JOHNSON, JOHN WESLEY

JOHNSON, JOHN WESLEY (Poker)

Born at __________, Tennessee, __________ 18__(about 1838).

Son of __________ and __________.

Married, Lucinda Strahan of Verde Valley, February 20, 1870;

children, Albert S., David C. and Lillie May (Mrs. __________).

Listed, Territorial Census, April, 1864, 3d District

(Yavapai County) age 27, born in Tennessee, single, occupation -

Miner, resident in Arizona 3 months and in the 1870 U.S. Census

at Prescott, age 32, occupation - Farmer; the following references

to him were printed in the Prescott Arizona Miner:

August 27, 1870 -- J. W. Johnson (familiarly called "Poker Johnson" from the fact of his having once poked a furious she-bear between the ribs with a butcher knife, until he persuaded her to will him her cubs and die), has leased Dunn's meat market, and stocked it with good beef, mutton, vegetables of all kinds, poultry, eggs, etc., and tenders an invitation to people of every race and clime to call on him and buy some of his good things.

February 11, 1871 -- The burning of J. W. Johnson's house, in Willow Valley, last week, was a more serious affair than was at first supposed, Mr. Johnson's loss being at least a couple of thousand dollars, while Henry Gehrens lost clothing, four or five hundred dollars in currency, etc. The origin of the fire is a mystery.

June 10, 1871 -- J. W. Johnson and others returned here yesterday from the silver region to the northwest of Skull and Kirkland Valleys, and a party of men left for same destination early this week. The country contains gold and silver bearing ledges, but the richest, it appears, is a huge chimney or blow-out of quartz, almost, if not quite as rich in silver as the Tiger. Tests will soon be made, when we hope to be able to render a good account of these deposits.
Here, now, are about 40 men, awaiting the arrival of 50 others from Nevada, who intend to follow the lead of an old miner, who says he can take them about one hundred miles to the east of Prescott and show them very rich placer diggings, from which he, with others, were driven by Indians.

December 19, 1873 - - Last week J. W. Johnson, alias Poker Johnson, was skylarking with a lady at the Verde and met with a severe accident. He had his pistol in his belt with the hammer on a cap, and the lady had a stick in her hand, with which she struck him, and as he dodged the blow the stick struck the hammer, the charge exploded, and the ball entered the calf of Johnson's leg and went down into the heel. The wound inflicted was severe, and fears were entertained that amputation might become necessary.

March 2, 1877 - - J. W. Johnson, who settled on Willow Creek, five miles north of Prescott in 1863, and continued to live there from that time until two years ago, and now a resident of Verde Valley, arrived this morning from that place.

April 9, 1880 - - J. W. Johnson returned to Verde Valley yesterday, after a sojourn with friends in Prescott for several days. Died at ____________ Yavapai County, A.T., August 26 or 28, 1885; buried ____________ Cemetery.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION
Probate Court of Yavapai County - Docket No. 206
Yavapai County Marriage Records - Book 1, p. 94.
The Great Register of Yavapai County - 1875, 1882.
The Arizona Miner, Prescott, January 2, 3; and January 9, 1869, 2; August 27, 1870, 3; February 11, 3; and June 10, 1871. 2; December 19, 1875, 3; March 2, 1877, 4; April 9, 1880, 4.
The Prescott Courier, December 29, 1883, 4; The Arizona Republican, Phoenix, December 29, 1897, 7; Monroe.

WANTED
Obituaries in the Prescott or other newspapers and additional references to him.