

Josiah Rogers “Joseph” Hoag

Josiah Rogers Hoag was born 13 January 1833 in Concord, Merrimack, New Hampshire.¹ He was the fifth of six children of Charles Hoag and Eliza Purington Rogers. His father was a book publisher in New Hampshire, but soon moved west, spending the winter of 1840 in Chicago, Illinois. The next spring the family moved to Plainfield, Will, Illinois.² They lived in Wheatland, Will, Illinois,³ until 1860, when both of Josiah’s parents died. He was living in Wheatland with his sister on the 1860 census.⁴

Josiah went west to California, and in his adult life often went by the name Joseph. He was a farmer, living in Eden Township, Alameda, California, in 1868.⁵ In 1870, he was a laborer, living in Oakland, Alameda, California.⁶ He moved to Pioche, Lincoln, Nevada, by 1872. He ran for sheriff but was asked to withdraw his name in favor of W S Travis, and then his name was put forward as state senator. He withdrew in favor of Judge Clapp.⁷ He then was proposed for short term senator, but withdrew in favor of A Brown.⁸

In 1873, Joseph was riding down Meadow Valley Street in Pioche. As he passed the office of the Meadow Valley Mining Company, Michael F Tarpey, a clerk in that office, called him in. Tarpey asked to see Hoag’s Whistler pistol, as he was thinking of buying one. Hoag took out the pistol they took it apart and put it together again twice. The pistol was then returned to its scabbard, but Tarpey asked Hoag to show him how quick he could draw it. When Hoag drew the pistol, the hammer caught in his clothing and discharged and hit Tarpey in the leg. Doctors Philson and Deal were called and the wound examined; it was found to be severe but not serious. The ball was cut out and he recovered within a month.⁹

Joseph was a deputy sheriff in Pioche in 1874.¹⁰ He was involved in the capture of an escaped fugitive from Eureka who was caught near Beaver, Utah Territory, and returned to the sheriff of Eureka in Carson City, Nevada.¹¹ He lost the election for sheriff in 1876.¹² In November 1875, he was one of five men who travelled from Pioche to Silver Reef, Washington, Utah Territory, with the intention of prospecting around Toquerville. Hoag remained in Silver Reef,¹³ where he served as a constable in 1879.¹⁴

Joseph was credited with the effectiveness of the fire brigade during the 1877 fire and directed a group of men shoveling dirt and sand from south of the mine portal to put out the flames of the 1879 fire. He was employed as a night watchman for the entire town as part of the fire committee.¹⁵

¹ New Hampshire Birth Records, Early to 1900; New Hampshire Births and Christenings Index, 1714-1904.

² Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois, by Newton Bateman and Paul Selby, 1913, Vol 2, p. 555.

³ United States Census, 1850.

⁴ United States Census, 1860.

⁵ California Great Registers, 1866-1910.

⁶ U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995.

⁷ *Pioche Daily Record*, 13 October 1872.

⁸ *Pioche Daily Record*, 13 October 1872, p. 2.

⁹ *Pioche Daily Record*, 11 September 1873.

¹⁰ *Pioche Daily Record*, 2 December 1874, p. 3.

¹¹ *Pioche Daily Record*, 1 September 1876.

¹² *Pioche Daily Record*, 8 October 1876, p. 3.

¹³ *Silver, Sinners and Saints*, by Proctor and Shirts, 1991, p. 48.

¹⁴ *Silver Reef Miner*, 1 October 1879, p. 4.

¹⁵ *Silver, Sinners and Saints*, by Proctor and Shirts, 1991, pp. 123, 125, 127.

In 1880, Joseph got into an altercation with Mr Penroad at Bonanza Flat. Joseph was struck with a knife in his shoulder, inflicting a wound an inch deep and about four inches long.¹⁶ He was the first lawman to react when Tom Forrest knifed and killed Michael Carbis, the mine foreman who fired Forrest from his mining job in 1880. Constable Hoag was nearby and attempted to arrest Forrest, but Forrest drew a pistol and the officer wisely abandoned the idea and ran for help.

Constable Hoag organized a large posse of approximately one hundred individuals to locate Forrest, including a couple of Indians with tracking skills. They found Forrest hiding in an idle shaft of the Tecumseh Mine and placed him under arrest, incarcerating him in the Silver Reef jail. The newspaper reported, "Deputy Sheriff Hoag is deserving of considerable credit for the courage displayed in pursuing him. Forrest held a pistol and knife and threatened to kill the first man who should come into the tunnel. Hoag jocularly remarked that his 'bread basket' would hold more lead than was in his pistol and still be hungry."¹⁷

Almost immediately, there was talk of breaking Forrest out of jail and hanging him for the murder. Hoag kept a constant watch for anyone who might choose to carry out this threat. Sure enough, Michael Carbis' oldest son, Michael J. Carbis, came to the small jail with a loaded pistol and threatened to kill Forrest. Hoag was able to diffuse the situation and convinced Carbis to leave. But then Hoag determined that it wasn't safe to keep Forrest in Silver Reef. Transportation was arranged and Forrest was transferred to the Washington County jail in St. George for his safety.¹⁸

A year later, Silver Reef was again in upheaval, business was suspended and the stores and mills were closed. The mine owners had announced a cut in pay for the miners, and in reaction, a miner's union was organized and the miners began to strike. They ran Colonel Allen out of town, and he asked the court in Beaver to intervene.¹⁹

Deputy Marshall Pratt, sheriff Hardy and deputy Hoag, at the head of twenty-five mounted and well-armed men, made arrests at the Harrison House, the Barbee mine, and the Stormont mill. Twenty men were arrested (including all the union leaders) and lodged in the Silver Reef jail; others were still to be found. No resistance was made as the miners scarcely believe they have committed any crime and expect to get clear.²⁰ The prisoners were taken to Beaver by wagon; all were arraigned and pleaded not guilty.²¹ Thirteen were found guilty of riot,²² taken from Beaver to Milford to board the train to Salt Lake City to be put in the penitentiary.²³

In February 1881, local merchant Simon C Greenbaum forced John E Lloyd (known as Sailor Jack) to participate in his plan to set fire to the business section of town to obtain insurance money. Lloyd tried to tell deputy sheriff Hoag but he didn't believe him. Lloyd then reported the plan to Captain Henry S Lubbock, and Greenbaum was eventually arrested and the plan for a fire was thwarted.²⁴

¹⁶ *Salt Lake Herald*, 16 September 1880, p. 3.

¹⁷ *Salt Lake Herald*, 13 October 1880, p. 3.

¹⁸ *wchsutah.org*

¹⁹ *Salt Lake Herald*, 20 March 1881, p. 3.

²⁰ *Ibid*; *Silver Reef Miner*, 16 March 1881.

²¹ *Salt Lake Herald*, 24 March 1881, p. 3.

²² *Salt Lake Herald*, 8 April 1881, p. 3.

²³ *Salt Lake Herald*, 8 April 1881, p. 3; 10 April 1881, p. 3; 12 April 1881, p. 3.

²⁴ *Silver, Sinners and Saints*, by Proctor and Shirts, 1991, pp. 129-131.

Joseph was involved in horse racing and betting on the results across the Territory.²⁵ In 1882, he was a sub-register for Washington Precinct in Washington County.²⁶ That same year, sheriff Spillsbury of Kane County was robbed. Sheriffs Hoag and Grant with A J McDonald, immediately went in pursuit from Silver Reef. They traced the brigands to a cabin near the point between Silver Reef and Leeds.

The *Silver Reef Miner* newspaper explained: “A thorough search was made, but to no purpose, while as has since been ascertained, the robbers were under the floor, lying on their backs, and ready to perforate the first man that showed himself. The sheriff had received a telegram from Sheriff Clark at Richfield stating he could arrest John Brantly formerly of Washington and well known to be one of the two men wanted. He was requested to do so and Spillsbury set out at once for his game which he got safe and sound at Richfield and brought to Toquer. Brantly made a full confession of his crime and gave the name of his accomplice as John Todd. It appears that the pair had started in for extensive operations but were nipped in the bud at the outset.”²⁷

In 1887, Joseph was summoned as a juror for the trial of the famous man killer Thompson in the Beaver court. Thompson had killed a Mr. Dalton when he went to arrest him for unlawful cohabitation. Joseph was excused as juror because he was “a former officer of Pioche during the town’s palmiest days”.²⁸ In 1888, he left Silver Reef to travel to Salt Lake City to meet his brother Thomas, who he had not seen for more than twenty years. His brother had been on a pleasure trip to California and was on his way home.²⁹

Joseph returned to Pioche, Nevada, with J A Turrell in 1888. They “placed themselves on the payroll by resuming their old occupations. J R looks much improved after his trip ... Turrell says that Salt Lake is improving and the church is growing in membership”.³⁰ Joseph served as sergeant-at-arms for the Single Men’s Protective Association, which was to protect young single miners in Pioche from being enticed into marriage by young single women. Joseph resigned his post due to a general dissatisfaction over his failure to provide proper security and his own disinclination to “being knocked down and trampled upon by a swarm of indignant feminines”. The association disbanded shortly and the “marriage tally” lengthened as members promptly fell one by one.³¹ It appears that Joseph never married, however.³²

In 1890, he was registered as a voter in Pioche³³ and installed the officers of the newly organized Ancient Order of United Workmen (AOUW) Pioche Lodge.³⁴ He ran for sheriff in 1892 but lost to E D Turner. He filed objections to the ballots from Clover Valley, Bunkerville and Overton precincts because the names had been handwritten on the ballots and not certified to the county clerk before the election according to law. The results were examined and it was determined that if any of those precincts were thrown out it would not affect the outcome, and Hoag withdrew his objections.³⁵

²⁵ *Silver Reef Miner*, 28 October 1882, p. 3; *Salt Lake Tribune*, 5 June 1890, p. 5.

²⁶ *Salt Lake Herald*, 7 September 1882, p. 8.

²⁷ *Salt Lake Herald*, 8 July 1882, p. 8.

²⁸ *Salt Lake Herald*, 9 January 1887, p. 8.

²⁹ *Salt Lake Herald*, 1 April 1888, p. 4; *Pioche Weekly Record*, 5 May 1888.

³⁰ *Pioche Weekly Record*, 6 May 1888.

³¹ *Reno Gazette-Journal*, 30 March 1896, p. 66.

³² United States Census, 1900.

³³ *Pioche Weekly Record*, 8 November 1890.

³⁴ *Reno Gazette-Journal*, 24 October 1890, p. 1.

³⁵ *Pioche Weekly Record*, 17 November 1892, p. 3.

Joseph felt that the “heat, dust and turmoil of the metropolis of Pioche” was not conducive to his health. He traveled to the rural precincts of Lincoln County to interview the granger on political questions.³⁶ In 1894, he was a registered voter in Helene Precinct, Lincoln, Nevada,³⁷ but two years later is serving as justice of the peace in De Lamar, Nevada.³⁸ He continues to serve as justice of the peace until his death.³⁹ He was in poor health for his last six months and gradually got worse until death relieved him of his suffering on 16 August 1900 in De Lamar, Nevada. He was an old timer who “lived in Pioche in its palmiest day and occupied many positions of trust. He was a sterling man and made hosts of friends. He was upright, honest and a valued citizen.”⁴⁰

Research by Elaine Young, Silver Reef Foundation historian, 2016
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³⁶ *Pioche Weekly Record*, 13 October 1892.

³⁷ *Pioche Weekly Record*, 1 November 1894.

³⁸ *Pioche Weekly Record*, 29 October 1896.

³⁹ *Pioche Weekly Record*, 25 August 1897, p. 1; *Salt Lake Tribune*, 28 March 1898, p. 3; United States Census, 1900.

⁴⁰ Lincoln County Record, 17 August 1900.