

Clairborne

Office file

OSBORN, JOHN PRESTON, born in Clark County, Tennessee, March 26, 1815; son of John and Elizabeth (Flannery) Osborn, both natives of Virginia; married, Perlina Elizabeth Swetnam (1821-1912), daughter of Neri Swetnam, in Lawrence County, Kentucky, March 25, 1841; children, William Lewis (1842-1927); John Wesley (1854-1931); Neri Ficklin (1856-1943); David Ezra, Elizabeth M., Emma, Jeanette J. (Mrs. Thomas Barnum), Louisa A. (Mrs. John T. Alsap), Pauline Rebecca (Mrs. Joseph B. Cramer) and Rose G. (Mrs. A. D. Copeland).
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He attended school in Virginia and then settled in eastern Kentucky where he was a merchant; moved with his family to Adams County in southwest Iowa about 1852 and went from there in the Spring of 1863 to Colorado Springs, Colorado; joined a party of emigrants which travelled via Santa Fe to northern Arizona arriving in Prescott, July 6, 1864, with 3 ox teams and wagons and some fine Durham cattle; according to Varney A. Stephens he built one of the first hotels in Prescott.

The Osborn House stood partly on the ground now (1900) occupied by Wallace's saloon, on Granite Street. The hotel was a two story frame structure and by no means a pretentious affair. Dressed lumber was worth \$60 a thousand and nails 50 cents a pound in those days. The best hotel fare to be had was pork and beans, with coffee and bread. These meals cost \$1 each. Mr. Stephens said that Osborn was one of the most industrious men he ever knew.

In January, 1878, the Prescott Enterprise stated:

Mr. J. P. Osborn, who boarded the members of the First Arizona Legislature, survived that embarrassment and is still alive and good natured.

In addition to his hotel in Prescott he began to cultivate a tract of land north of Prescott afterwards known as the Banghart place; in a depredation claim filed in 1890 against the United States and the Apache Indians he stated that he had suffered the following losses:

In March, 1865, the Indians scattered his stock herd on Willow Creek, about 4 miles north of Prescott, and got away with 8 milch cows and a horse each worth \$100.

Soon afterwards he moved most of his herd to the Verde Valley where his son, William L. Osborn had a farm below the present site of Camp Verde; the Indians raided the valley in off June, 1865, and drove 30 head of cattle, 12 of which belonged to him, one being a fine Durham bull worth \$500 which he brought from Colorado.

In 1866, he built a house in Chino Valley with lumber that cost \$100 per thousand; he went to San Bernardino, California, that year to place his children in school and to buy a load of provisions but when he returned he was told by his neighbors that the Indians had burned the house which was worth \$1,000.

In 1867, a horse for which he paid \$100 was being herded between Prescott and Fort Whipple by Amasa G. Dunn when the Indians killed Dunn's herder, stampeded and stole the whole herd.

That same year he began farming on the Agua Fria River southeast of Prescott, and in the spring of 1868 the Indians stole a horse which had been turned out to graze for which he had paid

\$80; he grew 60 acres of fine corn but when it ripened, the Apaches came on different nights and stole large amounts of it; corn was then selling at 4 to 5 cents a pound and the quantity that they took was worth at least \$1,100.

In the fall of 1869, members of his family being sick, he had to move them to Prescott and he rented the place to George Hamlin, furnishing seed, feed, plows, etc.; in the winter of 1869-70 a band of Apache-Mohaves set fire to the house about daybreak and tried to kill the man who was inside but he got away; the barn was locked but they burned it destroying 3 horses in the stalls and about 10 tons of cribbed corn; the house that was destroyed cost about \$1,000; the barn and stored corn were valued at \$600 and the loss of farming implements and furniture amounted to \$400; the following items were printed in the Prescott Arizona Miner:

October 9, 1869 -- "J. P. Osborn and family got to town from their ranch on the lower Agua Fria, Friday evening last, suffering with fever and ague, which will not stay with them long in this piney country."

January 22, 1870 -- "J. P. Osborn and family threaten to migrate to Salt River."

January 29, 1870 -- "J. P. Osborn and family started Monday last (January 24) for Phoenix, Salt River."

Soon after his arrival in the Salt River Valley he settled in the N.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ Section 4, 1 North, 3 East, and upon a cash payment of \$1.25 per acre obtained a patent to the 160 acres on April 10,

1874; the home that he built in 1871 was located at what is now 710 East McDowell Road; as a member of the Salt River Valley Town Association he took a leading part in the selection of the Phoenix townsite and assisted in surveying it; was a member of the first Board of Trustees of the Phoenix School District organized in 1871; served from June 4, 1874, to May 18, 1875, as Chairman of the Phoenix Townsite Commission which determined the ownership and fixed a value upon all lots sold.

Died at Phoenix, Maricopa County, A.T., January 20, 1900, aged 84; buried, A.O.U.W. Section, old City (Pioneers) Cemetery, Phoenix.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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Vol. 3, pp. 426-427 (Neri Osborn)
- Chapman Co. - Portrait & Biographical Record of Arizona, Chicago, 1901, p. 172 (Alsap)
- Sloan, R.E. & Adam W. - History of Arizona, Phoenix, 1930, Vol. 3, p. 175. (Neri Osborn).
- Parish, T.E. - History of Arizona, Phoenix, 1915-18, Vol. 3, p. 211;
Vol. 4, pp. 268-269; Vol. 6, p. 95, 181.
- Barnes, W.C. - Arizona Place Names, Tucson, 1935, p. 311.
- U.S. Court of Claims - Indian Depredation Docket No. 1052.
- The Arizona Gazette, Phoenix, January 20, 1900, 8:2 (obituary), February 24, and March 10, 1941.
- The Arizona Republican, Phoenix, January 22, 1900, 5:2 (funeral); December 4, 1912, 8:2 (death of his wife).
- The Phoenix Herald, March 26, 1891, 3:1; January 20, 1900, 1:6 (obituary).
- The Arizona Republic, Phoenix, April 7, 1940, 4:2-5 (Neri Osborn).
- The Arizona Bulletin, Solomonville, February 2, 1900, 1:1 (reprint from the Prescott Courier).
- The Arizona Enterprise, Prescott, January 19, 1878, 1:3.
- The Arizona Miner, Prescott, October 9, 1869, January 22 and January 29, 1870.
- October 8, 4:3 and October 20, 1866, 2:1; April 17, 3:2 and October 23, 1868, 3:2; August 10, 3:3 and November 30, 1872, 1:4; April 9, 1875, 2:3.

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crop of barley about one, 1866,
Osborn. We have only 1864 Miner, published bi-monthly
and 1866 Daily Miner beginning in Oct., 1866.