

# BINKLEY, FRANKLIN

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BINKLEY, FRANKLIN, born In Tennessee, November 10, 1826; married Harriett Wall, a native of Virginia, in Missouri about 1850; children, William Franklin, Charles Edward, Leonidas Lenear, Mason Stewart, and Martha F. (Mrs. Brown).

Went from Tennessee to Missouri when he was young and emigrated with his family to California in 1855; first came to Arizona in 1863 and was for several weeks with William D. Bradshaw on a prospecting trip in what were thereafter known as the Bradshaw Mountains; he then found what he considered a good pay lead near the Black Canyon and told his brother-in-law, Stewart M. Wall, about It when he returned to California who decided to go to Arizona with him and develop the claim.

In March, 1864, he and Wall departed for Arizona; they were joined at Bradshaw 's Ferry by Fred. Henry, DeMarquis Scott and Samuel Herron who, after some delay, went with them to Walnut Grove on the Hassayampa River, arriving in May; Binkley's account of what happened to them on June 3, 1864, at what was afterwards called "Battle Flat" which first appeared in a San Bernardino, California, newspaper and later re-printed In the Prescott Arizona Journal-Miner of September 17, 1887, is with some revisions, as follows:

"There were in the party Stewart Wall, whom you all know as the County Revenue Tax Collector, Sam Herron, a man we called 'Scotty', Fred Henry and myself. We had a pack train, and were on horseback. We came into camp at dusk on the f first day out, and slept In our blankets until about 4 o'clock the next morning.

"Day was just breaking, and all at once we were aroused by the most hideous and inhuman yells one could imagine. We all slept close by our guns, and no sooner were we awake than every man was ready to fight. It was the Intention of the Indians to

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stampede us and to either kill us outright, or capture all of our provisions, arms and animals.

"As soon as we were thoroughly aroused, we found our little party of five surrounded. The Indians were, as a rule, armed with bows and arrows, but a number of them were armed with muzzle-loading rifles. We had shot-guns and muzzle-loaders too.

"The first thing I remember was a peculiar and not pleasant sensation in the mouth. A great big Indian with a long, strong bow, had sent an arrow into my mouth, and it had taken out the tooth that you see gone.

"This made me hot. I knew I was hurt, but did not know how badly. I grabbed up my shotgun, but it missed fire. Then I reached over and grabbed Old Betsy--wish you could see her, she's a baby. The big Indian had dropped his arrows, and when he straightened up to take another draw at me with his bow, I leveled the old girl on him, and for one tooth he took from me I got four from him. He jumped right up into the air, and when he came down there was a good Indian.

"Stewart had laid out another, and at the same time I got a slight wound in the leg. We realized what sort of a hole we were in, and little things like a bullet hole through us, just so that it left us able to use our arms, was excused. Herron, had a good shot-gun and two revolvers, and you ought to have seen that fellow use himself. Why, he had dead Indians all around him, and still his clothes were full of arrows, and the blood from bullets was running down his legs in perfect streams.

"Scotty laid down behind a lot of pack-saddles, and every time his gun cracked a red-skin went to glory. I can tell you, young man, we had an experience that few men in the world ever had. A remnant of the savages had run our animals off, and we saw that we were in a fine pickle. As I said before, we had to fight or die, and you can bet your life we did fight.

"I can give you a little idea of what kind of work was done, when I tell you that Sam Herron was wounded in two places and died in eight days from the day of the fight; that Scotty was riddled with bullets and shot full of arrows, and when the fight

ended was unable to move. Fred Henry got hit once, but very seriously. I had my teeth knocked out, lost this left eye, and Stewart Wall was left on the ground with 17 wounds in his body.

"The Indians stayed pretty close to us until we got to dropping one every time we let a gun go off, and then they gradually withdrew. As soon as the fight was over, Fred and myself were the only ones that could get around. Sam, Scotty and Stewart lay upon the ground unable to walk. Fred and myself gave the boys some water, and then came the tug of war.

"We had no horses, and the nearest habitation was miles off. The only thing we could do was to walk the distance and leave the boys in the broiling sun until we could get assistance, and as we talked we could see the Indians going away which gave us courage.

"We started out on foot and in twenty-four hours we were back with a crowd of fellows. The boys were found in a terrible condition, but we carried them to Walnut Grove, and all but Sam got well. Come around to my house some day and I will show you a bullet. It is a little battered and is the bullet that knocked my eye out and lodged in one of the pack-saddles."

Two days later the Journal-Miner continued the story by printing an interview with Henry A. Bigelow:

The Journal-Miner representative set out this morning to verify the particulars of the Indian fight, as published in the last issue, taken from a San Bernardino, California, paper. The recollections of the oldest inhabitants seem to be rather indistinct as to the details of the Indian fight, Mr. Binkley was in, but they all said "Old Bigelow can tell you."

We had the pleasure of meeting Col. H. A. Bigelow in town, and smuggling him into the sanctum, got a solid hour's talk about the old times. Bigelow is mining on Slate Creek, and the head of the Hassayampa, and to judge from his talk does not like an Indian any more than Binkley does.

He says that he was living at Walnut Grove, engaged with George H. Vickroy and Jack Swilling in

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placer mining, In the spring of 1864. The Indians were on the rampage in those days. The Tontos were the ones who made the most trouble-- living 100 miles east of Prescott, they would come into this section in force sweeping through the mining and agricultural settlements like a cyclone, kill, burn and destroy, gather up all the horses and cattle they could get hold of, and disappear, leaving only devastation behind.

In March, '64, one of these marauding parties struck Walnut Grove, killed three white men in the canyon, two miles below the site of the dam of the Walnut Grove Water Storage Company is now building, and five Mexicans on the trail between Walnut Grove and the mining town of Weaver.

Late in May, '64, the party Binkley was in left Walnut Grove, on a prospecting expedition. His narration of the trouble is about correct. All the old timers know of it, as "the Battle Flat fight." One of the raiding gangs of the Tonto tribe waylaid the party and bounced them as they arose from their sleep in the morning, having previously taken possession of all the animals belonging to the boys.

Everyone of the five was wounded at the first attack. The fight was kept up from sunrise till the middle of the afternoon. Fred Henry had a favorite saddle-horse which the redskins killed, roasted and ate on the hill-side, in his sight, but out of rifle shot. The fact that the party were just starting out and had plenty of ammunition was all that saved them from annihilation.

When the Indians fell back in the afternoon, Fred Henry and Binkley, the only two of the party able to travel, left for Walnut Grove and raised the miners, and a party went out and brought in the three wounded men, to (John) White & (James N.) Bright's ranch in Walnut Grove. There they were cared for. Fred Henry was shot in one arm. Binkley was shot with a bullet, or an arrow, which cut the bridge of his nose out, and knocked one eye out. Colonel Bigelow says he met Binkley in Prescott several years ago, and talked these things over.

The Yavapai County Book of Mines for 1864 shows that on July 8 of that year F. Binkley recorded the location of 200 yards on the Washburn lode in the Turkey Creek District; in the Prescott Arizona Miner of July 20, 1864, it was reported that "Captain Pauline Weaver and Mr. Frank Binkley arrived here today from Weaver"; he returned to San Bernardino, California, and was registered there as a voter from 1872 to 1879 as a Teamster; in 1880-84 he is listed as a farmer at Temescal and thereafter as a laborer at San Bernardino, where he died on December 28, 1892, aged 66.

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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