

OSBORN, WILLIAM J.

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OSBORN, WILLIAM J. Born February 6, 1834, in Bern, Albany County, New York. He was a messenger boy for Hon. Wm. S. Marcy when Marcy was Secretary of State during the presidential term of Franklin Pierce. He went to Kansas, and was elected to the territorial legislature that framed the constitution under which Kansas was finally admitted as a state.

He joined the expedition of General Johnston to Salt Lake as chief of the citizen transportation. While at Camp Douglas he was elected to the territorial legislature of Utah by the train boys as a joke, but he obtained his seat and served through the session.

On the opening up of Nevada, he emigrated there and went into the practice of law. At the first election he was elected to the territorial legislature. When the pony express came through the territory he was chosen one of the riders, because of his light weight, and rode from Virginia City westward. During the Civil War, when the Government wanted to concentrate transportation into California, Osborn was appointed to take charge of one of the trains and, after traveling to various points, was finally ordered to Wilmington, near Los Angeles, to await orders. The train was loaded with army supplies and ordered to Tucson, where General James H. Carleton had made his headquarters for Arizona. Osborn's train arrived in Tucson in 1863. Upon arrival he quit.

In 1866, William J. Osborn was elected to the House of the Third Territorial Legislature, from Tubac. He went back to ranching above Tubac, but the Indians pestered him. They drove off his mules in a raid on January 31, 1870, and in another raid Osborn was wounded. Ranching being too dangerous, he secured a job as an assistant secretary of the Council of

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the Sixth and Seventh Territorial Legislatures. He went back to Tucson and was made Recorder of the village in 1871 and re-elected in 1872, 1873 and 1874. He was also elected one of the Justices of the Peace of the Tucson precinct in 1872, receiving the highest number of votes. On March 17, 1873, Governor Safford appointed Osborn a notary public for Pima County. The next year he hung out his shingle on the north side of Congress Street and advertised as a Notary Public and Conveyancer. He was also the secretary of the Montezuma Canal Company, an irrigation project.

On March 4, 1873, he married Anna Johnson, a school teacher, Gov. Safford performing the ceremony. That year he was appointed Probate Judge for Pima County, and on April 13, he assumed the duties of ex officio superintendent of schools, serving in 1874 and 1875. By 1877 he added the practice of law to his notarial and conveyancing business. In 1879 he was elected Recorder and Police Justice for the municipality of Tucson. He and Charles H. Meyer ran for Recorder (Police Justice) in 1881. Osborn received the largest number of votes but was disqualified because his residence was located just outside the limits of the municipality. He had laid out an addition to the town on South Main Street and was living in it. He was Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in 1883-84. In June 1884 the Republican Party organization of Arizona elected him secretary. He served as secretary of the Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society for years and also as its president. He was president at the time of his death.

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William J. Osborn died on January 30, 1908, at his home, 416 N. Meyer Street, Tucson, Arizona. He was survived by his widow and his daughter, Mrs. Mary Hoxie of New Jersey. He was buried January 31, 1908 under the auspices of Arizona Lodge No. 1, A. O. U. W. and the Arizona Pioneers' Society. Rev. Roberts of the Congregational church officiated. The remains were buried in the "Workmen's" cemetery.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Arizona Citizen, January 18, March 22 and December 6, 1873.

Arizona Citizen, January 3, 17 and 24, 1874.

Arizona Citizen, January 2, 1875.

Arizona Citizen, July 4, 1878.

Arizona Weekly Star, January 13, 1881, p. 2, col. 2; also p. 3.

Arizona Daily Star, January 31, 1908, p. 2.

✓ Tucson Daily Citizen, January 31, 1908, p. 5.

Pioneer Minutes.

Tucson Directory, 1881, 1883-84, 1902, 1903-4, 1906-7.

Clipping pasted on p. 249, Pioneers' Minutes, large volume.

Brichta, Augustus, Reminiscences, Brichta file, Pioneers' Historical Society, Tucson.