

Charles R. Morehead, Pioneer Banker, City Builder, Former Mayor of El Paso, Dead at 86

Charles R. Morehead, former mayor of El Paso, banker, school and city builder, one of the men who was chiefly instrumental in bringing Fort Bliss to El Paso and famed nationally through his connection with the Pony Express, the "railroads" of the great plains in the old days, died yesterday afternoon at his home, 1119 Myrtle avenue. Death was due to the general debilities of old age. Mr. Morehead was 86 years old.

Funeral arrangements have been deferred pending the arrival here of E. A. Nebeker of Los Angeles, Cal., a grandson of Mr. Morehead, and Mrs. James Alton of San Antonio, a niece. He is also survived by his wife and two grandchildren here, C. M. Nebeker, assistant cashier of the State National bank, and Mrs. Dexter R. Mapel, 2621 McKinley avenue.

Founded Bank in 1881.

Mr. Morehead was chairman of the board of directors of the State National bank, which he founded here in 1881. Until a year ago he was president of this bank. He was at its head through four decades of service here.

He was prominently identified with El Paso politics for many years. He served one administration as mayor. He was instrumental in bringing Fort Bliss here, both through his personal influence and by obtaining a large tract of land for the post. Mr. Morehead at his death still owned a big tract near Fort Bliss.

For many years he was identified with the public school system in El Paso as a member of the board of school trustees

and as chairman of the board. During his administration a number of the big grade schools here were constructed and the teaching faculty of the city schools increased and bettered. The Morehead school here is named after him. Morehead avenue, formerly Grand avenue, a residential street, is also named after the banker-planner.

Mr. Morehead was a thirty-third degree Mason and a member of the local consistory of the Scottish Rite. He was a Knight Templar. He was identified with the First Baptist church here and had taken a leading part in the building up of his church in El Paso.

Lived Here 40 Years.

Mr. Morehead had been a resident of El Paso for 40 years. He moved here in 1881 with S. O. Bassett, father of C. N. Bassett, 4809 Farthing Drive. They came in by stage line from Rincon, N. M. His arrival here ended 26 years of traveling on the great plains in connection with the freighting and express business of the famous Pony Express.

Mr. Morehead early got into that adventurous "game." His father, the late Charles R. Morehead, was a revolutionary hero, a colonel in the national guard, who served with distinction in the revolution and was twice bayoneted in the breast. The younger Morehead was born in Richmond, Va. He was married in 1868 to Miss Lemmie Morris of Mason county, Kentucky. He was later married to Miss May Gates.

At the request of Col. Alexander (Continued on Page 2, Column 6.)

MR. MOREHEAD DIES WAS PIONEER AND SCHOOL BUILDER

(Continued from Page 1.)

Doniphan, author of "Doniphan's Expedition," a book on the conquest of New Mexico and California, Mr. Morehead contributed personal memoirs covering his 26 years of work on the great plains. Mr. Morehead was at Washington in the service of Russell, Majors and Waddell when the pony express was formed at the request of the commanders of the government forts in the great plains. The quartermaster at Fort Leavenworth had been getting freighters by haphazard heretofore. Regular service by contract was begun with Russell, Majors and Waddell.

Mr. Morehead was one of the men who had to carry on the service in the face of constant terrors from Indian raiders. With him were associated Capt. John L. Ginn, Capt. J. W. Brady and Parker Burnham, who all afterwards became residents of El Paso.

As an assistant wagonmaster the young man, then only 17 years old, started across the plains with 35 wagon loads of supplies for Forts Kearny and Laramie.

Held Up by Indians.

They were held up by a band of Indians straightaway. The Indians were given flour and sugar and coffee and appeased. The party ran onto an object in the road that frightened the mules. It was a decrepit Indian squaw. Mr. Morehead fed her and drove on. He discovered there the old custom of the Indians of abandoning their old ones who got too feeble to travel.

With Capt. James Rupe, veteran Indian fighter and mail coach line conductor, they chased a lost herd through the wilds of the early west, quelled a mutiny in another Pony Express wagon train and fought off the Cheyenne Indians. Alone, the two ran into a group of ten Indians hidden across the Little Blue river.

"Turn around and drive as fast as you can," Captain Rupe told Morehead. "If they pursue us, I will hold them back."

With an old breech-loader, Captain Rupe fought off the band with a half dozen shots, while Morehead drove on amid a volley of bullets.

Faced Other Perils.

Mr. Morehead's duties in bringing supplies to the government posts led him into dangers from the Mormon Danites. Near the South Pass of the Rocky mountains his train came to the camping place of the Tenth infantry, where the Mormons later stampeded the mules of that regiment. This stampede gave an alarm that possibly saved the regiment from starvation that winter, but it brought Mr. Morehead and his train of supplies into great danger.

Fifty soldiers under command of Lieutenant Deshler were guarding the Morehead train and the herds of cattle, which were the army meat supply for the posts in the winter. A rumor spread among the teamsters not to fight the Mormons; if they made no resistance none would be killed. The lieutenant told them the camp would be defended until every man was killed. The army must not starve, he said.

A note asking help was rushed back to the Tenth regiment. The camp waited for the fight. The next morning the Mormon army, 600 strong, was seen approaching to attack. At the same time the Tenth regiment came in from the rear. It arrived by a forced march. The supplies were saved.