

## Biography of Charles E. Lewis Powell Town Marshal 1922-1939

Charles Edward Leroy Lewis was born March 25, 1895 in Big Horn which is a mountain community south of Sheridan. He was one of 5 brothers and 2 sisters. The family eventually moved to Basin where Charles spent his early childhood. The family moved to Powell in 1911, where his father Frank ran the local blacksmith and veterinary business. Charles got a job as the stable boss for government owned horses used by the Shoshone Reclamation project. He attended Powell high school and was a member of the 1914-1915 basketball team. Charles had aspirations of being a pharmacist and was interested in auto mechanics.

Mr. Lewis was inducted into Company C of the Wyoming National Guard on March 13, 1915 and saw action against Pancho Villa at the Mexican border. He was stationed at Fort Deming, New Mexico and later at Camp D.A. Russell near Cheyenne and also bases in North Carolina, Long Island and in New Jersey. In March 1917, his unit was mobilized as part of Battery F, 148th Field Artillery and was eventually sent to France in 1918. In France, Mr. Lewis's unit saw action in many battles including Chateau-Thierry and Champagne. He was promoted to Sergeant on August 1st, 1916 and was offered a battle field commission. He turned it down since he did not want to leave the Wyoming soldiers. During the war, he was gassed many times and suffered a minor shrapnel wound in his cheek which affected the sight in one eye. Mr. Lewis was discharged from the Army on July 5th, 1919.

After his discharge, he worked in Billings before he settled in Powell in 1920.

On December 10, 1921, Charles married Sara Elizabeth "Bess" Philips. Shortly after their marriage, he was appointed Street Commissioner, Water Commissioner and Town Marshal.

Mr. Lewis filled an important role into the growing community of Powell by participating in the development of the water works extension project, sewer and streets development, and many other important projects. He did all of this while staying busy as Powell's Town Marshal.

As a family man, Charles and Bess had 2 children, Margaret born in 1922 and Milrae born in 1924. The family were all involved in the community. Chuck and Bess were founding members of American Legion Post 26. Margaret and Milrae were involved in Junior American Legion and high school sports.

Every year, the family would go on a camping trip to Yellowstone. There was always room for extra children to come along and usually they were children who lost their fathers during the war.

In 1939, there was an American Legion Convention in Los Angeles. At the time, it was the first reunion of the 14th Field Artillery Unit. There were 220 of the war veterans who attended and Mr. Lewis remembered nearly all of them. He rekindled friendships with this group of men and it was one of the happiest moments of his life.

The family has several memories of Charles and they include:

\* He liked the children he came in contact with, he gave them treats and he remembered all of their names.

\*The 4 Horseman-as they called themselves, (Carl Bloom, Harry Atteberry, Otis Rowlette and Charles Lewis) would go hunting and they would share the meat with the widows and families in Powell.

\* One year there was a terrible snowstorm in Powell and schools closed early. Some parents couldn't get in to town to pick up their kids, so Mr. Lewis took at least 10 of them home with him so they would be safe.

\* I recently read a story where Mr. Lewis and PCSO Deputy D.M. Baker had to deal with a large gentleman who put a gun to the stomach of a towns person and threatened to shoot him. The man was also upset that he did not have a job. Mr. Lewis went to the mans residence and found him sitting on the porch with a rifle laying across his lap. Mr. Lewis told the man that he had a job for him, but he needed to put the rifle down. Mr. Lewis told the man to get his truck which he did. The man was dropped off near the sheriffs office and was told to start cleaning up the street with a rake. As the man began to work, D.M. Baker and 2 other deputies came outside and took the man in to custody with out any further problems.

Mr. Lewis is remembered as a hard worker, who faithfully served his country in WW1 and as Town Marshal of Powell. He was passionate and extremely dedicated to

Powell and its early development. He was an honest, unselfish, and a popular public servant. He loved his family very much and cared about the people he served with.

The Powell Police Department and the city of Powell celebrate Mr. Lewis's life and mourn his death 70 years ago today.