

# BURKE, WILLIAM HENRY H.

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BURKE, WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON (Paddy), born in Boston, Massachusetts, September 1, 1825; probably a son of Patrick Burke, who was born in Ireland in 1790; married Maria Engracia Suastegui (1844-1891) at Magdalena, Sonora, Mexico, March 16, 1859; children, Palatine Robinson, Peter Frederick and Frank Joseph.

Enlisted as Second Class boy on February 5, 1845, on the U.S.S. Raritan, commended by Commodore F.H. Gregory, at Rio Janeiro, Brazil, to serve 2 years in the United States Navy; the Raritan became part of the Gulf Squadron during the Mexican War and was at Vera Cruz, Tampico, Tabasco and at Port Isabel where he landed to take care of wounded soldiers; also served as Seaman on the U.S.S. Cumberland in Mexican waters; honorably discharged at Norfolk, Virginia, November 30, 1846.

Went by sea to California about 1850 and remained there until 1852 when he came to Tucson; assisted in raising the first American flag at Tucson when the Mexican soldiers evacuated that place on March 10, 1856; occupied a tract of land on Sonoita Creek known as Llana de los Duranos which he relinquished to W.W. Thompson on January 2, 1857; member of the convention held in Tucson on April 2, 1860, to organize the proposed Territory of Arizona; listed, U.S. Census, July, 1860, at Tucson, occupation- Grocer.

Operated a stage station on the Colorado desert, 40 miles west of Yuma and later kept Burke's Station on the south bank of the Gila River 12 miles west of Oatman Flat, opposite the Agua Caliente hot springs, until the Overland Stage Company ceased operations at the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861; went to La Paz at the time of the placer gold excitement where he acquired lots in the townsite and located 7 mining claims in the Plomosa District in December, 1862; located 6 claims in the La Paz District in

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in 1863 and 5 in the Castle Dome District, 1863-64; listed, Territorial, Census, 1864, at La Paz, occupation - Miner, resident in Arizona 12 years.

Moved to Arizona City (Yuma) where he was elected Justice of the Peace, June 7, 1867; unsuccessful candidate for supervisor of Yuma County, 1874; in 1878 he took out an irrigation ditch on the Gila near Burke's Station; appointed as the first Postmaster at Sentinel, A.T., June 30, 1880 and served until August 26 when he was succeeded by Freedom Neahr; served as Justice of the Peace for the Gila Bend Precinct and his son, Palatine, was the Constable, 1881-82; in February, 1881, he purchased the Colorado Hotel located on lot 11, Block 9, Gila Street in Yuma and changed its name to the American Hotel; original member, Society of Arizona Pioneers, Tucson, January 31, 1884; moved to Yuma where he was appointed Justice of the Peace October 4, 1888; died at Yuma, A.T., July 31, 1890, aged 64; buried in Holy Cross Cemetery, Yuma, Arizona.

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