

# Chester Webster Pinkham

Chester Webster Pinkham was born about 1832 in New York.<sup>1</sup> He was the second of four children of Frederick Worth Pinkham and Ruth Hull. On the 1850 census, he was a sailor, living with his mother and siblings in Brooklyn, Kings, New York.<sup>2</sup> A year later, he sailed from Panama on 2 October 1851 with the steamer "Constitution" and arrived in San Francisco 27 October 1851.<sup>3</sup> He was a farmer, living with his brother John's family and his father in Santa Clara, California, in 1852.<sup>4</sup>

On the 1860 census, he was living in San Jose, Santa Clara, California.<sup>5</sup> He married Sarah Minerva Clark on 8 September 1865 in San Luis Obispo, California.<sup>6</sup> They had two sons. Chester was farming in San Simeon, San Luis Obispo, California, in 1867.<sup>7</sup> He must have taken a voyage, as he was listed as arriving in San Simeon by steamer in 1868.<sup>8</sup> That year his wife died, leaving him with two very small boys.<sup>9</sup> On the 1870 census, he was a farmer, living with his two sons in Santa Rosa, San Luis Obispo, California.<sup>10</sup>

Chester and his sons moved to Pioche, Lincoln, Nevada, about 1874, where his sons went to school. He went on a prospecting trip to southern Utah with his sons, where they dug into several Indian mounds. During this trip, while fording the Virgin River after a storm, a floating log struck and overturned the wagon, which was washed away, while the two boys were carried to safety on the backs of their father and his partner. They lived in Silver Reef, Washington, Utah Territory, with the boys attending school, until 1880 when they made a trip by prairie schooner or covered wagon to Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah Territory.<sup>11</sup>

Chester and the boys moved to Pima, Arizona, in 1880, where he was registered to vote.<sup>12</sup> He reported the details concerning the killing of an American near Fronteras, who may have been mistaken for an Indian, and returned the clothing and effects of the victim.<sup>13</sup> He established a Tombstone and Sonora Stage Line that provided weekly service along a route that traveled south from Tombstone and into Mexico. He ran a four-horse stage in December 1881 and made a round trip. The fare for a trip ran between \$25 and \$30.<sup>14</sup> He regularly reported on activities at the mines and towns along his route.<sup>15</sup> Chester died of yellow fever 24 July 1884 in Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico.<sup>16</sup>

Research by Elaine Young, Silver Reef Foundation historian, 2017

---

<sup>1</sup> United States Census, 1850, 1860, 1870, California State Census, 1852.

<sup>2</sup> United States Census, 1850.

<sup>3</sup> US and Canada Passenger and Immigration Lists Index, 1500s-1900s; San Francisco Ship Passenger Lists Vol 2.

<sup>4</sup> California State Census, 1852.

<sup>5</sup> United States Census, 1860.

<sup>6</sup> California County Marriages, 1850-1953.

<sup>7</sup> California Voter Registers, 1866-1898,

<sup>8</sup> US and Canada Passenger and Immigration Lists Index, 1500s-1900s.

<sup>9</sup> McCartney & McClung Families Genealogy, p. 591.

<sup>10</sup> United States Census, 1870.

<sup>11</sup> California and Californians, Vol 3.

<sup>12</sup> Arizona Voter Registrations, 1866-1955.

<sup>13</sup> *Arizona Weekly Citizen*, 25 December 1881, p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> *Tombstone Weekly Epitaph*, 16 January 1882, p. 3; 20 February 1882, p. 3.

<sup>15</sup> *Tombstone Weekly Epitaph*, 17 April 1882, p. 1; *Arizona Weekly Citizen*, 5 March 1882, p. 3; *Los Angeles Herald*, 15 January 1882, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup> California and Californians, Vol 3.