

Edward Virgil Dickinson: Merchant, Postmaster, and Pioneer of Old Town Cottonwood

Parents

Samuel Cotton Dickinson 1827–1907

Nancy Jane Green Dickinson 1836–1916

Spouse Florence Myrtle Stegman Dickinson 1886–1930 (m. 1902)

Children

Wanda Rita Dickinson Buckner 1907–1983

Clyde Phelex Dickinson 1916–1992

Edward Virgil Dickinson was born on 1 August 1872 in Stockton, Missouri, the youngest of Samuel Cotton Dickinson and Nancy Jane Green’s children born before the family’s migration west.

A Frontier Childhood on the Wagon Road

In April 1875, when Edward was just three years old, the Dickinson family joined a wagon train departing Humansville, Missouri. Over the next three months and twenty days, they crossed Kansas, Colorado, and New Mexico, followed the Old Star Mail route through Winslow and Holbrook, and pushed over the Mogollon Rim by way of Pine Springs, Stoneman’s Lake, and Rattlesnake Tanks.

They arrived in the Verde Valley on 23 August 1875, settling near Wales Arnold’s ranch at Montezuma Well, a journey that would define the rest of Edward’s life. Growing up in this rugged frontier landscape, Edward was surrounded by a large and influential pioneer family. His siblings included Frank Lee Dickinson, William Green Dickinson, Margie Dickinson-Back, Mariah May Dickinson-Hawkins, and Alfred Dickinson, all of whom left their own marks on the Verde Valley.

Merchant of Old Town Cottonwood

By the early 1900s, Edward had become a central figure in the developing community of Cottonwood. The E.V. Dickinson General Merchandise Store, located on Main Street near the old jail, served as one of the town’s early commercial anchors. General stores of this era were more than places to buy goods — they were gathering spots, news hubs, and lifelines for ranchers, miners, and travelers and often served as the area Post Office.

Postmaster of Cottonwood — 1904

Edward’s role in the community expanded further when he was appointed Postmaster of Cottonwood on January 18, 1904. His dual roles as merchant and postmaster made Edward one of the most recognizable and relied-upon figures in early Cottonwood.

Family and Later Years

Edward married Florence Myrtle Stegman on 26 November 1902 in Oak Creek. Together they raised six children, four daughters and two sons, while living at various times in the Verde Valley, Kern County, and eventually Los Angeles County.

He lived long enough to witness Arizona transform from a frontier territory into a modern state. Edward died on 17 July 1958 in Los Angeles County at age 85 and was brought home to rest in Cottonwood Cemetery, Section C, alongside family members and among the pioneers who helped build the Verde Valley.

A Life That Spanned Eras

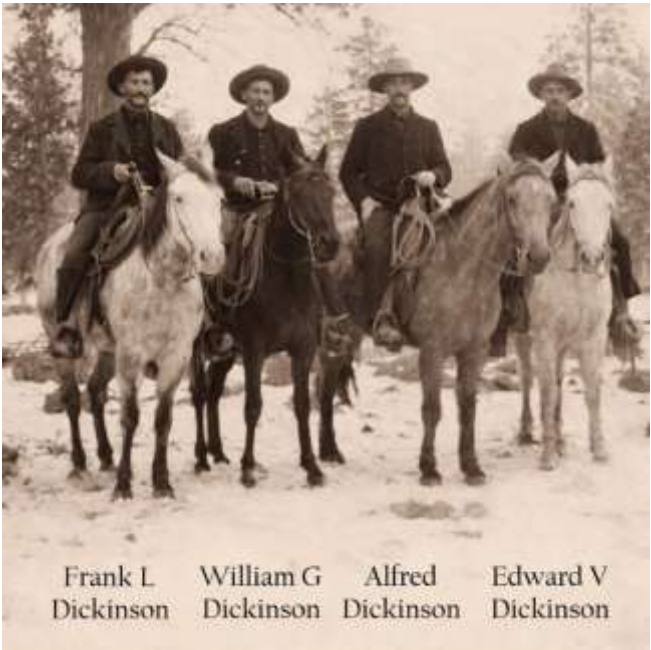
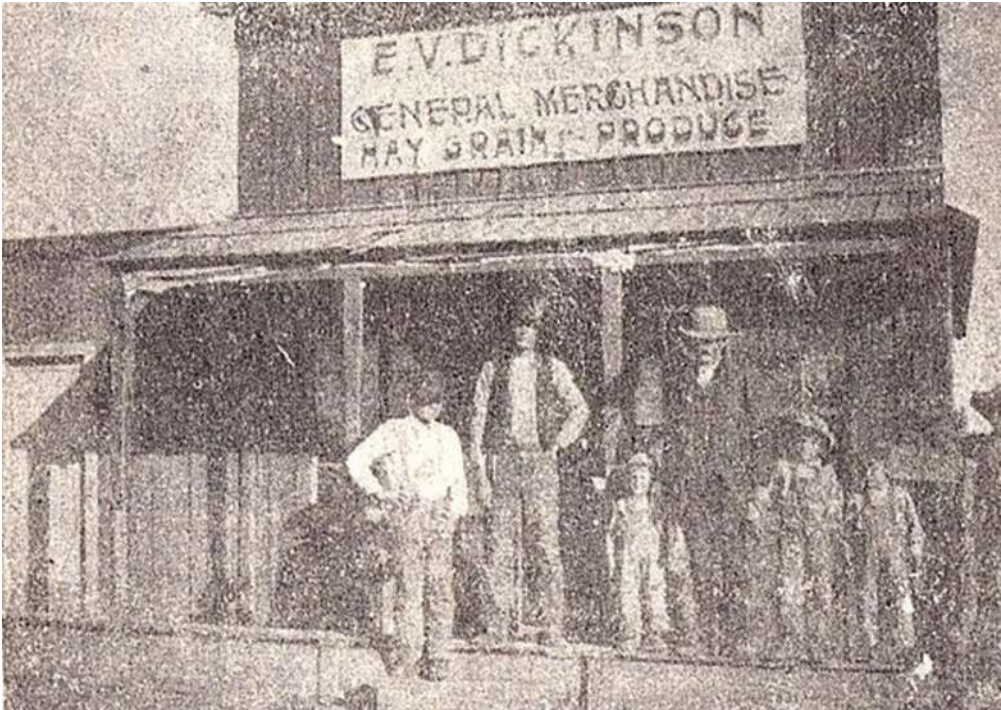
Edward Virgil Dickinson’s life bridged the age of wagon trains and the dawn of the modern West. From frontier child to merchant, from postmaster to community anchor, his story remains an essential chapter in the history of Old Town Cottonwood and the Verde Valley.

Continue reading about Edward at

<https://dickinsonfamily.us/edward-virgil-dickinson>

The sponsor of this gravesite chose to preserve Edward’s story by placing a QR code linked to his biography on the headstone. This ensures that visitors to Cottonwood Cemetery can learn who Edward was, a frontier child, a merchant, a postmaster, and a contributor to the growth of Old Town Cottonwood.

This \$25.00 sponsorship will help to preserve Edward’s legacy.
For information on sponsoring a gravesite visit <https://VerdeValleyPioneers.com>



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