

Tombstone by Tombstone

Pauline Weaver

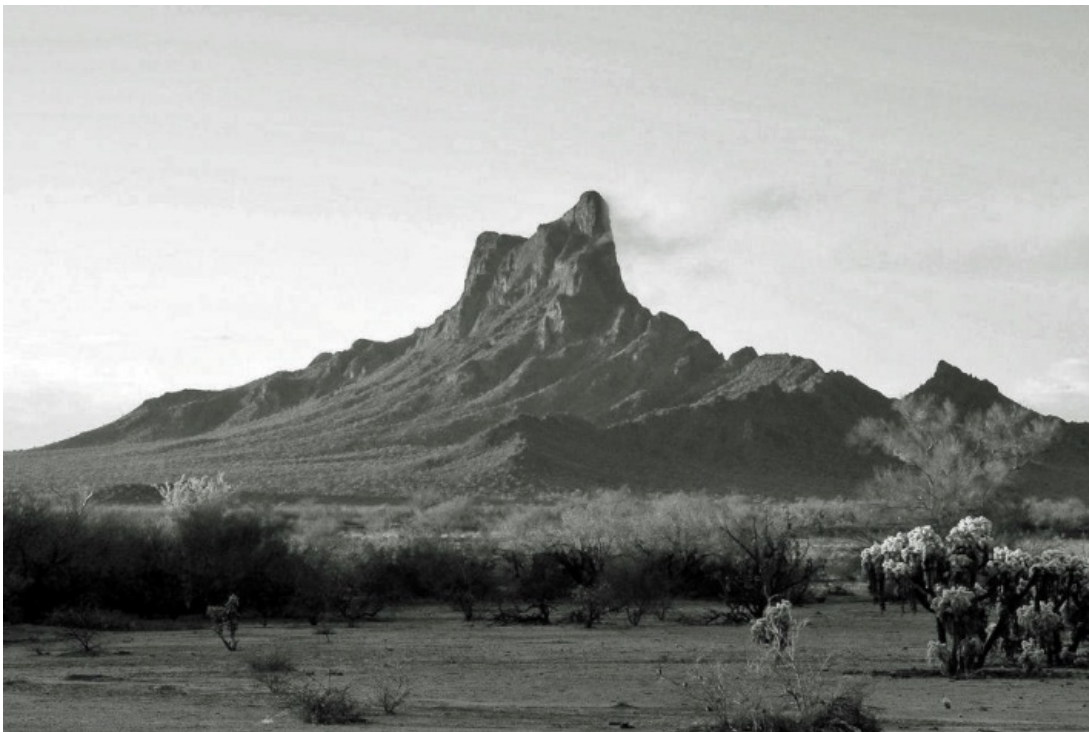
Pauline Weaver, also known as Paulino Weaver, was born as Powell Weaver in White County, Tennessee, probably in the year 1797. He was the son of a Caucasian father and a Cherokee mother. He was to become a mountain man, a trapper, military scout, prospector, explorer and a key figure in Arizona's history. Most of his recorded history began in 1829 when he joined Capt. John Rogers on a trapping expedition to the Rocky Mountains. He left the expedition in Taos, New Mexico, where he remained for several months. In 1831, he joined Ewing Young and 34 others in an expedition from Taos to California to purchase horses that they would bring back to New Mexico. This was his first venture into Arizona and making him one of the first Americans to enter this area. They traveled through the White Mountains to the Salt River and then to the Gila River and arrived in Yuma the first week of 1832. They followed a more southern route on the return trip and reached Santa Fe in July of 1832, with 600 mules and 100 horses. Little is known of him for the rest of the decade of the 30s, but he was back in California by 1842 where he spent most of the next 20 years near San Bernardino.

In September 1846, John C. Fremont sent **Pauline Weaver** and **Kit Carson** back east with the news that they had captured California in the war with Mexico. When they reached Socorro, New Mexico, in October of 1846, after traveling 800 miles in 21 days, **General Stephen Kearney** recruited Weaver to act as a scout for the Mormon Battalion. Joining with Weaver as scouts were noted trader and trapper **Antoine Leroux** and **Jean Baptiste Charbonneau**, a noted scout and son of Sacajawea of the Lewis and Clark fame. The Mormons were under the command of **Captain Phillip St. George Cooke** and their purpose was to locate and build a road across southern Arizona and to California. The 397 men and five women making up the Mormon Battalion left Santa Fe on October 19, 1846, they were embarking on the longest infantry march in American history. The scouts led them across southern Arizona, but eventually they were lost in the California desert. After finding civilization, Weaver returned to his California home to discover it looted by retreating Mexicans. He returned to Arizona in 1857, where he was trapping beaver and doing some prospecting.



Tombstone by Tombstone

When the Civil War broke out, he went to Yuma and enlisted with the Union as a scout under **Colonel James Henry Carelton** and a group of California volunteers known as the California Column. Arizona had been declared a territory of the Confederacy and Carelton's purpose was to capture Tucson and return Arizona to the Union. Weaver was the chief of scouts for the Union forces that engaged a Confederate unit on April 15, 1862, at the Battle of Picacho Pass. This was the only Civil War battle in Arizona and is the westernmost battle of the war. The Union patrol was under the command of **Lieutenant James Barrett**, who was killed along with two enlisted men. The bodies of the two enlisted men were later sent to the presidio in San Francisco for interment. The lieutenant is buried in an unmarked grave along the railroad tracks near Picacho Peak. The Confederates, led by Captain **Sherrod Hunter**, reported that three men were captured and none killed or wounded. The battle delayed Carleton's march to Tucson and Weaver became so frustrated he left the troops and growled, "If you fellers can't find the road from here to Tucson, you can go to hell." Carelton knew he needed Weaver so he sent two friends out to convince him to return, which he did.



Picacho Peak where a reenactment is performed every spring, usually in March

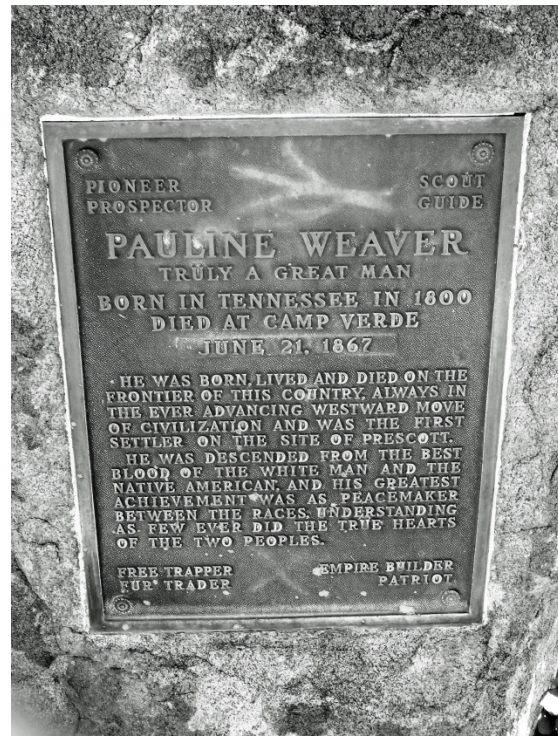
Around April 1, 1863, Weaver led the **Abraham T. Peeples** party up the Hassayampa River in search of gold. About 30 miles south of Prescott they discovered nuggets of gold lying on the ground on top of a knoll that became known as Rich Hill. Weaver did not strike it rich, but he established a ranch at Walnut Grove.

An army unit from Santa Fe seeking the gold fields of the Bradshaw Mountains discovered the lone figure of Weaver while he was out hunting. This probably gave birth to the legend that he was "Prescott's first citizen." In February of 1864, he was hired to serve as a scout for Fort Whipple. In June of 1864, he was seriously wounded in an Indian ambush. Thinking he was about to die he went into a "death song" he had picked up from the Plains Indians. The attacking Indians were not familiar with the dance and thinking Weaver was crazy they ran away. With the Indians gone he was able to make it to Fort Whipple where he recovered. In November of 1866, and around the age of 69, he was assigned to Camp Lincoln, now Camp Verde, where he contracted malaria and died on June 21, 1867. He was buried at Camp Verde with full military honors.

Tombstone by Tombstone

On April 10, 1890, Camp Verde was ordered decommissioned and the last detachment left on April 25, 1891. A local rancher, J. H. Lee, was awarded a contract to move the military remains in central Arizona to the San Francisco National Cemetery. Weaver and all the others buried at Camp Verde were moved in June of 1892. In the late 1920s, **Alpheus H. Favour**, an attorney and state legislator, and **Sharlot Hall**, poet and Territorial Historian, combined their efforts to bring his remains back to Arizona where they so rightfully belonged. On March 28, 1928, the War Department approved the transfer of Weaver's remains. The superintendent of the cemetery in San Francisco, Charles Church, wrote to Favour, "It appears that Weaver has been dead something over fifty years, and you must appreciate that there will be very little of his remains. However, if what we find is shipped as the remains of a dead body it must be in a hermetically sealed package in order to be accepted by the transportation company, and the cost will be the price of two first class tickets from San Francisco to Prescott." In addition there would be the cost of reburial and a monument once the remains arrived in Prescott. It was estimated that the cost to return the remains would be \$156 plus the cost of the first class tickets. Boy Scouts and school children were immediately enlisted to help raise the money to have his body moved back to Prescott.

The money was raised and Weavers body was delivered to the Lester Ruffner Mortuary in March of 1939. But it would be sometime before burial would take place. The legislature would appropriate the funds for the bronze plaque that would be attached to the large granite boulder used for his headstone. A permit would have to be obtained to bury him on the grounds of the Old Governor's Mansion (now a part of the Sharlot Hall Museum). In the meantime the remains had moved to an old friend's home, then to the Old Governor's Mansion where Sharlot Hall lived. She often talked to him, even wishing him a "good night Paulino." Finally all was in order and on October 27, 1929, the remains which had been returned to Ruffner's for burial preparation would be laid to rest. The Boy Scouts carried the casket and the procession through downtown was led by Sheriff George Ruffner.



He was born, lived and died on the frontier of this country, always in the ever advancing westward movement of civilization and was the first settler of Prescott. He was descended from the best blood of the white man and the Native

Tombstone by Tombstone

American, and his greatest achievement was as peacemaker between the races, understanding, as few ever did, the true hearts of the two peoples.

Very little is known about his family life. According to Arizona pioneer Charles B. Genung Weaver married the daughter of a Chimehueva chief on the Colorado River and had a son. The boy came into the interior of Arizona with his dad and was killed while prospecting near Date Creek. An article in a San Francisco newspaper reports that **Ben Weaver**, son of the noted scout was killed during an Apache raid on the ranch of **Frederick L. Brill** on April 6, 1866. Brill reported, "When found there were arrows in his body and a bullet wound in his groin. ...found Weaver dead and brought his body to Brill's ranch; the Apaches had broken off the arrows so as to strip his body of clothing ... Ben Weaver was buried on Brill's ranch close to the Hassayampa River."

Weaver and Leroux both played vital roles in the opening of the southwest and were key players in our history. It is such a shame that that their roles are not recognized today to the extent that so deserve.

Sites in Arizona that are named for Pauline Weaver include Weaver's Needle in the Superstition Mountains; Weaver's Creek, Weaver Mountain, and Weaver Peak in Yavapai County; Weaver Pass and Weaver Wash in La Paz County, and the ghost town Weaver, Arizona, in Yavapai County.

Sources: **Roadside History of Arizona** by Marshall Trimble and articles found on the Sharlot Hall Museum Website