father, "Scotty" called himself a "scientific boxer." The accounts of his conversion to Christianity are varied. Taken together, his mother's love of hymns and his father's fighting spirit both appear to have played a part in his decision to follow the call of Christ.

A *Los Angeles Times* article written about Sam and the community he founded in the Huachucas reported, "When he was of the world, worldly, he was the worldliest of them all." He did everything "with all his might." The paper recorded that his conversion had something to do with his remembering singing hymns to his mother as a child from an old hymnbook.<sup>4</sup> An Arizona travel guide claims, "One night Scotty ducked into a Salvation Army tent on the San Francisco waterfront to avoid a confrontation with some local thugs."<sup>5</sup> Howell Granger's, *Arizona's Names*, recounts that "Donnelly had been a leading patron of the tough San Francisco waterfront bars, but began his regeneration when he overheard another patron suggest that Scotty commit a crime at the cost to the other drinkers of a shot of whiskey.

Scotty was sober enough to give the men a tongue-lashing. He then wandered out and stumbled into a Salvation Army meeting.”<sup>6</sup>

The most insightful accounts of his conversion come from the memoirs of two women who were members of Donnelly’s Huachuca Mountain community called Sunnyside. Mary Lucille Hathaway, whose family moved to the camp in 1893 when she was three months old, recounts that Sam was at a Methodist Mission in San Francisco on April 10, 1885. He got up to settle some “rowdies” behavior, when the woman in charge of the meeting said to him, “Brother, what you need is the love of God in your heart.”<sup>7</sup> The most complete account comes from Biff Lamma, one of the last residents of Sunnyside, who has synthesized a number of accounts. Sam began drinking when he was about 25 and for seven years led a hard life of drinking and fighting. He liked to “set-em-up” for the whole house, and sometimes up to fifty patrons would have a drink on Scotty. One day he entered a bar without any money and expected someone to “set-em-up” for him. But no one in the bar offered to do so, even one man who had often had a drink on Scotty. Enraged when the man refused, even after being asked, Scotty jerked him out of his chair and began to thrash him so severely that, coming to himself, he realized he was about to kill the man. The experience so shocked Sam, that he swore off drinking altogether. Later while singing an old hymn in Fanny Crosby’s tent meeting in San Francisco, he was converted and became a preacher himself.<sup>8</sup>

“Brother Donnelly’s” career as a preacher was no less stormy than his earlier life. He traveled to Los Angeles where his preaching alienated leaders in the Methodist church and soon he found the pulpits there closed to him. He joined a Presbyterian church but found himself at odds with doctrines and practices that he found hypocritical and out of accord with the Bible. Sam’s disagreement with the reform-mission doctrines of the day centered on the relationship between Christianity as social work or Christianity as a relationship with “the spirit.” In the last decades of the 1800s, the “Social Gospel” was growing as a strong force in American Protestantism. A rejection of individual salvation, for an ideology of a “heroic social mission,” had captured the imagination of young Protestants, especially among the Presbyterian and Methodist denominations. The workers in the social missions “savored the warm emotional glow that came from helping the disinherited.” Work in a mission or an institutional church provided a sense of purpose more appealing than the intangible, ethereal promises of salvation by God’s election. Otherworldly spiritual reward shifted to more earthly and immediate sources. The Christian reformers were beginning to reject their parent’s doctrines of predestination and individual salvation for more modern ideas like teamwork, the reassurance of others, and therapeutic social relations.<sup>9</sup>

“Brother Sam,” as he was now called, found these doctrines to be self-centered, self-righteous, and contrary to his reading of Paul’s epistles. To Sam, their doctrines reeked of salvation by good works. He

joined the Holiness mission in Los Angeles believing their ideas of sanctification by a sovereign work of the Holy Spirit to be more in keeping with the Scriptures. Sam began a Bible study group “in an earnest attempt to search out its truths.” Among the group as a young woman by the name of Lizzie O’Harra who would become an important link to bringing many of the original families to the mining camp Donnelly would one day establish. Lizzie’s friends and family as far away as Dodge City, Kansas, began to correspond in letters with Brother Sam concerning the Scriptures.<sup>10</sup>

It was while Sam was in Los Angeles, trying to sort out his understanding of the Scriptures and their relationship to organized Christianity, that he was called to help out the Holiness mission in Tombstone, Arizona. The rough miners of the town had been hampering the work there, and the “two-fisted” preacher was needed, one who was “as ready to fight for his new faith with his brawn as with his eloquence.”<sup>11</sup> In Tombstone, Donnelly spent hours every day studying the Scripture. He found himself still at odds with the various denominations and their activities. In one of his pastoral letters he wrote, “Episcopalians, Baptist and Methodist fight against each other so much and so bitterly in the letter of the word that they cannot see the Lord Jesus Christ the blessed spirit of the word.”<sup>12</sup> Their arguments and conflicting doctrines divided people and spread confusion. He was beginning to view even the Holiness church as trusting in their ability to live the letter of the Scripture rather than trusting in the Grace of Christ’s sacrifice. Paul’s epistles engaged him;

he studied justification by faith and sanctification by relationship with the Holy Spirit. Human ability to reform produced emptiness for him; the letter of the Scripture without the Spirit was empty. All the preaching, the praying, and the social reforming of the Churches he had been a part of seemed to him like the religious gyrations of the Pharisees of old, and he wanted no more part in it. Donnelly wanted only the Spirit of the Word to guide him, but his passion for the Spirit of Truth kept taking him further and further from religious places and closer and closer to wild places.

Donnelly's teachings in Tombstone had a profound effect on two men in particular. While in the rough gunfighter town, he lived for a time across the street from the famous Bird Cage Theater in a livery stable. He met Ed Langford in the raucous town. Ed was an ingenious and trusting man who worked at the time as a blacksmith. He was an inventor, a kind of machinist, who could fashion things with his hands. Although he was converted to Christianity by Donnelly, Mrs. Langford, who was a Methodist, refused for a long time to even hear the charismatic teacher, believing him to be solely engaged in breaking up churches.<sup>13</sup> It seems Donnelly's reputation among church-going people was already tarnished, even in a town as rough as Tombstone. The second man to commit himself to Donnelly's teaching was Albert Gattrell, an ex-saloon keeper from the dying mining town of Charleston, Arizona. This town had been the headquarters of the Clanton gang, and Albert was well known for his shooting ability, which served him

well as a barkeep in the lawless town. He had also owned a bank that had been robbed so many times that he went bankrupt. He turned to prospecting hoping to make enough to pay back some of the people who had lost money in his bank.<sup>14</sup>

Gattrell had an interest in a mine in the Mule Mountains in conjunction with a short, heavy-set assayer named Ellis Sinclair, who was said to be stone-deaf from the repeated whistle of a Mississippi steamboat on which he had been the engineer.<sup>15</sup> Donnelly, Langford, Gattrell, and Sinclair all went up to work the mine in the Mule Mountains. They were up in the Mule's for nine months, but the mine proved unproductive.<sup>16</sup> However, while it may not have produced the ore Gattrell needed to pay off creditors, Sam seems to have found pure ore in his Bible. As Mary Hathaway tells the story, Sam "built a long ramada of brush and found by walking back and forth he could memorize better. He wore a deep ditch in this place while practically memorizing the Bible and lost all interest in the other teachings, having seen so much error in them."<sup>17</sup>

In the meantime, the men continued their search for the precious rocks of the mountains. On October 13, 1887, E. W. Sinclair located another mine in the West Huachuca Mountains. The deed was recorded on November 15, at 2:45 P.M. and was witnessed by A. J. Gattrell in front of W. F. Bradley the County Recorder.<sup>18</sup> The men relocated to the Copper Glance Mine. Concerning the move, Sam later wrote, "After I was delivered from the mules I trusted the Lord to

open the way for me to preach his gospel if I was ready, but the way was entirely blocked up in every direction but one and there the way was clearly opened to the mountains, again everything supplied that was needed." Sam believed providence was leading him up into the Huachucas. The letter was written on January 15, 1891, after the men had been in the Huachucas for three years. And at the beginning of 1891, Sam still thought the Holy Spirit would keep him in the mining camp for "still another year of Holy Ghost training."<sup>19</sup>

Donnelly described his approach to the Huachucas on his way up to Sunnyside Canyon one morning in this manner:

*I started at 3:30 a.m., a very clear, cold a.m. So cold that as I came Jack Frost made very determined advances on my nose and ears, but above all, he got my feet and showed me no mercy. Just as I neared the foot of the mountains the light of day began to peep above the horizon in the East. I watched the increasing light and the manner in which the darkness receded before the waves of glorious light. I had never seen such a light before; it came in great waves over the earth, just like the waves of the sea, as the tide comes in rolling its mighty billows over the nude rocks, now clothing them with his majestic reefs of white foam embedded in deep blue. Just in the same way the glorious waves of light from the sun of day clothes over nude Mother Earth shivering in the early morning. As the waves of light sweep the mountain tops, which a little while before had looked so cold and dreary, they are now looking radiant in their bright morning robes. I watched the waves of light rolling over the desert-looking earth until the grim darkness of the night had receded before the glorious sun of the day and the*

*thought came, what a beautiful type of Christ, whom steadfastly beholding, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory. So as by the Spirit of the Lord in the early morning of our Christian experience we stand in the desert cold and dark watching the glorious beams of light of the Son of God shining in our darkened hearts; we rejoice in the light, but as we press onward the rising Son of Righteousness, the Glory of His Presence fills our hearts and the warmth of His Eternal Love dispels the gloom and the host of Spiritual darkness that reigned through the night of Sin, receded in sullen fury before the glory of the Son of God.<sup>20</sup>*

For Sam Donnelly, the Huachucas had become a metaphor for what he had concluded about the nature of Christ. The Thunder Mountains embraced the thunder of the Apostle Paul's message to this preacher, who from his days leading the Bible study group in Los Angeles, had searched so diligently for the essence of the "Truth" of the scriptures. The satisfaction of Christianity came not from social relationships, not from the ability to follow the precepts of the letter of the law, but through the continuing approach of the overwhelming presence of God. Like the light of day pushing back the cold and dark of the desert night bringing its radiant warmth to the very tops of the Huachucas, so Sam Donnelly began his mountain wilderness church, free from the dark, cold vice of the world below and free from the denominational strife from which he sought divorce. Sam Donnelly became a voice of one crying in the wilderness high atop the Huachuca Mountains. From this point on, the mountains and their hidden treasures became metaphors by which he would explain and expound



the deep riches of the Scriptures he so loved. He possessed a desire to take his epiphany from these mountains to the world, but he would never leave them for long again; he would spend his life scattering his seed in Sunnyside Canyon.

A few of Sam's converts came to the Copper Glance mine for religious reasons, to hear "the best expounder of the Gospel in the Southwest, its most thorough Bible student and most eloquent speaker [whose] sermons are of the kind one does not mind being long."<sup>21</sup>

A few came to the camp from Los Angeles. One said, "I had belonged to several churches in Los Angeles and found in them something lacking, a hollowness and dissatisfaction in it all. I took part in socials and other means for the Pastor's fund, but that did not help me. I left the Methodist church and tried others. At last I heard of Brother Donnelly, and the good work he was doing. Here, I said, is what I have been looking for."<sup>22</sup>

In October 1890, Will Crawford and his new wife Katie came to the camp. Katie had been a piano teacher in Dodge City, Kansas. When she was fourteen years old, her older sisters married and her parents moved out to western Kansas. Katie stayed in Dodge City with the McIntyres, an affluent family, while she took over her sister's students as their piano teacher. Louis McIntyre was politically active and even ran for office on the Prohibition ticket but was defeated by a saloon-keeper.

McIntyre had a growing dissatisfaction with his church, as he had been introduced to the Holiness doctrine of sanctification as a second-definite work of grace. He began to talk with a Sunday school teacher from another church named Moore. Moore's daughter, Lizzie O'Harra, was in Los Angeles in Donnelly's Bible study group. Through this acquaintance Donnelly and the McIntyres began to exchange correspondence.<sup>23</sup> Sam's letter congregation was continually growing as he sent long letters filled with spiritual instruction across the country from his mountain retreat in the Huachucas. This correspondence eventually brought Katie the music teacher to the camp. She was the second woman to join the group, and she became the camp's exquisite pianist. The men of the camp brought her an elegant Rosewood Chickering square piano around the mountains from Fort Huachuca carrying it on their backs up the last hill to the camp. Her piano filled the canyon with "sacred music" from her "sympathetic touch."<sup>24</sup>

Three years later the McIntyres followed Katie and her husband Will down to Arizona, not only because they coveted Brother Sam's teaching, but also because Louis had lost everything in the depression of 1893. Louis McIntyre had gone from riches to rags. For Louis, Brother Sam's mining camp held the promise of family, fellowship, and the Word of God. The year of the depression brought many more to the camp. The work was hard, but there was work, not to mention the attraction of Brother Sam's teachings. But 1893 was not a year of depression for Sam. He and Alvine Caroline Swartz were married on May

4, at Fairbank. They had three children in the next few years, Raymond, Laurence and Alvin.<sup>25</sup> Brother Sam's old friend Lizzie, who had helped him organize Bible Studies when he lived in Los Angeles, was drawn to the Huachucas in 1893 also.

Lizzie's husband, John O'Hara, traveled to the 1893 Chicago World's Fair from California. Lizzie asked him to stop in Bronson, Kansas on his way back to Los Angeles to pick up one of their two nieces and escort her to Los Angeles for a visit. Lizzie hoped to do a little matchmaking and find a wife for one of her sons who was crippled. The older daughter Donna did not want to leave Kansas as she had just gotten her first job as a school teacher, so John took the younger, Laura Nye. The trip to California was unnerving. The train derailed in Lordsburg, New Mexico. Although no one was hurt, Laura was shaken. Then, when they arrived in Los Angeles, her aunt Lizzie greeted her by asking John, "Why did you bring that one?"<sup>26</sup>

Laura records that neither she nor her family were very religious, but in Los Angeles with Aunt Lizzie she attended Church and Sunday school developing a desire to understand Christianity. She said, "I was slow at understanding these truths, so Aunt Lizzie took me to many different . . . Pastors [who] tried to show me the way, but I couldn't seem to grasp it. . . . I was under deep conviction. Aunt Lizzie said, 'I know what I'll do. I will take you to Arizona to the Huachuca Mountains. There is one that can deliver you, and if he can't, nobody can.'" She arrived in Arizona on her 22nd birthday and stayed.<sup>27</sup>

Contacts with Lizzie O'Harra encouraged a good number of converts to join the camp. Yet, most who came to the Huachucas did not arrive looking for the Word of God. Rather, work drew them to the mine. Donnelly had a reputation for benevolence as well as paying higher than average wages. In November of 1894, three prospectors came to the camp broke, destitute, and looking for work. At the time, the camp was not in need of more laborers, but Donnelly packed their animals with a quarter of beef along with other staples. One of them, a man named Herndon, refused to accept the charity and insisted they work to pay for the goods. Donnelly allowed them to work for a few days in payment. Herndon proved to be an industrious fellow, and Donnelly retained him. The other two were sent on their way, their work not proving to be acceptable.<sup>28</sup>

In this manner, the camp grew, some for work and a meal, some for the Seeds of eternity to be planted in their hearts. At one time the community had in excess of 80 residents. The camp's structure was communal. Maybe there was a spirit of altruism in Sunnyside Canyon, or maybe it was just the most practical way of life for a wilderness mining camp. Those who joined Brother Sam's camp and proved their worth could stay. It would have been all but impossible, as remote as the camp was, to pay each individual, then take separate supply and food orders for each family, keep track of the separate moneys, and maintain completely separate living quarters. This was a wilderness camp, some eight miles from the nearest wagon trail. Eating together and holding

supplies in common was only logical, and over time it simply became the norm for the community. Even later, when the mines began to play out and the camp moved down into the meadow below and built Sunnyside, they continued their communal structure. Those who were hired were paid wages and given board, but if they did not work hard, or after a time showed no interest in understanding the Scriptures, were paid their wages and asked to leave. This was at no loss to them, as the camp paid generous wages.

The Copper Glance consisted of an “Upper” and “Lower Camp.” Each camp had a hand hewn log house whose construction was overseen by Ed Langford and Joe Branch. Makeshift cabins and tents surrounded these gathering houses. Most of the families with children lived in the houses, the others in the tents. Donnelly saw his role first as the Pastor, and Langford and Gattrell conducted the business of the mine.<sup>29</sup> On Sunday, Sam held two or three meetings in the house at the Lower Camp, as work at the mines was suspended for the Sabbath. Children were not required to attend the services and were usually allowed to “go their way and play.” Bible study and meetings were not only confined to Sunday. Sam had an informal style, and he maintained a certain comfortable presence with the people of the camp and the Scripture. He taught the Words of the prophets in a practical manner, using examples from the mine, the mountains, and the camp’s everyday life. Questions were always allowed, even welcomed. Mary Hathaway remembered Sam’s

manner of teaching saying: “Anywhere, anytime when a few were gathered together and Brother Sam was at hand he would talk to them; maybe in the kitchen a little sermon would be given or at the mine where the men were working, or under the trees. It was all very informal and natural.”<sup>30</sup>

Sam often used the mine as a metaphor for his teachings, like he used the mountains and their surrounding deserts. He compared their community to the deposit of ore they worked to uncover. “You understand the principle of assaying a sample from a great mine,” he said one day. You can’t assay the whole mass or know all its contents or value, he went on, “But, you can cut through it in various places and



Ruins at Sunnyside

*Image courtesy of Keith Davis*

having taken a sample of the great mass, a ton or more; you grind it all up, and a small amount is melted by fire." This small sample represents the whole mass. "The smelter . . . must know not only the precious metals that are in the ore but also everything that is base and rebellious in it," he taught. In the world it is the same. There is an excess of evil and rebellious souls and spirits. When the flux is good the precious gold of the spirit "sinks to the bottom and the slag of science and worldly wisdom rises to the top." But also "the white quartz of self righteousness and the zinc of creeds can cause the furnace of God . . . to become frozen." He went on to compare this lesson directly to their mountain community. "You will understand by this why we have been so long in the mountains and why so many strange things have happened to us," he said. We have fed tramps and squandered money upon the vicious, idle, and malignant. We suffered adversity, and our fellow man seems at times to be a boiling cauldron of hate and malice against us. But we should not be discouraged or afraid he exhorted. "We are in the midst of the furnace, heated seven times by sin," but it is only God's test to see "whether the gold of the love of God and men were [sic] in us or not."<sup>31</sup>

Sam hated the self-righteous hypocrisy of religious people and religious divisions and dead doctrines. He saw them as the greatest threat to the Word of God. They could freeze the furnace causing God's plan to be aborted, causing His Word to be of no effect. He wanted the pure gold of God's Word to come out in his flock. He found out that the letters he had written

to people when he had first come up to the Copper Glance mine were being copied by some in the camp and sent to friends and family of the one he had first sent the letter to. This made him very angry. He called for everyone in the community to whom he had sent letters to bring them out to him. Sam proceeded to stuff them into two gunnysacks, and then, he struck a match and set fire to them in front of the whole congregation. He explained that he did not want a denomination called the “Donnellites” to spring up after he was gone from this earth. His desire was that the Word of God would be planted in their hearts, a living Word in each of them as individuals, and that they would be epistles where ever they went, that they would pass that Word to their children and to their children’s children.<sup>32</sup>

As comfortable as Brother Sam was with teaching in the camp, and though he wanted no written doctrine to leave his camp, he always envisioned taking his message from the wilderness to the world. The little group looked to the mine as the means to bring Brother Sam’s oratorical powers on a “crusade” that would “have no affiliations with churches, creeds or Salvationists.” They dreamed of a tent that would seat 10,000 people, their own train cars to travel from city to city, advertising and an itinerary in the United States and eventually Europe, all financed by the bounty of the mines. In 1896, they thought it would only be one or two years before they could set forth.<sup>33</sup> But Sam’s dream of leaving the Huachucas was never realized. The first carloads of ore in the early years produced as much as three thousand dollars



a car, but the ore was diminishing by 1895. Like the Spanish miners who had mined the mountains over a century before them, they found the Huachucas did not give up their treasure for long. In fact, the Sunnyside mines never produced more than enough for the community itself to survive.

Dwindling ore and supplying the camp were not Sam's only challenges or "attacks of Satan," as Sam deemed them. On February 27, 1897, the *Bisbee Weekly Orb* printed an article entitled: "A FALSE REPORT. A MAN WHO CLAIMS TO BE A DIVINE TEACHER SENT BY GOD. He Rules By Hypnotism. His Following Consists of some Twenty or thirty Persons. An Investigation Needed."<sup>34</sup> The defamatory article presented a grisly picture of Donnelly and his mining camp. The article accused Donnelly of being "expelled" from the Salvation Army "on account of some shortness in money matters." He supposedly retreated to the Mule Mountains "(an appropriate place)" the paper said, "where he claims he received communications from God telling him he was a direct teacher from God." After two years, he moved to the Huachuca Mountains "where he gathered around him some twenty or thirty people, men and women, who are as completely under his power and influence as are the serfs of Russia or the peons of Mexico." The members of the camp, claimed Hall and Collins, work the mines for "Mr. Donnellh's [sic] enrichment." In stark contrast to a *Phoenix Times* article from the year before, which had been reprinted by the *Los Angeles Times*, describing the camp structures as "uncouth without, but cherry within," the *Orb*

described the buildings at the mining camp as cramped and without privacy. The *Orb* went as far as to claim, “Mr. Donnelly has the entrance of these private rooms, at all hours, without knocking.”<sup>35</sup>

The article made the members of the camp out to be deluded prisoners. “All who join the camp must . . . leave friends, relatives, children, wife or husband and follow God and Donnelly.” They must also give up all their property to him, claimed the *Orb*. Donnelly supposedly named all the children born in the camp, the parents having no say. One women, the piece asserted, was being held against her will while her husband, who had left the camp to work in another mine, was desperately trying to retrieve her. Donnelly, allegedly, pulled a gun on several men and used violent threats. The fierce man whose passions were not kept in subjection was accused of adultery with the claim: “When he goes to Tombstone or Fairbanks . . . he takes with him the wife of any of his members whom he pleases.” Donnelly was pictured as getting rich on the ranches and mines of others while he sat and dined on champagne in Los Angeles or El Paso.

Finally, the *Orb* called its readers to action: “We believe this camp should be investigated by the authorities and cleansed, as Mr. Donnelly says he will soon have the power to command the sun or moon to stand still, and it will be done. We are in favor of visiting the camp at once ere Mr. Donnelly stops the sun in mid-heavens and makes our days of many hours duration.”<sup>36</sup> In short, the article made the Copper Glance Mining Community out to be a fanatical group of zealots led by a hypnotic, deceitful,

vision crazed tyrant.

Because the article was simply not the truth, Sam Donnelly sued J. Rex Hall and Thomas Collins, editors of the paper, for libel. Bench Warrants were issued for J. Rex Hall and John Doe Collins in the District Court of Cochise County in the latter part of May 1897. When Collins appeared before the Bench, he stated that his name was Thomas Collins and not John Doe as stated in the indictment. Both men pleaded not guilty and bail was set at five-hundred dollars each.<sup>37</sup> The case never came to trial.<sup>38</sup> Allegedly, the two men disappeared from the territory. A year later, the case was dismissed by the court. However, having his name defamed in the local press was not the full extent of Donnelly's problems that spring. At the same time he stood in the court of Cochise County as plaintiff in the libel suit, he stood before the bench as defendant, charged with aggravated assault on a child.

The Grand Jury of Cochise County, upon hearing rumors that children were being treated cruelly at the camp, investigated the matter. No doubt, the article in the *Bisbee Weekly Orb* played a great part in communicating the "rumors." At one point, the article read: "A woman, who had been a member of the camp but became disgusted at the actions, ran away but was forced to leave her child there. She sent four men out after the little boy, but they were met at the top of the canyon by eight or ten male members armed with rifles."<sup>39</sup> The woman and little boy described here were likely Mrs. Fannie Warrington and her son Joe.

The charges against Donnelly alleged that he had taken the six-year-old Warrington boy and, tying a rope around him, had degraded and humiliated him in the presence of the whole community by throwing him in a pond and dragging him out crying and screaming in fear for his life. The mother claimed Donnelly did this three successive times and then took the child, dripping with water, into a room, and there, whipped him with a buggy whip until his back and legs were covered with welts.<sup>40</sup> Mrs. Warrington had given over discipline responsibility to Mr. Donnelly, but the prosecution held that even so, not even a parent has the right to inflict such cruelty on a child, and of course can delegate no such authority to anyone else.<sup>41</sup>

Donnelly lost the case in Cochise County and was forced to appeal to the Supreme Court of the Territory of Arizona. The Supreme Court Brief of Appellee is written in a tone that echoes the tone of the *Weekly Orb's* defamatory article. The Brief begins saying:

*This is a most remarkable case: The defendant was charged with an aggravated assault upon a child. The evidence in this case discloses the fact that up on top of the Huachuca Range of Mountains, is a community located so that a wagon road will not come nearer than eight miles of the camp, and the balance of the way taken on foot or on the backs of animals. So isolated, this man Donnelley [sic] has surrounded himself with a community of religious zealots who have surrendered to him absolutely.*<sup>42</sup>

Even with these kinds of credibility and image problems, Donnelly, in a manner of speaking, won the case in the Supreme Court of the Territory of Arizona.

Witnesses for the defense testified that Donnelly had not whipped the boy, nor tied a rope around him. Alice Branch testified that the “defendant placed one foot on the rock at the edge of the pond, and his other foot on the shore, and he took and ducked him [the boy] in and lifted him up and gave him to his mother.”<sup>43</sup> Thomas Duncan, a blacksmith at the camp, testified that the water was only 15 to 20 inches deep where Donnelly ducked the boy, and he saw no whipping, even though Donnelly spent some time immediately after the ducking helping the blacksmith do some measuring. He also said that no buggy whip was kept in the shop. He ended his testimony reiterating, “I swear that there was no whip in the camp, none that I know of, and if there had been one there I think that I would have known it.”<sup>44</sup>

The Court did not completely exonerate Donnelly, but decided that first, Donnelly had no right to discipline the child, even if Mrs. Warrington had asked him to do so. Common law supposes that schoolmasters may discipline students while in their care, “provided, always, that the chastisement be reasonable.” Whipping has always been considered assault and can only be justified by the relationship between the child and the adult. Even though Donnelly was “called teacher” by all those in the camp, and the mother had instructed him to discipline the child, he did not necessarily possess such a role legally. Nevertheless, the Supreme Court felt that the lower court had erred in taking into consideration that Donnelly thought he possessed such a role, and therefore, had no violent intent. The lower court had excluded evidence that

the punishment of the child was at the request of the parents, and the jury should have been allowed this evidence before making their judgment. The evidence reflects directly on whether the defendant was guilty of simple or aggravated assault, ruled the court. The High Court also ruled that the six-year-old boy's testimony at the trial should not have been allowed. He was obviously coached, and the court determined he did not realize the consequence of perjury. The case was therefore returned to Cochise County for retrial.<sup>45</sup> The County did not retry the case but dismissed the charges on May 9, 1898, two months after the High Court's ruling. In his youth, Donnelly fought with his fists and won; now he fought with words and the winning was bittersweet.

Late in 1894, in order to supplement dwindling funds, the community began to operate a sawmill in the meadow they called Sunnyside below the mine. The lumber went to the Washington Camp, a mine thriving across the San Raphael valley in the Patagonia Mountains. Sunnyside needed the money until their "main body of ore" was found. The December 1894 issue of the *Prospector* reported the camp starting up the sawmill, but also said: "Another rich find has just been made in the Huachuca mountains by the Copper Glance Co., said to be better than the mine which has been worked by the Co. for a number of years, in fact, it is described as being a mountain of ore, and astonishingly rich."<sup>46</sup> A year and a half later, the *Phoenix Herald* reported: "Mr. S. Donnelly was in town today from the Copper Glance mine. He reports the new strike improving as work progresses.

The shaft is down 60 feet and is 12 feet wide at the bottom, all in ore, the hanging wall not being found yet.”<sup>47</sup> Nevertheless, the miners never found their “mountain of ore.” Their vision of riches beyond their needs, their dream of sending Sam out from the purity and innocence of the mountains with the pure gold of the Gospel using the precious things of the earth, was not to be.

The manner in which they worked was typical of early prospectors. Their techniques were hardly sophisticated. The community who sought the precious things of life set their charges at night and waited until morning, when everything had settled, to clear out the ore and debris. One morning, they awoke to find the mine full of water. They had opened an underground reservoir or spring. Now they had to invest in pumps, but no matter how much they pumped, they could lower the water not even an inch. They tried to tunnel in from below and thereby release the water. Their tunnel goes into the mountain for quite a way and then branches off into numerous directions, as if they could not decide which way to go.<sup>48</sup> By the fall of 1898, everyone had moved down to Sunnyside except Brother Sam and his family who had located a few miles away at the Lone Star Mine which the company had established about the same time as the sawmill at Sunnyside.<sup>49</sup> While Sam and Alvine lived at Lone Star, the Sunday meetings were generally held there, the flock enjoying the picturesque three-mile walk from Sunnyside.<sup>50</sup>

Late in 1900, Brother Sam fell ill from Bright's disease and stomach trouble. He left his flock on April

14, 1901. They buried him at the Lone Star mine, but since it had produced no ore, they dismantled the house there, and Sam's family moved down to Sunnyside. Brother Sam Donnelly would never sow the seeds of God's Word beyond Sunnyside Canyon himself. If the seeds he planted took root in the individuals of the camp, his words would spread anyway. The precious gold, silver, and copper of the mines supported his community while he mined and taught the Bible to his mountain flock, but about the same time the mountain quit giving up its wealth, Sam's voice of gold also fell silent. If his precious seeds were to be scattered, it would now be by those of his flock who, as things turned out, were soon scattered abroad.

By 1903, everyone had left Sunnyside Canyon except an eccentric old bachelor, Cyrus Cooper. He remained with a few chickens, a garden plot, and a rifle until Arizona became a State in 1912. That year a few of Sam's scattered flock returned to try to operate a cattle ranch. But that is a story for another time.

For years an apocryphal story has circulated around the area that when the Donnellites buried Sam, they put a pipe in the ground from his head to the surface. The story goes that they expected him to rise from the dead or speak from his grave. There is probably no more truth to this story than to the *Bisbee Orb's* story Sam challenged in the courts. But if you are going to visit Sam's grave it is not on Boot Hill; it is high atop the Mountains of Thunder, spiritmountains, in a place we still, almost a century



later, call wilderness.

Sam Donnelly was truly a voice crying in the wilderness. His letters, his flock, his legacy, have left a unique mark on southeastern Arizona. Conquistadors, priests, gunfighters, cattle barons, miners, and speculators have all left their mark and many still speak from their graves across the Sky Islands of Arizona. Sam's voice is one of the most unusual. The people who lived with Sam never liked being called Donnellites, and their descendents do not appreciate the label either. Sam hated denominations and no denomination ever arose out of his flock. But the descendants of Sunnyside, AZ believe their hearts were filled with springs arising out of the Huachucas, especially those springs that arose out of Sam Donnelly.



Ruins at Sunnyside

*Image courtesy of Keith Davis*

## Notes

- 1** John P. Wilson and Historical Society of New Mexico., *Islands in the desert: a history of the uplands of southeastern Arizona*, 1st ed. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995): 37, 46.
- 2** Roberta Lamma, *A place called Sunnyside* (Tucson, Ariz.: Pocket Guides, 1982): 5-6, and *Phoenix Times*, (March 23, 1896)-- *Los Angeles Times* (March 27, 1896) 12.
- 3** Lamma (1982): 6.
- 4** "A Mining Commune", *Los Angeles Times*, March 27, 1896: 12.
- 5** Ben T. Traywick, *Other ghost towns in Cochise County* (np Red Marie's Bookstore, 1987): 2.
- 6** Byrd H. Granger, *Arizona's names : X marks the place* ([Tucson, Ariz.?]: Falconer Pub. Co.: distributed by Treasure Chest Publications, 1983): 593.
- 7** Mary Lucille Hathaway, *An album of memories* (Tucson, Ariz.: M.L. Hathaway, 1972): 9.
- 8** Lamma (1982): 6.
- 9** Susan Curtis, *A consuming faith: the social gospel and modern American culture, New studies in American intellectual and cultural history*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991): 69.
- 10** Hathaway (1972):8.
- 11** "A Mining Commune", *Los Angeles Times*, March 27, 1896: 12. Lamma (1982): 6; Alma Ready, "The Copper Glance Colony: A Communal Religious Group Mined and Lumbered the Huachucas," *Arizona Magazine*, May 28, 1967, 22-26: 24.
- 12** Donnelly, Sam. Transcribed letters and letter fragments (1888-1900): 317.
- 13** Lamma (1982): 11; Ready (1967): 22, Alma Ready's article contains numerous errors, and she records Mr. Langford as "Tom Langford, a burly former blacksmith of that tough town, Tombstone."

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**14** Lamma (1982): 5.

**15** Hathaway (1972): 30.

**16** Katie Crawford in Lamma (1982): 11.

**17** Hathaway (1972): 10-11.

**18** “*Index to Names of Mine Locators, Book 8, 1881-1894.*,” (Bisbee, AZ: Cochise County Recorder, 1881-1894), 630-631.

**19** Donnelly, Sam. Transcribed letters and letter fragments (1888-1900): 159.

**20** Sam Donnelly, “*The Donnelly Letters*,” (unpublished collection of Biff Lamma, 1888-1900):113-114. Letter, in Hathaway (1972): 16, and Lamma (1982): 49.

**21** “A Mining Commune,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 27, 1896: 12.

**22** Katie Crawford in Lamma (1982): 11; and “A Mining Commune,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 27, 1896: 12.

**23** Hathaway (1972): 8-9.

**24** Lamma (1982): 18-19.

**25** “*Affidavit of applicant for marriage license, Territory of Arizona, County of Cochise: Samuel Donnelly and Alvine Richards HEE Swartz*,” (Phoenix, AZ: Arizona State Archives, Department of Library, Archives and Public Records, 1893). and Hathaway (1972): 19. According to the license, Rev. Charles R. Nugent A.M., Pastor First Presbyterian Church of Tombstone, AZ., conducted the marriage at Fairbank in the presence of Edwin R. Langford and A. L. Gattrell. Lucille Hathaway thought the minister was Hugert Prichard of Tombstone.

**26** Lamma, Roberta Almyra Nye. Biography of Annie Laura O’Harra Blomberg Nye, (unknown date).

**27** “*Biographical Sketch of Laura Nye*,” in Hathaway (1972): 265-266.

**28** “A Mining Commune,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 27, 1896: 12; Lamma (1982): 8-9.



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**43** “*Samuel Donnelly vs. Territory of Arizona*” Appellant’s Abstract, (Jan. 6, 1898) 6.

**44** “*Samuel Donnelly vs. Territory of Arizona*” Appellant’s Abstract, (Jan. 6, 1898) 7-8.

**45** “Criminal No. 124. Filed February 23, 1898. Samuel Donnelly, Defendant and Appellant, v. Territory of Arizona, Plaintiff and Respondent,” in *Arizona Reports: Report of Cases Argued and Determined in the Supreme Court of the Territory of Arizona From 1896 to April 16, 1898*, ed. E.W. Lewis Reporter (San Francisco: Bancroft-Whitney Company, 1905), 291-300.

**46** Lamma (1982): 22.

**47** “Mr. S. Donnelly was in town today,” *Phoenix Daily Herald*, March 13, 1896:3.

**48** Lamma (1982): 22-23.

**49** Hathaway (1972): 39.

**50** Hathaway (1972): 49.



1910 Gleeson Jail in 2010

*Image courtesy of Keith Davis*

## **Laws and Lawmen in Gleeson<sup>1</sup>**

By Glenn Snow

*[This article and the ones by Glenn Snow that follow have been reprinted from pamphlets and broadsides on the history of Gleeson and Courtland that he has made available to the public on his excellent website, [GleesonArizona.com](http://GleesonArizona.com). In addition to the essays, he has included numerous photographs of Gleeson in the past and present.]*

Wesley Wooten Cates was the first deputy sheriff and constable of the Gleeson jail. It was a significant and notable step on a long trail of law-enforcement pursuits for deputy Cates. Wes Cates, or W.W. Cates, as he was commonly known, was born in Round Rock, Texas, which at the time was a small town just north

of Austin. His mother died giving birth to him, and his father was a circuit-riding Methodist preacher. His father remarried, but Wes was just a child when his father also died, leaving him with nothing that felt like home and nobody who felt like family. After a while in his stepmother's home, he loaded all his belongings into a flour sack and left Round Rock on his father's grey mare. Two days later, he sold the mare for two bronses and a bed roll.

Moving from town to town, young Wes worked wherever he could, eventually landing a position as a helping hand at a horse outfit near the Texas-New Mexico border. It was there, at the LFD Ranch, that Wes learned to break young colts and horses, working through his early teen years as ranch hand and horse trainer.

There is a note about the actual date of Cates' birth. He needed to be 18 in order to join the Texas Rangers, and at the time of his induction, he *said* that he was born in July of 1874. However, his mother died giving birth to Wesley, and her tombstone lists February 22, 1876 as the date of her death. Apparently, Wes joined the Rangers just shy of his real 17th birthday, and since he had no parents to contradict him, he was accepted into the Rangers.

He served from January 24, 1893 until January 23, 1894. During his one-year stint, he served in the Frontier Battalion, Company B, under the command of Captain Bill McDonald, one of the most famous of the Rangers. The short duration of his service was not due to his inability to do the job (although

the reality of his youth may have played some part). After one year of service, his courage and integrity impressed Captain McDonald so much that he recommended Cates to the people of Amarillo Texas, and in January of 1894, just shy of his real 18th birthday, Wes became the first (and youngest) city marshal of Amarillo.

While in Amarillo, Wes married Florence Margaret Allen in late December of 1895. It was the Allen connection which eventually brought the Cates' family to Gleeson Arizona. Florence (known as Pearl) was daughter to Margaret M. Allen who lived in Pearce and Courtland. After a stay in Roswell New Mexico, where Wes briefly tried his hand at ranching, they moved to Pearce, and finally to Gleeson, where Wes was named deputy sheriff in 1904. From 1904 until 1912, Cates served as the town's lawman under Cochise County Sheriff Scott White.

When he began his service in Gleeson, the "jail" was a large oak tree in the wash. The tree had a cable wrapped around it, and prisoners were chained by their right hand to the cable and served their sentence there, whether it was one day or thirty. When it rained, the runoff would flow down the wash and clean out "the jail." After a couple of years, Wes prevailed upon the county to build a more conventional jail, albeit made of wood. This "interim" jail was build of 2x6's laid flat one on another, with a steel grate for a door and a tin roof. It stood in the area just in front of the current jail building. In 1910, several inmates attempted to escape their confines by tearing out the tin roof. By late April 1910, the new Gleeson jail was





Gleeson Jail Tree still has the cable in 2010

*Image courtesy of Keith Davis*

built of reinforced concrete at a cost of \$1778. The interim wooden jail was sold at auction for \$25 and was hauled away in May 1910.

Several incidents of some interest and excitement happened during Cates' time in Gleeson. Very early on the morning of March 16 1911, Cates went with John Gleeson and B. A. Taylor (two of the biggest names in Gleeson) in Taylor's car down to Douglas to be spectators at the battle just across the border between the revolutionaries and the Mexican Federales. They returned later in the day, disappointed that the battle did not take place "as scheduled". The film canisters which the rebel general Pancho Villa had ordered

for his movie cameras had not arrived, which meant that he could not film the battle. Consequently, he decided to postpone his attack to a later date so that he could be immortalized in his movies.

In May of 1912, two 14-year old girls, Lupa Madril and Rosa Olivas, were reported as having been spirited away by Angel Valderaros and David Martinez. Deputy Cates and some helpers canvassed the area, but did not find the group. The couples had rented a buggy and horse in Courtland the previous day and headed for Douglas, but the horse and buggy returned by themselves to Gleeson. After some investigation, the foursome were found in a hotel in Douglas and were brought back to Gleeson. Deputy Cates interceded with their parents who agreed to let the two couples marry, which had been their plan.

Less than a month later, Cates and Sheriff Wheeler of Tombstone were out on the roads with bloodhounds, trying to find David Martinez. It seems that Martinez got angry with Rosa Olivas, put a handgun to her chest and pulled the trigger. The bullet went just above her heart and was lodged in her back, next to the spine. Unable to find Martinez with the bloodhounds, they set up watch on the residence of a "loose woman" in the tenderloin district of Courtland, with whom Martinez was known to spend some time on a regular basis, but he never showed up there either. The young girl died of her wounds, and Governor Hunt posted a \$200 reward for the capture of Martinez, but it was feared that he had made his way to Mexico and would

never been seen again.

Martinez was apprehended within days by the Mexican authorities near Nacozari, about 75 miles south of the border at Douglas. Martinez was transported to Agua Prieta, just across the border from Douglas, and was then extradited back into the United States. He admitted shooting his wife, but claimed that he had caught her with another man and was therefore justified in killing her as "a matter of honor." The editor of the *Courtland Arizonan* offered the opinion that

*To the people of this vicinity, who know how he had conducted himself between the time of his marriage and the killing of his wife, the fact that he was possessed of any sense of honor comes as a surprise.*

Martinez pleaded guilty to the charge of murder, and was sentenced to the state penitentiary for the rest of his life.

Wesley Wooten Cates departed the town of Gleeson in 1912, and moved with his family up to Casa Grande, where he was the first marshal of that city. He held that position until 1927, when after a brief hiatus, he became Captain of the mounted guards at the Arizona State Penitentiary at Florence. He later moved to Tucson and was recruited to be a Pima County deputy and border patrolman. Cates' final position was working for the U.S. Marshal's office in Tucson transporting prisoners. He worked that job until he was 78 years old, and died peacefully at the age of 80.



Wesley Wooten Cates in Casa Grande

*Image courtesy of Glenn Snow*

### **Robert Lafayette “Lafe” Gibson**

Lafe Gibson was named deputy sheriff and constable of Gleeson to replace Wes Cates in 1912. His appointment was a political one, as Lafe did not live in Gleeson prior to his posting. In fact, Gibson and his family lived in the Tombstone precinct and he traveled to Gleeson every day from his homestead. Lafe was not a professional lawman, but listed his profession as barber in the 1910 census. This was hardly surprising, as the income for being a deputy sheriff was not enough to support a single man, let

alone an entire family. Most deputies before World War I had some other job as their primary employment, be it miner, rancher, well driller (as in the case of Wesley Cates), or a score of other time-flexible jobs.

Lafe was born in 1878 in Utah, and came to Tombstone, where he married Katie Scranton in 1906. He was 34 when he replaced Cates at Gleeson. His family had a homestead between Tombstone and Gleeson, and when he was a barber he would ride west from the homestead to Tombstone for work. After he got the job in 1912, he simply rode the other direction east into Gleeson and made his office at the jail.

If he was not a lawman when he began the job at Gleeson, he certainly became one by experience. But it was a time of transition between the “Old West” and the “New West.” It was a time that called for less gun fighting and more negotiation. It also called for greater “networking,” making (and using) connections both technological and personal. And Lafe Gibson was well equipped for the job. As a barber in Tombstone, he knew most everybody in town. In fact, since Tombstone was the county seat and drew people in from all over Cochise County, Lafe knew, or knew of, most everyone in the whole county. He also had an ability to talk and to connect with people, again a legacy of his days as a barber. His friendliness and his sociability became a valuable tool in law enforcement for him at Gleeson.

When the escaped murderer Luther Price decided to turn himself in, it was to Lafe Gibson that he

surrendered. Lafe rode across the Sulphur Springs Valley to the foothills of the Chiricahuas to arrest Luther. He brought him back to Gleeson overnight on the way back to Tombstone and ultimately the state prison in Florence.

In 1915, the voters of Arizona decided to go “dry.” They enacted the Arizona Prohibition Amendment, which provided that:

*Ardent spirits, ale, beer, wine, or intoxicating liquor or liquors of whatever kind shall not be manufactured in, or introduced into the State of Arizona under any pretense.*

From that time, the sheriff and deputies of Cochise County spent a good deal of their time and energy in an effort to stem the tide of bootlegging in the state. Both Mexico and New Mexico were not dry (until New Mexico went dry with the passage of the 18th Amendment), and both were steady suppliers of booze on the borders of Arizona.

Many times Lafe and Sheriff Wheeler of Tombstone would travel across the county chasing bootleggers and confiscating their illegal cargo. In one incident, a gang of Mexican bootleggers attacked Wheeler and Gibson when they tried to apprehend them. The leader of the gang, Santiago Garcia, was later captured and jailed in Tombstone. When asked why the gang had started shooting at Wheeler and Gibson, Garcia said that they thought their cargo of booze was being hijacked again, and so they started shooting. When they discovered it was the lawmen shooting at them, they stopped shooting and ran into the hills.

Lafe Gibson left Gleeson in 1918, (that's another story!)<sup>2</sup> and returned to the life of a barber, moving to Colorado, then Oregon, then back to Colorado, where he died in 1952 at the age of 74.

### Notes

**1** Much of the material on Deputy Cates was obtained from various publications and interview notes from Dan Woods, whose work appeared in many publications, including the *Casa Grande Dispatch* and the magazine *Frontier Times*. Some of his work is also found in the archives of the Pinal County Historical Society in Florence.

**2** For the other story, see the pamphlet entitled "Been There, Done That" on the website [GleesonArizona.com](http://GleesonArizona.com)



Portion of a 1909 panorama of Courtland

*Image courtesy of the Library of Congress*

## **Courtland: An Historical Overview**

By Glenn Snow

Courtland, Arizona stands as an example of a typical southwest mining boom town. From a material standpoint, it owed its existence to copper, railroads, and technology. From a human standpoint, it equally owed its existence to greed, opportunity, optimism, determination, naiveté, stubbornness, publicity, tall tales, resourcefulness, and outright lies.

The town of Courtland was named after Courtland Young, one of two brothers who owned the Great Western Copper Mining Company. The Young brothers, lumber magnates from Clinton Iowa, came into possession of a half-sector of land along the southern edge of the Dragoon Mountains in far southeastern Arizona. Courtland Young rarely came



to Arizona, largely contenting himself with running the lumber business in Iowa. His brother William was the driving force behind their new mining enterprise out in far-flung Arizona Territory (Arizona became a state on Valentine's Day in 1912). In 1908, a rich vein of copper ore was discovered between the Sulphur Springs Valley and the old turquoise mines once jealously protected by the Chiricahua Apache tribe. Copper mining required great machinery and resources unavailable to the lowly individual prospector or miner, and so the Great Western Copper Mining Company was created to take advantage of this opportunity. Within months, three other large mining companies also staked out claims in the vicinity. At the time, copper was in great demand, as the inventions of Edison and others drove many towns and cities to get "electrified".

Within months, all the land within walking distance was bought up, in large parcels, and was being divided into residential and mining areas. A Mormon entrepreneur named James McFate (or J.N. McFate, as the common style for men was to identify themselves by their initials instead of their first names) had brokered a deal where he sub-divided a large tract of land adjacent to the big mines, into small lots which were sold for homes to mine workers and businesses to support them. It became known as the McFate townsite, and was the first housing site in the area, apart from tents thrown up on unused land. McFate was an unabashed booster, which served his real-estate business quite well. He had previously been the manager of a bottling company

in Morenci, another copper mining town to the north. When word of a rich copper strike reached him, he left the bottling plant and came down to the southern Dragoons to get a jump-start on any competition in what he judged would be a real-estate boom. He was right about the boom. He also got out of the real-estate business before it went bust just a few years later. McFate apparently had excellent business instincts.

In the meantime, the Leadville Mining Company, the Calumet and Arizona Mining Company and other concerns had also staked out or negotiated mining rights to just about every square foot of land in the district. Since the Young brothers were the largest landowners, William decided to name the new town after his brother. The town of Courtland, Arizona was born in early 1909.

In February of 1909, the first issue of the *Courtland Arizonan*, a weekly newspaper, was published. Its owner and editor, John V. VanEaton, began an enterprise which was almost single-handedly responsible for the widespread reputation of Courtland and the attraction of thousands of residents. Readers of the *Arizonan* found extensive and unreserved praise for the town and its prospects for the future. Ads on every page extolled the limitless potential of this mining town, and small blurbs filled most every white space with dripping enthusiasm for everything about Courtland. VanEaton soon joined McFate and others in trying his hand at real estate, but he'd been so busy starting up the newspaper that he'd missed the real early-bird opportunities for wealth.

—KEEP FAITH WITH THE PEOPLE AND THE PEOPLE WILL KEEP FAITH WITH YOU.

the island, and the islanders are now being resettled in the new camp within the next six months. All reports agree that the resettlement is being carried out in a humane manner. Reports are that the evacuation to Okinawa will be further delayed by the addition of the evacuees during the past week should further evacuees be needed. The islanders will leave in six weeks. **Continued.**

Scores of mine shafts were started, some by big companies and some by individual miners hoping to get lucky and strike it rich. The area is pockmarked with them, attesting to the optimism and sometimes the naiveté of recent arrivals. The miners lived in makeshift homes, often hardly more than tents, and worked long and arduous hours in the mines, following the veins of rich copper ore. Miners were mostly single men, or men living away from their families. The women of Courtland were largely shopkeepers, or the wives of shopkeepers, along with teachers, craftswomen, and operators of boarding houses and restaurants.

By the middle of 1910, there were nearly 2000 residents in Courtland, along with miles of water mains, telegraph lines, two rival telephone exchanges, stores, butchers, a lumber yard, an ice cream parlor, an automobile dealership, and a movie theater. Most every service was available in Courtland, from barbers to assayers, from saddle repair to machinists. Visitors to the tenderloin district, on the north of Courtland, had other services available to them as well.

The law was represented in Courtland almost completely by one man, John Henry Bright. John came from Texas where his family had considerable dealings in oil. He was married to Pearl Allen, and moved with her to join with her family in Arizona in 1908. He became a deputy Sheriff of Cochise County and the constable (local jail-keeper) of Courtland that same year. His brother-in-law Wesley Cates held the same position just down the road in Gleeson. Until 1909 there was no real jail in Courtland. Instead,

an abandoned mine shaft was fitted with a heavy oak door, which was padlocked closed. In June of 1909, an enterprising though not too sharp prisoner decided to burn his way out through the oak door. Unfortunately there was more smoke than damage, and he nearly suffocated. Sheriff Bright rescued him and the town finished building a proper jail. It was completed in June and was nicknamed "The Bright Hotel" by the locals. It housed mostly drunks and thieves during its tenure, with the exception of one murderer, a woman who killed her boyfriend in a fit of jealousy in the tenderloin district. John Bright was the one and only constable in the town's brief history, though others were given territorial jurisdiction as the town declined.

If copper was the mare who gave birth to Courtland, the railroad was the sire. Two railroad empires competed mightily for the chance to come into Courtland: the Southern Pacific (known as the S.P. or "Espee" to the locals); and the El Paso and Southwestern (known as the EP&SW). In fact, Courtland became a major battleground for those two railroad companies. The EP&SW was playing David to the S.P.'s Goliath. The EP&SW built a line up from Douglas while the Espee built south from their main line in the town of Cochise. Due largely to some labor issues, the EP&SW won the race into town, and in fact almost circled the entire town of Courtland with its tracks. It had two spurs, one coming in on the south side of town and traveling right up through the homes of the Great Western townsite. The other coming up the gully between central and north Courtland and

circling around the mountain to a spot just above the end of the southern spur. The effect was like a finger and thumb encompassing the whole town. The Espee had to settle for a terminal on the far south side of Courtland. This spur then continued around the mountains and into Gleeson. The mining ore was all hauled by the EP&SW, while the Southern Pacific focused on freight and passengers, taking advantage of its trans-continental connection in Cochise.

Courtland's ore was rich with copper, but it was not deep. By 1911, several of the major mines had played out. At some time in the geologic past, a block of copper-rich rock was shifted into the Courtland area, but that block ended about 300 feet below the surface. The Germania mine (primary mine of the Calumet and Arizona company) was dug down to 500 feet, but no copper was found below the 300 foot level. Flooding groundwater caused them to abandon



Ruins of the Great Western Copper Co. offices

*Image courtesy of Glenn Snow*

everything below 300 feet, and when the price of copper dropped in 1913, all work on the Germania ceased. Other mines stopped working as well, and except for a few lone holdouts trying to scratch out a living, all mining ceased by the end of 1913. With the closing of the mines, much of the remaining population migrated elsewhere. Courtland's heyday had lasted only four years. It remained as a center for the surrounding farms and ranches, and the railroads made it viable supply town for a while, but eventually, the population of Courtland just bled out.

Farms and cattle ranches bordered Courtland on the east, and became Courtland's primary customers, at least for a time. It was the railroad which allowed this to continue. The Southern Pacific eventually bought



Building ruins and part of the sidewalk in Courtland

*Image courtesy of Keith Davis*

out the EP&SW system in late 1924, ending that rivalry in a typically American fashion. The trains stopped running to Courtland in the spring of 1933, and the tracks were picked up by New Years Day of 1934. The farms and ranches simply switched to trucks for the delivery of their supplies, over increasingly paved roads. Cattle were driven to Willcox and loaded onto trains there until the end of World War II. Small farms, most of which had begun under the Homestead Act of 1863, were gradually abandoned or merged together to create larger farms, which continue to operate in the Sulphur Springs Valley. Ground water could be had in sufficient quantity to supply the agriculture, but it was pumped from several hundred feet below the surface. Until the electrification of the area in the 1950's and '60's, that was a difficult and expensive task.

The history of Courtland is brief but instructive. It illustrates the rivalry of big railroads and big mining, as well as small hopes and small enterprises. It was the birthplace of several companies as well as the birthplace of William Rumford, the first African-American elected to any public office in northern California. It was a mostly peaceful town, with only one murder in its history, although several shoot-outs occurred on its streets and in nearby arroyos. Its meager ruins encompass the passing of a century and a way of life. Its trails, roads and borders mark the passing of the baton from the railroads of the 19th century to the roadways of the 20th century; from small homestead farms to larger and corporate farms; from the Old West to the New West.

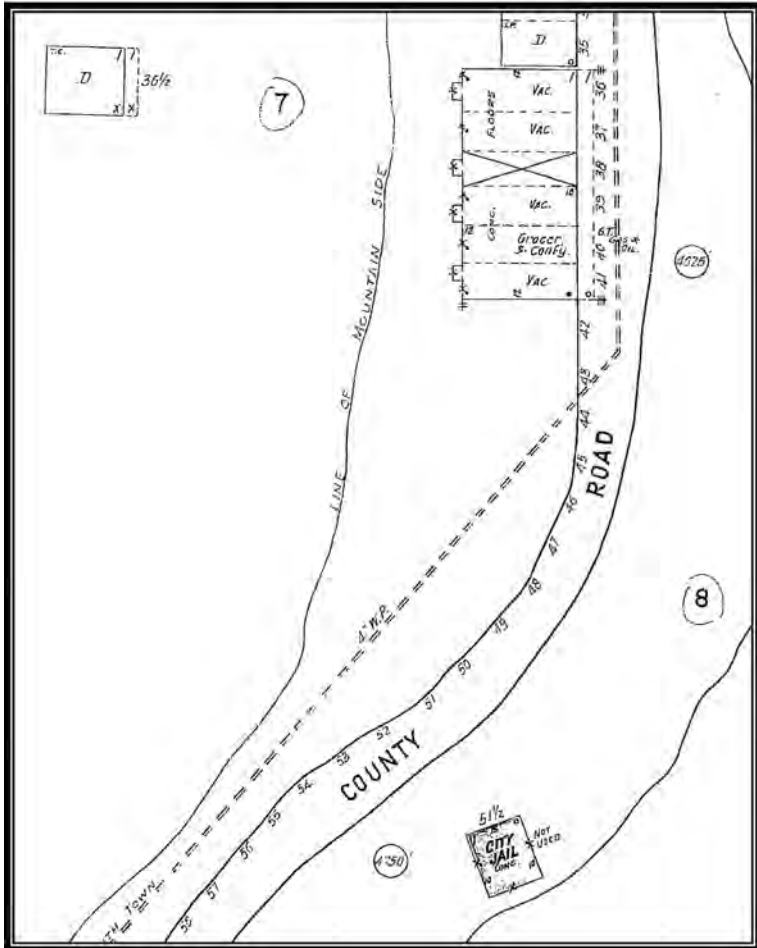




Ruins of the "Big Rock Store" named and built by John Rock in Courtland, Arizona

*Images courtesy of Keith Davis*

## Courtland, Arizona



Portion of a 1927 map of downtown (center) Courtland, showing the jail, a 4-inch water main, and mostly-empty stores on the west side of Ghost Town Trail.



The author, Glenn Snow, telling the history of the Courtland Jail to a group of history buffs.

*Image courtesy of Keith Davis*



Ruins of the Courtland Jail

*Image courtesy of Glenn Snow*

## **Law and Order in Courtland**

By Glenn Snow

Drunks and petty thieves were the primary concern of Deputy John Bright, constable of Courtland, during most of his tenure in the town. Modern police will describe their job as 5 hours of boredom followed by 30 seconds of abject terror, followed by 5 hours of paperwork. So also the daily fare of law enforcement in this turn-of-the-century mining town was mostly routine. There were moments, however...

The law, and its implementation, are usually divided into three components: the police, the courts, and the jails. In Courtland, both the police and the jail wore a single badge, and it was on the chest of John Henry Bright, who was both Deputy Sheriff (police) and Constable (jailor). Deputy Bright came from Texas, where his family had considerable oil interests. Bright was married to Pearl Allen Bright, whose sister Minnie Allen Cates was married to the Deputy Sheriff in nearby Gleeson. The Allen sisters had followed their family to Arizona, and brought their husbands with them. When Courtland became a town in 1908, John Bright was appointed as the first lawman in town. In fact, he was the only one to ever hold the title of Deputy Sheriff of Courtland.

When Courtland sprang into being, there was no jail in town. Since it was a full day's ride to the county seat in Tombstone, it was necessary to find a way to lock up miscreants locally. The first "jail" in Courtland was an abandoned mining tunnel which had a heavy oak door fastened into place over the opening, and which was padlocked shut.

Early on the morning of June 2 1909, Constable Bright walked to the jail tunnel from home in order to bring breakfast to the Mexican man who was incarcerated there. Upon his approach he found that the prisoner had his own plans for freedom. Smoke poured from the tunnel, through the ventilation window in the heavy wooden door. It appears that sometime in the previous hours, the prisoner had piled his mattress up against the inside of the door and lit it on fire, intending to burn the door down and

escape. The door, however, proved more formidable than he had expected and was relatively unharmed. The smoke, however, had filled the small tunnel and began to suffocate the lone detainee. Although unconscious, he revived when Bright dragged him out into the fresh air.

The only remaining building standing today in Courtland, the jail was completed in June of 1909 at a cost of \$1000. It was built of reinforced concrete and comprised two cells 14' by 14', with an additional inner cage 6' by 8' which was imported from the Bisbee jail. In the corner of each cell was a bathroom which consisted of a wash basin and a toilet. The accommodations were so far improved from the mining tunnel that the local citizens nicknamed the jail "The Hotel Bright."

The jail was so accommodating that it caused a bit of a problem. Since much of the housing in the mining camp consisted of canvas stretched over a wooden frame and dirt floors, it seems several of the local citizens found the jail a more pleasant place to spend the night than their own homes. Overcrowding began to become a problem. Furthermore, it had been the local judge's practice to offer a one-to-one reduction in sentence for every day worked. Thus, a prisoner sentenced to two weeks in jail could work every day on the roads (supervised by Bright), and would then be released after serving only one week. The lodging was so pleasant that a number of the prisoners declined the judge's offer, resulting in a smaller work force and a larger jail population. County records consistently show a considerable

amount of money being disbursed in the purchase of food for the prisoners at the Courtland branch of the county jail. From these records, it appears that there were 4-8 inmates of the Courtland jail most of the time.

The only complaint registered about the jail came from an incident involving a loyal mutt. In September of 1909 a woman named Felipe Martinez was sentenced to 20 days in jail for a fight in which she severely beat and tore the hair from a 70 year old woman. When Deputy Bright locked her up, her dog was left outside the jail. After two days of the dog barking, yelping, and generally making a fuss, the other prisoners were unable to sleep and requested that it either be shot or allowed to live in the jail with its owner during her incarceration. Bright opted to allow the dog inside.

Though a number of killings happened in the general area of Courtland, including several along the road from Gleeson to Courtland, only one murder happened within the town limits. On January 26 1913, Dan Danielson was shot in the back by his 18 year old girlfriend Jennie Canady Parker, whose occupations were listed in official records as cook and actress. Mr. Danielson, a miner and saloon keeper, had been paying too close attention to a female Mexican acquaintance, much to the displeasure of Miss Parker. Her protest took the form of a confrontation with Danielson behind his saloon on the north side of Courtland. The argument got more heated and Danielson took a six-shooter and shot the corner off the liquor cabinet next to where Jennie was

standing, then put the gun in a bar drawer inside the saloon. After a few more minutes of argument, Miss Parker ran behind the bar, got the gun, and shot Danielson in the back. He died a few minutes later, and Jennie Parker (A.K.A. Janie Parker, Jennie Canady, Genevieve Kanaday, Genevieve Kennedy) was arrested and sent to Tombstone for trial. She was found guilty of manslaughter, and sent to the state prison in Florence on April 28, 1913. Her attorney told her mother that he would get her paroled within three months. He was only a little over-optimistic, in that she was paroled in May of 1914, just a little over one year after her incarceration. Furthermore, Governor George Hunt granted her a full pardon on November 28, 1916, and her rights as a citizen were restored. Interestingly, this pardon came in the midst of a ballot counting crisis from the November 7th election, which saw Governor Hunt claiming victory, then being certified as losing, then bringing a lawsuit to the Arizona Supreme Court, which changed its decision twice, and finally confirmed him as the election winner more than a year later.

Back in Courtland, Deputy Sheriff John Bright had a few moments of excitement now and again. He was wounded only once in the line of duty. This happened on August 12 1916, when two Mexican men broke into "Colonel" F.A. Davis' home and stole two pistols, several boxes of ammunition and some other items. When Bright was notified, he started a search for the robbers, but was unable to find them. After several tours around town on foot and in a borrowed car, he saddled up his horse and went up to a hilltop, where



he spotted the two walking north towards Pearce. Going around the hill, he managed to come out on the road ahead of them. Leaving his horse, he stepped out in front, identified himself, and asked if they were armed. One of them pulled his gun out and replied, "Yes, you gringo S\_\_ of a B\_\_\_\_, I have a gun!" A gunfight ensued between the two desperados and the sheriff, with Bright being shot in the leg. Bright emptied his five-shot revolver at them, and then hid himself behind a mound and crawled, limped, and tumbled his way to Leadville Canyon and help. When a posse was rounded up and came upon the scene of the shoot-out, it was discovered that all five of Bright's bullets had struck their targets, and both his assailants were dead: five shots, five hits between the waist and shoulders. Not a man to be messed with.

When the county eliminated the position of Courtland Deputy in 1916, the jail became largely unused. It still stood solidly in 1937 and can be seen in photographs of that year with all hardware intact, but in April 1938 the steel doors and barred gates were appropriated by the county for the construction of a new jail at Benson. Some windows remain, but weather and vandals have done considerable damage to the structure which had once been a second home to the troublemakers of Courtland.

As for the courts, there were two men who served as judges in the Courtland district: Judge Cabell and Judge Bolton. The Honorable Judge James M. Cabell served as the local justice of the peace from Courtland's foundation until his semi-retirement

in 1914. Cabell was counsel to the county Board of Supervisors in Tombstone until he was replaced by a political appointee. He moved to Courtland in February of 1909, and lived there until he died in 1921. Born in Missouri in 1858, he had moved to Arizona in 1901, and practiced law in Cochise County.

Judge Cabell was known for his even-handedness in dealing with rowdy miners and those who were just blowing off steam. When it came to more serious offenders, he was considerably more strict. The judge was especially known for his rulings against those who treated animals with negligence or cruelty. One of his first rulings was a case regarding the closing of the only saloon in Courtland. Arizona law said it was illegal to operate a saloon or sell liquor within 6 miles of a mining camp. James Herron had opened and operated a saloon in north Courtland, well within the six-mile limit. He contended however that he had in good faith paid for and received his license from the state before the opening of those particular mines, and therefore should be allowed to continue operation. Judge Cabell agreed and threw the case out, allowing Herron to continue running his saloon.

One event in the life of Judge Cabell continued to cause him embarrassment for many years thereafter. In mid-July of 1910, the Judge was roused from his sleep by shots fired at a neighbor's house, followed by much shouting. In his eagerness to come to his neighbor's aid, he ran out of the house carrying a gun, plenty of ammunition...and nothing else. It had been a hot night, and Judge Cabell was entirely unclad. The cause of the ruckus was a wildcat which

was terrorizing his neighbor's hen house. Both the neighbor and Judge Cabell fired away at the bobcat until they killed it. It was then that they noticed they were both equally underdressed for the occasion. Both men retreated to their respective homes, much to the amusement of their families and other neighbors.

Born in Vermont, Judge Carlos Bolton was a civil war veteran, having served throughout the war in the Pennsylvania Volunteers. He was a true pioneer, having come to Arizona in the 1870's after his service in the Union Army. He first worked in Gleeson and Courtland as a carpenter and construction manager. In 1911, he was commissioned as a Notary Public, and thus began his career in public service. On New Years Day, 1914, he began his appointment as United States Commissioner in the district, a position which made him administrator of federal law in the area. The office of United States Commissioner performed judicial functions for the federal government, including such tasks as the apportionment of land and settling of claims filed under the Homestead Act.

In September of 1914, Carlos E. Bolton was elected Justice of the Peace for the town of Courtland. He had run unopposed, as Judge Cabell entered retirement. Judge Bolton lived the remainder of his life in Courtland, and passed away in the summer of 1920 at the age of 73. He was buried in Douglas and his funeral was one of the biggest that Douglas had seen in many years.

In contrast with the legends of the Old West, towns of the New West were much more peaceful and civilized.

It was because of people such as John Bright, James Cabell, and Carlos Bolton that law supplanted force as the ruling principle in the new state of Arizona. Because of their respect for and enforcement of the law, both business and population boomed throughout the wider territory of the southwest, even if they happened to decline and fade in particular locations such as Courtland.



Window of the Courtland Jail

*Image courtesy of Glenn Snow*



Ruins of the Courtland Jail

*Image courtesy of Keith Davis*



*Image courtesy of Glenn Snow*

## **Railroads**

By Glenn Snow

Railroads made the settlement of the southwest possible.

They brought food, tools, lumber, hardware, furniture, clothing, medicine, mining machinery, and farming equipment. They also brought settlers, workers, doctors, visitors, and even the occasional politician. In the abstract, they also brought a feeling of connection, of security, and of national unity.

For a mining town, railroads were as necessary as shovels and drills. It may be difficult for a modern person to really comprehend the excitement caused by the building of a railroad through a territory, let

alone the actual establishment of a railroad station in the neighborhood. The surveying, grading, laying and finishing of track were followed mile by mile, sometimes even yard by yard, by residents and businesses the way box scores are followed by a baseball fanatic.

Railroad empires, and those who ran them, were viewed with an awe and deference which bordered on idolatry, not unreasonable considering the immense power that railroads had in the development and survival of a territory. In the town of Courtland, the arrival and departure of the railroads marked the beginning, and the end, of hope for the town. From the perspective of the railroad companies, towns such as Courtland were seen both as lucrative business opportunities and as pawns in an intricate game of power politics.

In 1908, when copper ore was discovered in Courtland and the big mining companies began operations there, it sparked a race to build tracks into the town. Twenty-five miles to the north the Southern Pacific (S.P.) ran the "Sunset Limited" from coast to coast along its trans-continental tracks. A water stop in the town of Cochise provided the jumping-off point for tracks to be connected south through the Sulphur Springs Valley, towards Courtland, Gleeson, and even down to Douglas and the Mexican border.

Twenty-five miles to the south, the El Paso & Southwestern (EP&SW) had a line running between the huge mines of Bisbee and the smelter operation in Douglas, and continuing on to El Paso. These two

rival railroads began building track at a furious pace up into Courtland, each in an attempt to outflank the other. Each also had ulterior motives for winning this race, far beyond the benefits which might accrue to the lowly town of Courtland. For the EP&SW, allowing the Southern Pacific access into Douglas and the southern border would so undercut their business that it could well spell the end of the company.

For the Southern Pacific, the motivation was more complex, but just as powerful. The S.P. was owned by the Union Pacific Railroad Company, whose chairman was the famous E.H. Harriman. It was his dream, his obsession, to build a transportation empire including trains and ships which would make it possible to circumnavigate the globe without ever leaving the Harriman line. He was convinced that a monopoly was economically necessary in order to viably do this. As a result, he desperately wanted to maintain his monopoly on Atlantic-to-Pacific rail travel across the southern United States. The lowly Rock Island Railroad, however, was threatening to break this monopoly.

The Rock Island had built, bought, or negotiated its way from the Atlantic all the way through the midwest and into New Mexico. It had also negotiated a deal with a railroad running from San Diego to Yuma. The only chunk of the country they hadn't managed to get across was Arizona. From New Mexico to Yuma, the Rock Island had no connection. This is where the EP&SW came into the power struggle. The EP&SW was built by mining interests (specifically the Phelps Dodge mining company) as a way of transporting



their ore from one processing plant to another. Along the way, they included passenger and freight service as a sort of side-line. If the Rock Island could make an arrangement to use the tracks of the EP&SW from New Mexico to Yuma, its connection from coast to coast would be complete.

E.H. Harriman didn't want that to happen. It became one of his pet projects to undermine the business of the EP&SW so deeply that it would fold, thereby collapsing the plans of the Rock Island line to go cross country. That would leave the Southern Pacific as the sole provider of trans-continental rail traffic across the southern United States. So Harriman started building a line from Cochise south, heading towards Douglas, with spurs into Courtland and Gleeson. At least, that was the plan. In the meantime, the EP&SW started building a line north out of Douglas and into Courtland. The race was on, and the stakes were high for both companies. Tiny Courtland found itself right in the middle of this fight, and profited greatly from the competition, the publicity, and the construction.

The EP&SW had the advantage of being a more local company, with connections and contacts in the town of Courtland. It also used laborers who were local, and could move quickly, where the S.P. imported its crews from further afield. While the surveyors of the S.P. were still trying to figure out the best way to come into town, negotiators for the EP&SW had already signed contracts with eager local landowners for rights-of-way into Courtland...on two different routes. The EP&SW came up the Sulphur Springs

Valley and created the junction station of Kelton. This station, which no longer exists, sat three miles east of the southern tip of Courtland. With the success of the Silver Bill mine in Gleeson, it was thought that Kelton would make the perfect junction point for serving both Courtland and Gleeson. The EP&SW ran north into and just past Kelton, then split into two “fingers” which encircled Courtland. The northern finger ran up the gulch between central and north Courtland. In fact, it ran right up between the Germania and the Mary mines, the two biggest producers. From there, it used a double-switchback to continue around the hills into the Leadville Mining Company’s holdings to the west of central Courtland.

The southern finger of the EP&SW ran in a meandering gentle grade around a hill, circling around the Courtland cemetery and into the Great Western Townsite, where it turned north right through the houses and businesses there and up to the big mines. In effect, the EP&SW encircled the majority of the town of Courtland like a finger and thumb, almost connecting in a loop, but not quite.

The Southern Pacific, having been beaten into Courtland by the more agile EP&SW, decided to use the station at Kelton to build a spur which touched Courtland only on the far south side and continued around the tip of the mountains into Gleeson. Passengers and supplies were the mainstay of the S.P. operations in Courtland and Gleeson. While the S.P. station in Courtland (originally called “Blacks”) was inconveniently located south of town and had to be reached by horse, by wagon, or by a local “taxi”

coach service, it did have the advantage of being connected with the main Southern Pacific line in Cochise, which ran to all points east and west with little hassle. Passengers who wanted to go to Los Angeles, San Francisco, St. Louis, Chicago, or New York could purchase a ticket at Blacks up to Cochise, where they could stay in a local hotel and wait for the next east or west bound train right to either coast.

EP&SW customers, on the other hand, had to purchase tickets on several trains to make that same journey. The EP&SW had a monopoly, however, on Courtland's ore business, since its tracks ran right up to every major mine in town. As far as Courtland was concerned, the two railroads ended in a tie. But Harriman was still determined to undermine the EP&SW's business by building into Douglas.

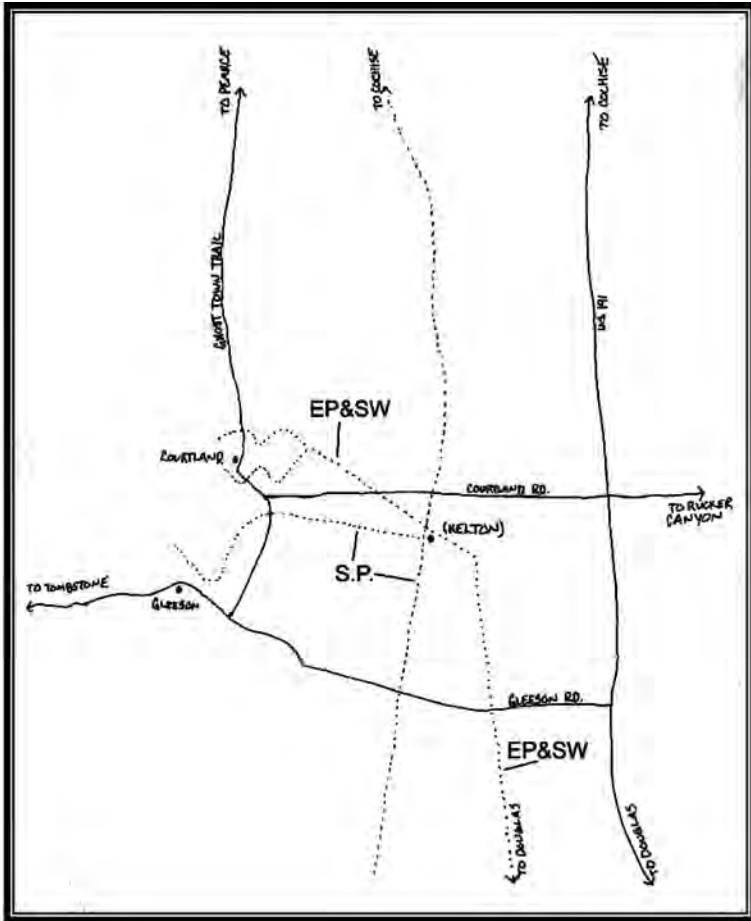
In April of 1909, the Southern Pacific had laid down survey stakes all the way into Douglas, and beyond into Mexico. In August, grading work began on the railroad bed between Courtland and Douglas, with the track-layers working close behind. The bed was completed between Courtland and Douglas, and the tracks had been laid within a mile of Douglas when on September 9, 1909 Edward Henry Harriman died. The passing of this little man changed everything in the railroad business. It was the drive of E.H. Harriman which had emphasized the importance of building the S.P. into Douglas, as well as scores of other projects. When Harriman died, all of those pet projects were put on hold until they could be evaluated by his successors. By the time they were evaluated, the mines in Courtland had begun to

decline, and the business of both rival railroads in the area declined with them.

After World War I, copper prices dropped, and the fortunes of the EP&SW railroad changed. It no longer made sense for Phelps Dodge to continue to operate it. The entire system was bought by the Southern Pacific in November of 1924. In the spring of 1933 all trains to Courtland and Gleeson stopped running, and the tracks were picked up by New Year's Day of 1934. It is still possible to walk the track bed of the El Paso & Southwestern (both fingers) through Courtland. You can also walk the Southern Pacific bed from Gleeson, around the mountain and through southern Courtland to within a half-mile of the old Kelton station. All the stations in Courtland are gone, with only a few cutoff telephone-pole sized foundation timbers remaining. The rails are long gone, as are the wooden ties. Walking along the bed, an observant hiker can find the occasional bolt, hook, spike, or other hardware that was left behind when the rails were picked up. Date nails can also be found, usually near the location of a trestle, bridge, or station structure. Some sections of the bed look like blackened gravel. Those are the places where coal fell off the train and was trampled upon and crushed.

The railroads were the blood vessels which provided for growth in many mining towns. In many ways the history of the railroad is the history of a town. Courtland was just such a town. When the blood vessels were removed, the town shriveled up and died. Still, walking along the rail beds and finding a rusted railroad spike or the remains of a trestle over

a gully can provide a little hint of the excitement that the rails brought to a town such as Courtland more than a hundred years ago.



Rail beds of the El Paso & Southwestern (EP&SW) and the Southern Pacific (S.P.) lines into Courtland and Gleason.

The EP&SW line came up from Douglas, crossed at the Kelton station, and virtually encircled Courtland.

The S.P. line came down from Cochise, entered south of Courtland and continued to Gleason. The S.P. tracks were laid almost to Douglas, but were not completed, and no S.P. train ever ran between Kelton and Douglas.

## BOOK REVIEWS

### Tombstone Satellites

*Charleston & Millville, A. T.: Hell on the San Pedro*, by John D. Rose. 2012. xviii + 330 pp. Paper, \$24.95.

*On the Road to Tombstone: Drew's Station, Contention City and Fairbank*, by John D. Rose. Sierra Vista: John Rose Historical Publications, 2012. viii + 346 pp. Paper, \$24.95.

Thanks to Hollywood's films on Wyatt Earp and the Gunfight at the OK Corral, and the subsequent focus by current Tombstone residents on the Hollywood image of the town, one suspects that tourists are unaware or are, at best, vaguely aware, that Tombstone, like so many other towns in Arizona, owes its founding and growth to mining. And even if tourists are aware of its beginnings, it is almost a certainty that they know nothing about the towns that came into being along the San Pedro River because of Tombstone's mines. Yet, the ore that came from the mines needed to be reduced to the silver it contained and to do this mining companies needed mills near water to process the ore and roads to ship the bullion once the milling was done. This necessity in turn led to the establishment of mills and towns along the San Pedro, the remains of which are almost totally gone in fact as well as memory. The rapidly disappearing existence of these towns is the reason John D. Rose

has compiled two books about them.

*Charleston & Millville, A. T.*, falls roughly into three parts. Rose begins with the efforts of Richard Gird in building a mill along the San Pedro River to process the silver ore discovered by prospector Ed Schieffelin. The location of Gird's mill on the east side of the river became known as Millville, and because of the noise the stamping mill made, a town for the workers and merchants associated with the mill, Charleston, arose on the west side of the river. Rose next turns to the character of Charleston, in which the mill workers "combined with cattle thieves, honest ranchers, merchants, house wives, school children, and Mexican consumers as well as Mexican smugglers . . . offering stark contrasts to each other, and crime, violence, and murder." In this section he quotes from sources showing what life was like in the town for the wicked and the righteous, and introduces readers to some of the towns interesting characters, including Justice of the Peace Jim Burnett and saloon keeper and sometimes constable Jerry Barton. Rose concludes his history by focusing on the some of the more famous incidents associated with the town's history: the arrest and near lynching of gambler "Johnny Behind the Deuce," conflicts in and around Charleston involving the Earps and the cowboy factions, the murder of mill worker Martin Peel, and the 1887 earthquake that led to the town's almost total destruction.

In *On the Road to Tombstone*, Rose turns his focus on the sites along the transportation route to Tombstone. His approach in this book is basically

chronological, beginning with the stage stops at Tres Alamos and Drew's Station on the road to Tombstone that were later replaced by a stop at the San Pedro mill town known as Contention City and finishing with the arrival of the railroad from Benson to Contention City and later to Fairbank. Among the more interesting discussions in this history are Rose's examination of the location of Drew's Station, the accounts of the stagecoach robbery that led to the death of Budd Philpot and its aftermath, quotations from the diary of George Hand on life in Contention City, and compilations of newspaper clippings on activities, many of them criminal, in Fairbank.

These books are the culmination of the years Rose has spent collecting documents, newspaper clippings, and pictures related to these towns since he first became aware of Charleston in the 1960s. Unfortunately, instead of using the material he has collected as sources for a narrative history of the growth and brief survival of the towns along the San Pedro River, he has chosen to simply paste together the many documents and clippings he has collected, often without introducing them, occasionally out of chronological order, and frequently stringing together ones that simply repeat information. As a result, his books do not lend themselves to easy reading; in fact, a reader is often forced to go to the footnotes to determine the date and/or source of the material being quoted.

In the final analysis, therefore, Rose's books should be regarded as collections of primary sources, as reference books, rather than historical narratives.



But as reference books they are certainly useful for persons interested in the history of Cochise County. Admirable, also, is the amount of work Rose has put in collecting these sources, many of which would probably be lost if not for his efforts.. And in this respect, he has succeeded in what appears to be his principal goal in publishing these books of calling attention to the importance of his subjects to the history of Tombstone in particular and Arizona in general as well as to the need to preserve the few records and landmarks of the towns that still survive.

--Fred Rusch

### **More Recent Books Of Interest**

*When Law Was in the Holster: The Frontier Life of Bob Paul*, by John Boessenecker. Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 2012. 504 pp. Cloth, \$34.95.

A number of chapters in this biography of one of the Old West's greatest peace officers focus on Paul's involvement in the events leading up to and following the Gunfight at the O.K. Corral.

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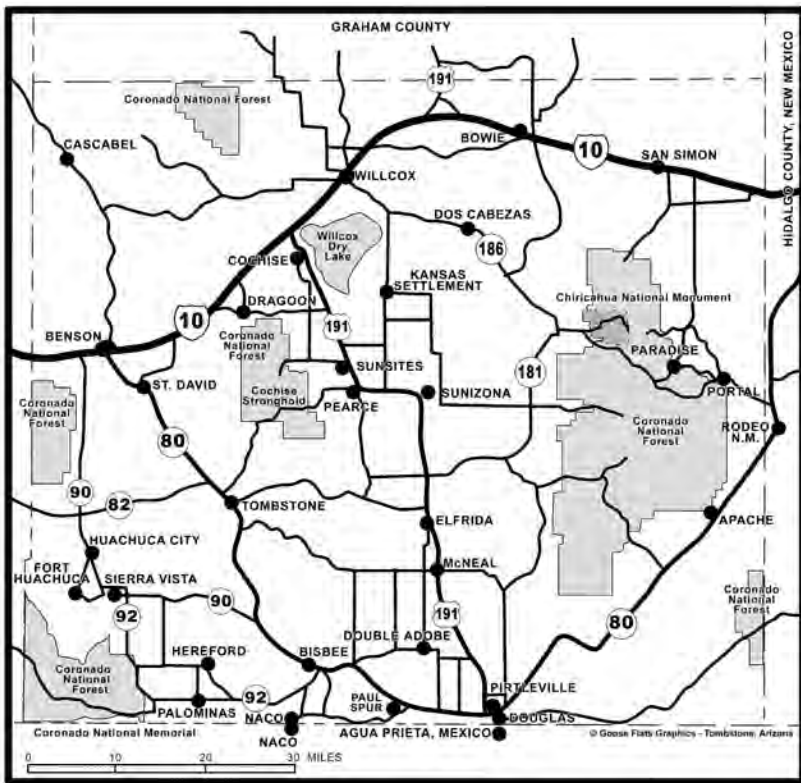
*The McLaurys in Tombstone, Arizona: An O.K. Corral Obituary*, by Paul Lee Johnson. Denton: Univ. of North Texas Press, 2012. 416 pp. Cloth, \$29.95.

Along with the story of the two brothers who were killed at the O.K. Corral, Johnson tells about the efforts of their older brother, Will, to bring the Earps and Doc Holliday to justice.

*Lady at the O.K. Corral: The True Story of Josephine Marcus Earp*, by Ann Kirschner. New York: Harper, 2013. 304 pp. Cloth, \$27.99.

This well-written biography of the common law wife of Wyatt Earp for almost 50 years is a welcome companion to the biography of Mattie Earp published in 2010 (see the review in the fall/winter 2012 issue of the CCHS Journal).

## Cochise County Historical Journal



## Cochise County, Arizona

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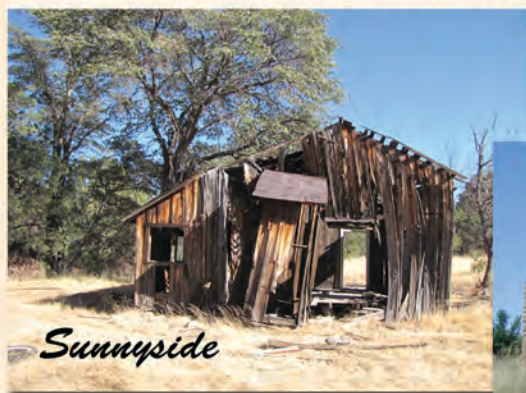
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