Alice McIlroy (July 11, 1874 - November 21, 1946)
By Jo Ellen Heil

[ED NOTE: Her Handbook name is spelled M-c-capitol eye - small el — r-o-y. This type makes it look like it's two "el's."]

She's listed as Alice McIlroy in the Tent 22 Handbook. But her real name was Emily Alice Coburn Hayward McIlroy. There are as many challenging combinations of her names as one might imagine. Yet in some ways, Alice remains a mystery.

Alice was born on July 11, 1874, in Northfield Falls, Vermont. Her parents were James Coburn and Sarah Agnes Bean, both native Vermonters. James was a teamster. He and Agnes had married in 1867, seven years before Alice arrived.

Alice had two Civil War connections. Her first was through her father. James Coburn enlisted as a Private in the 4th VT Infantry in April 1862 and mustered out in July 1865. He applied for a veterans' pension in 1882.

Alice was married twice. Her first husband was Warren Melvin Hayward. They wed in December 1890 in Boston; Alice was just 16. Ten years later they lived in Barre, Vermont, where Warren drove for a laundry business.

Things did not end well. At some point between 1900 and 1905, Warren became a traveling salesman, fathered a daughter by another woman, left Alice and then married the "other woman" in 1910.

But Alice made do. In her early 30s she moved to Albuquerque, NM and ran this ad in a July 1905 issue of the Albuquerque Morning Journal: "Mrs. Alice Coburn Hayward, Clairvoyant and Business Medium. Office Hours: 10 to 3 daily. Sundays and Evenings by Appointment. 120 South Arno Street."

Alice married again in 1907. Robert McIlroy owned a hat shop there in Albuquerque. Two years younger than Alice, Robert had been born near Topeka, Kansas. They had one son, Alvin.

Marriage provided Alice with her second Civil War connection — Kennedy McElroy, her new father-in-law. McElroy mustered into the 54th Indiana Infantry in June 1862 — and mustered out exactly three months later. He took full advantage of his three months' service, however. He joined E.P. Sheldon, GAR Post 35 in Burlingame, Kansas and filed a veteran's pension application in Kansas in 1887. His wife Mary would later file a widow's pension in 1917 in California.

Alice, Robert and their 11-year-old son Alvin were still in Albuquerque during the 1920 Census. Robert's widowed mother and a brother-in-law, Nathaniel De Leon, lived with them.

But the 1920 Census held two surprises. The first? No income was listed for anyone in the household.

The second surprise was Nathaniel De Leon. "De Leon" sounded Hispanic or Native American. No. According to Federal Census Records, he had immigrated to America in 1899 from either "Asia," "Arabia" or "Russia" and spoke both Hebrew and English. Naturalized by 1930, De Leon later lived in the Bronx.

After 1920, Alice's paper trail becomes barren. The family lived at 1712 Bath Street during the 1930 Census. Robert owned a soda fountain and Alvin sold grape juice. But Tent 22 was founded in 1921. Had the McIlroys just moved into town? Or previously wintered in Santa Barbara? Alice served as the Tent's first President in 1921 and again in 1929.

Alice did apply for a social security account under the state of California in 1938.

By the 1940 Census, Alice and Robert McIlroy had moved to 41st Street in Los Angeles and were supported by "income from other sources." She was 65; He was 63.

Both died in Los Angeles -- Alice on November 21, 1946 and Robert two years later in 1948. Their cause of death and burial locations are unknown.

May they rest in peace.