

**ARIZONA  
SUPPLEMENT**

**Peter H. Johnson, Jr., P.G.C., Editor**  
1524 Smith Drive  
Holbrook, AZ 86025  
(928) 524-3248



**johnson618@cableone.net**

**GRAND GENERALISMO'S MESSAGE  
JUNE 2009**

On April 25<sup>th</sup> of this year, I had the pleasure of attending a headstone dedication for an Arizona Freemason, Sir Knight, a Veteran of the "War of Northern Aggression" and Sheriff of Maricopa County. John Elliott Walker was born September 24, 1847 in Madison County, Virginia.

In 1864, at the age of 16, John joined Company E, 43<sup>rd</sup> Battalion of Virginia Cavalry (Mosby's Rangers), under the command of Colonel John Singleton Mosby. Walker wasn't unique to have enlisted at such a young age. Colonel Mosby preferred teen soldiers, saying, "They are the best soldiers I have. They haven't sense to know danger when they see it, and will fight anything I tell them to."

John Elliott Walker was apparently captured in Loudon County, Virginia on May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1864, and held at Old Capital Prison in Washington, D.C. Very few privates were held at this prison, but Mosby's Rangers were considered "special cases" meaning they were "desperate men". He was transferred to the infamous Union P.O.W. camp at Fort Delaware on June 15<sup>th</sup>, 1864. The records are vague and don't show him arriving at Fort Delaware or being released, but John Elliott Walker was definitely back in Virginia by September of 1864.

John Elliott Walker enrolled as a cadet at the Virginia Military Institute in September 1864 and attended until February 24<sup>th</sup>, 1865.

Returning to the family farm after the war, he remained there until about 1872 when he left Virginia for California. Early in

the 1880's he moved to Duncan, Arizona and first worked as a miner. He then moved to Tucson and married Matilda Robbins in 1886, and later that same year he moved to Phoenix and took a position as the Clerk of the District Court of Maricopa County. He was appointed Clerk of the Arizona Territorial Supreme Court. Walker, being a Democrat, lost his clerking jobs several times with administration changes. In 1893 and 1894, during the administration of Maricopa County Sheriff James K. Murphy, Walker served as Jailor, First Deputy and Under sheriff. He had other jobs after this, including receiver for The Hartford Banking Company, a "merchant" in Coconino County, elected Maricopa County Treasurer. In 1904 he was elected a Democratic Sheriff of Maricopa County and served in this post until his death.

The Sheriff's Office provided several difficulties for John Elliott Walker: a deputy's involvement in the disappearance of \$1100.00 from the Sheriff's Office, the escape of a prisoner named Lee Redwine from his jail on Thanksgiving night, and an undiagnosed illness which caused him great pain and robbed him of much of his memory. December 19<sup>th</sup>, 1906, John Elliott Walker rose from bed with several scandals "preying on his mind", went out to the outhouse behind his Phoenix home, and shot himself twice in the head.

Sheriff Walker's obituaries reported that during his funeral on December 21, 1906, Trinity Episcopal Church was so packed with mourners that people were literally standing in the aisles. Obituaries also mentioned that he was a prominent Mason and Knights Templar took part in his funeral. He was laid to rest in an unmarked grave at Greenwood Memory Lawn Cemetery in Phoenix, virtually forgotten in an unmarked grave for over a century. This was remedied April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2009, with the cooperation of Colonel Sherod Hunter Camp 1525 of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, Greenwood Memory Lawn Cemetery, Veterans Administration, Arizona Masons, and Arizona Knights Templar. John Elliott Walker has been properly honored with a headstone. Pictures of the dedication may be seen at [www.dixie-az.org](http://www.dixie-az.org). And, yes, Sheriff Joe Arpaio was also in attendance.

Sir Knight Mike Stegen  
E.G.G. AZ