

BURGER, JOHN HENRY

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BURGER, JOHN HENRY, born at Smiths burg, Washington County, Maryland, February 13, 1830; son of David and Leah (Ricksecker) Burger; married (1) Martha Riley at Crawfordsville, Washington County, Iowa, 1850, son Levi, (2) Elizabeth Morrell in Phoenix, A. T., May 31, 1874, by Reverend Alexander Graves at the first double wedding in Maricopa County when his bride's sister, Cassa, was married to Edgar H. Johnson; children, George, Lee, John H. Jr., (accidentally killed October 25, 1906) Elizabeth (Mrs. George W. Stewart) and Vera (Mrs. Minor Charles Downey).

As a boy moved with his parents to Richland County, Ohio, where his father taught him to be a carpenter; went to Iowa in 1848, and was employed as a carpenter and millwright at Iowa City and Crawfordsville; in 1853 he crossed the plains to California where he worked at his trade in Sacramento and Marysville and engaged in mining on Feather River; joined the gold rush to British Columbia in 1858 and successfully engaged in mining until 1863 when he removed to Inyo County, California; came to Prescott, A. T., in December 1864; listed, U. S. Census, August 13, 1870, at Walnut Grove, occupation, Carpenter; the following account of his experiences in Yavapai County is based upon a sketch of his life printed in 1896:

"In 1864 Mr. Burger came to Prescott and began making shingles and pickets from the pine timber. From there he went to the Vulture mine and built its first stamp mill. Later he went to the Bully Bueno mine, from there to Placer City near Walnut Grove, and opened up several mines none of which paid. After this he was engaged in ranching for three years at Walnut Grove, put in his grain with a gun strapped to his plow and his pistol in his belt, but the Indians would come into his field while he was at one end and steal the seed which had been left at the other end.

"He next opened up a tract of land at Antelope valley and had twenty acres ready for planting when his provisions got low. He started with another man for Wickenburg for a fresh supply, and on the way they were attacked by Indians. His companion was killed at the first shot, and although Mr. Burger fought with the energy of despair, the Indians shot him through the thigh and fired four balls into his side, one of which he still carries. He managed to reach the shelter of some rocks, where he was comparatively safe, and killed two Indians and crippled another, which caused them to fall back, giving him a chance to hide, finally being rescued by a party of four white men and carried to a cabin four miles away. After an eight months convalescence he went to work again at the Vulture till it shut down, when he went to Wickenburg for a short time, moving to Phoenix in February, 1873."

In Phoenix he engaged in wagon-making and blacksmithing and acquired considerable property; built the first two story house in the town; was the owner of 160 acres of land (SE $\frac{1}{4}$ Section 11, T. 1 N., R. 2 E.) and lots 1 to 6, Block 90 in Phoenix; served as Justice of the Peace of Phoenix precinct, 1874-76; was one of three trustees for the unincorporated Town of Phoenix, 1876; member Phoenix City Council, 1881, 1890-91; between 1882 and 1885 he located and did development work on 11 different mining claims in the Cave Creek District, Maricopa County; at the time of his death he was interested in the Columbia Gold Company which had erected a five-stamp mill at the Burger Mine on Hambug Creek in Yavapai County; accidentally killed by falling into the fly-wheel of a gasoline engine at the mine, May 27, 1901, aged 71; buried Old City (Pioneers) Cemetery, Phoenix, Arizona.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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- Probate Court of Maricopa County - Docket No. 691.
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- The Arizona Miner, Prescott, January 9, 2:2 and November 6, 1869, 3:1; May 7, 3:1 and July 23, 1870, 3:1; October 14, 1871, 1:5; January 22, 1875, 2:3
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