

Oscar Shultz

Oscar Shultz was born in 1896 in Germany and migrated to America where he settled in Arizona. When Oscar's mother, still residing in Germany, needed money, Oscar decided that the best and easiest way to obtain some for her was to become an outlaw and take what was needed from others. On his first attempt at the easy money, he rode his horse onto the highway near Springerville, Arizona and stopped a car. After taking the fellow's wallet, Oscar was so disgusted that the man only had \$200, that he put the money back in the wallet. In the excitement of being robbed, the man did not realize he still had his money and reported the robbery to the sheriff of St Johns, Arizona and a posse was soon hot after Oscar.

When the posse got close, Oscar jumped off his horse and hid in a tree. In an effort to cover more ground, the posse scattered out and the sheriff happened to ride under the tree where Oscar was hiding. Oscar jumped out of the tree and took the sheriff's horse at gunpoint and made his escape. After hiding out for the night near Nutrioso, Arizona, a friend hid Oscar in a wagon, drove him out of town and gave him a horse. Oscar rode to the small town of McNary, Arizona and decided to rob the bank. Getting just over a hundred dollars he made his escape down into the area around Big Lake in Apache County. Now there was an even larger posse looking for Oscar and he was running as fast as he could.

Deep into the forest he hid out for the night with a ranger in his lookout tower. Two members of the posse, having followed Oscar's trail, arrived at the tower before Oscar could leave the next morning and ordered Oscar to come out. Oscar was such a dangerous criminal that even though he came out unarmed they shot and killed him on May 17, 1922. The posse members strapped Oscar's body on the back of his horse and started back to Alpine, Arizona. After two days they realized they had still had a lot of distance to cover and the weather in mid-May was getting warm and Oscar was beginning to decompose. So they buried Oscar in an isolated grave in a remote area of the forest.

The grave can be found in the Sitgreaves National Forest at the junction of Forest Roads 276 and 2767. You will need a good map and the roads are gravel and sometimes rough, but the family sedan can make the trip. And it is certainly worth the drive. It is a remote and beautiful area of Eastern Arizona near New Mexico. The GPS coordinates are N33 82764 W109 2667



Oscars remote grave and headboard

Update: In the summer of 2011, the Willow fire, largest in Arizona history, swept through the area. I haven't been back to check, but I am sure that Oscar has suffered another tragedy. There is little chance that the old wooden headboard could have survived. The grave will still be there and I'll check on it again come spring time. Maybe the Forest Service can be convinced to provide a new headstone for Oscar. But only time can restore the beauty of the surrounding area.