

BROWN, CHARLES O.

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BROWN, CHARLES O. Born in October, 1829 in Essex County, New York. When about 12 years old, he and his family moved to Whitehall, Illinois. The discovery of gold in California attracted him and he went with the early Forty-niners in search of a fortune in gold.

He had fallen in questionable company, having joined up with the band of a Capt. John Glanton who it was said was engaged in gathering Apache scalps for the Mexican government at so much per head. Quite often Glanton mistook Yumas, Pimas and other Indians for Apaches; even blundered at not recognizing the Mexicans themselves. Early in 1850 the immigrants were gathering in large numbers at confluence of the Gila and Colorado rivers. Until a Dr. Langdon established a ferry, the Indians had ferried the immigrants. Because of the danger from Indian attacks Dr. Langdon took in Capt. Glanton. There seemed to be a competing ferry on the other side of the river. Glanton, to do his employer a favor, killed the manager of the opposition; and then operated the ferry himself. There was big money in ferrying immigrants and he exploited them in order to be sure of a good margin of profit. Some of the Indians were reduced to free-lances in the ferrying business. Glanton put this free-lancing out of business by mistaking them for Apaches. On the 24th of April, 1850, the Indians surprised Glanton's band in their tents and killed them. Charles O. Brown, detailed to chop wood with two other men fled and escaped to California. Remembering his original purpose in coming out west, he prospected for gold for sometime. (It was said that Brown, before the massacre, while with Glanton and some of his men purchasing supplies in San Diego, California, shot a lad in the San Diego plaza. Brown was arrested and placed under guard in the military camp. He and another prisoner prevailed upon a corporal and escaped.)

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Charles O. Brown probably came back to Arizona c1858. He ran a saloon and gambling house. When the California Column occupied Tucson, Lt. Col. J. R. West sold Brown the exclusive privilege of running a saloon and gambling house in the town for \$500. He prospered so well in the saloon and gambling business that he went to Mesilla, New Mexico, to marry a Mexican woman of good family and built the best saloon in the Territory, the Congress Hall. The first legislature that convened in Tucson met at Congress Hall. "The saloon had floors of wood, the lumber for which was hauled from Santa Fe, and cost \$500 a thousand. The locks on the doors cost \$12 each, and all other material in proportion." A meeting of townsmen (the well-known ones) was called on May 17, 1871, and met at Congress Hall. At this meeting the municipality of Tucson was organized and officers elected. Sidney R. DeLong was chosen mayor; Charles O. Brown, one of the four councilmen. Brown brought into Territory the first sewing machine; upon the birth of his first son he sent from St. Louis, Mo., the first baby carriage.

All his life he was interested in mines, prospected, and grubstaked other men. He was said to have been the first white man to work a mine in the Oro Blanco district. He kept one of the finest mineral cabinet collections in the Territory. In company with other men, he climbed the Santa Catalina mountains on report of rich gold mines there and his party was the first to explore the Cañada del Oro country.

When on May 10, 1877, one of his children died in an epidemic of small-pox, he seemed to have been affected deeply by it. Another misfortune followed. On October 18, 1877, the fixtures of his saloon were auctioned off. In the summer of 1879 he gave Thomas E. Farish a piece of poetry which recites

"THE HISTORY OF ARIZONA

How it was made,
And who made it. " He supposed "The Devil " did.

He died on August 13, 1908, at 0:10 P. M., of abscess on the brain, "leaving no property whatever". He left his widow; a sister, Mrs. James Flynn, North Church Street, Tucson; Asa Brown, a brother in Platville, Wisconsin; four sons, William, Stephen, Owen and Charles, and a daughter, Mrs. J. J. MacTeague, Durango, Mexico.

Legend: When Brown escaped the massacre at the ferry at (Yuma), he took with him a small amount of silver. About \$30,000 in gold buried on the bank of the river was never recovered.

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