

# BARNUM, THOMAS

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BARNUM, THOMAS, born at Potsdam, Saint Lawrence County, New York, April 15, 1831; son of Truman and Harriet (Rich) Barnum; (he was a relative of Phineas T. Barnum of the circus) married, Jeanette J. Osborn (1849-1935), daughter of John P. Osborn, at Prescott, A.T., May 10, 1865; children, Edward, Joseph, Herbert, Lucius, Lester, Hattie (Mrs. Charles W. Barnett), and Lulu (Mrs. A. J. Klein).

Went to Chicago as a young man to engage in business and took part in political affairs; moved to Santa Fe, N.M. and remained there until he heard of the discovery of gold in northern Arizona; left Santa Fe in October, 1863, in a party headed by James Shelby with a train of five wagons and arrived at the Walker Diggings on the Hassayampa in December; soon afterwards he went to Tucson where he was listed in the Territorial Census taken in March, 1864, as a Trader, resident in Arizona three months; within the year he returned to Yavapai County and resided at Prescott until March, 1869, when he removed to the Salt River Valley and located on 160 acres of desert land (N.W. 1/4, Section 3, T. 1 N, R. 4 E.) which he transformed into a highly productive farm; took part with Jack Swilling in the construction of the first irrigation canal to divert water from Salt River and largely furnished the funds for that work; was a member of the Salt River Valley Town Association, formed in 1870, which later became the City of Phoenix.

When the murder of Colonel Jacob Snively was reported in March, 1871, Barnum headed a party which found and buried his body near the White Picacho; at the first County election held on May 1, 1871, he was elected Sheriff of Maricopa County, receiving 200 votes as a candidate on the Railroad Ticket to 171 polled by John Moore on the Peoples Ticket; resigned as Sheriff, November 6, 1871, and was succeeded by Thomas Worden; engaged in business for a time at Tucson and later at Wickenburg but his principal holdings were in or near Phoenix

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where he'- built a fine residence on the northeast corner of Van Buren and Second Streets; was a member of the first Phoenix Volunteer Fire department of which his son, Lester, was later the Chief; at the time of his death was one of the owners of the Gold Coin Mining Claims, located 8 miles west of Kyrene and 14 miles south of Phoenix in the Climax District.

Died at Phoenix, Maricopa County, Arizona, January 26, 1909, aged 77; buried, old City (Pioneers) Cemetery, block 111, lot 4.

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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Barney, J.M. - "Thomas Barnum, Early Pioneer of Arizona", Manuscript, 1940.

Great Register of Maricopa County, A.T., 1878, 1882.

Pioneers Cemetery Association, Phoenix - Mortuary records.

W.P.A. - inventory of Maricopa County Archives, 1940, p. 367.

The Arizona Republican, Phoenix, January 26, p. 5, Col. 1 and January 27, 1909, p. 6, Col. 3, 4, and 5, (obituary).

The Arizona Gazette, Phoenix, January 26, p. 6, Col. 6, and January 29, 1909, p. 4, Col. 3, (obituary).