

PECK, GEORGE EDMUND

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PECK, EDMUND GEORGE, born in Canada, about 1833; married Sarena Ellen Alexander (1856-1887), daughter of T.M. Alexander, at Prescott, A.T., October 16, 1873, by Henry W. Fleury, Probate Judge.

Came to New Mexico over the Santa Fe trail, 1858; went with a prospecting party via Zuni to the San Francisco Mountain but the Apaches were very threatening so they returned to Albuquerque; when news of the discovery of gold on the Hassayampa was circulated in Santa Fe several parties were hurriedly fitted up for the new El Dorado; he joined the second group to leave New Mexico which consisted of Rufus E. Farrington, W.G. Collier, Lew Alters, Llewellyn Thrift and some others; they arrived at Fort Whipple late in 1863 where he secured the first Army hay contract under which he delivered 300 tons at \$30 per ton.

Was in command of 20 men in the second expedition against hostile Apaches organized by King S. Woolsey which left the Agua Fria Ranch on March 29, 1864; the total force consisted of about 100 well armed miners who penetrated as far east as the head of Fossil Creek and before their return had killed 30 Indians; Augustus Brichta, a member of the party, afterward wrote:

Ed Peck was with me - one of the best shots I ever saw. We traveled all night and before dawn arrived close to the rancheria. We crawled up in sight of the place and as soon as it was light enough to draw a bead through our sights (Peck and I each had a good Hawkins rifle), there stepped out in full sight a large buck Indian. I said, "Do you think you can fetch him?" He said, "Yes" and I replied, "All right, let's open". He fired and that Indian jumped about three feet and fell, which made one good Indian.

We charged down the hill and fired at the Indians. I do not think that there escaped more than two out of the lot. In the rancheria we found some cow hides with Woolsey's brand on them and also one of my horse hides. We burnt up the whole affair.

Listed, Territorial Census, April, 1864, 3d District (Yavapai County), age 29, resident in Arizona 4 months, occupation - Miner; property

valued at \$200; a notation on the census return after his name reads "Is here and will stay"; for a time he engaged in farming in Chino Valley and then became an Army Scout being employed as Guide at \$100 per month at Camp Lincoln, on the Verde River, from April 20, 1867 to September 30, 1868, when he was transferred to Fort Whipple and stationed there until May 30, 1870; again served as Guide and Interpreter at Camp Verde at the rate of \$125 a month from December 3 to 17, 1870, also from January 1 to 13, 1871 and for the month of February; it was during this service, on January 7, 1871, that he was with Lieutenant George W. Cradlebaugh of the 3d U.S. Cavalry and 20 men from Camp Verde when they were attacked by Apaches under Del-che (Red Ant) near Squaw Peak; in this action Private Thomas Meyers and Surgeon Alonso F. Steigers were wounded, the Surgeon's arm being amputated later at Fort Whipple.

Listed, U.S. Census, 1870, at Prescott, age 35, occupation - Miner; naturalized as an American citizen in the District Court at Prescott, October 22, 1870; having faith in a story told by a prospector named Miller, he headed a party of about 30 miners which left Prescott in May, 1871, to find a place in Central Arizona where one shovel full of earth panned out 17 ounces of gold; by the time that they reached old Camp Grant the excitement was so great the party was increased to over 250 men, one of whom was Governor A.P.K. Safford; Miller was unable to guide them to the place of his alleged discovery so after traveling up the San Carlos River and into Tonto Basin the group from Yavapai County headed for home by way of the Mogallon Mountains and Camp Verde.

Joseph Fish gives the following account of the discovery of the Peck Mine on War Eagle Creek, June 16, 1875, the first 10 tons from which were sold for \$13,000:

The discovery of this mine was as follows: E.G. Peck, T.M. Alexander, C.C. Bean, and William Cole were prospecting. While Peck was out hunting for deer, he stopped at a spring to get a drink and picked up a rock which was very heavy. He brought it in and when it was tested it was found to go ten thousand dollars per ton in silver. In three years the ledge had yielded \$1,200,000. in silver, yet, with the strange fate of many bonanzas, had brought its discoverers little but trouble. In 1879 the original owners became involved in a law suit which ended by the property passing out of their hands and into those of California parties.

Member from Yavapai County, H. of R., 9th Territorial Legislature, 1877; at that session an act was passed which moved the Territorial Capital from Tucson back to Prescott; died at Nogales, Santa Cruz County, A.T., December 13, 1910, aged 76; buried, Nogales Cemetery; Peck's Lake in the Verde Valley near Clarkdale, named for him; the following is taken from an obituary in the Tombstone Prospector;

The deceased was a man of commanding presence, and was imbued with a generosity that made him many warm friends. He was a scout under General Geo. Crook and helped materially in wresting the Territory from the dominating influence of the savage Apache.

Withal he was a most modest man. Some of the exciting scenes in Indian warfare, in which he participated, notably the "Pinole Treaty" proposed and carried into execution by King Woolsey, would be related by Mr. Peck as if it were an event of every day occurrence.

Ed Peck was a thorough Arizonian. He gave the best that was in him for the advancement and upbuilding of the sun-kissed land, and his many friends in Cochise county, as well as throughout the Territory, will read with sorrow this announcement of his death.

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