

OZBORN, WILLIAM NELSON

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Born in Jefferson County, Tennessee, November 2, 1822.

Son of _____ and _____.

Married, _____ at _____ on _____, 18__.

Children, _____.

Enrolled, May 1, in Saline County, Missouri, age 23, and mustered in at Fort Leavenworth, June 10, 1846, to serve 1 year during the War with Mexico in Captain John W. Reed's Company D, Colonel Doniphan's Missouri Mounted Infantry; marched with the Company to Santa Fe, N.M., and thence down the Rio Grande; participated in the battles of Bracito, December 25, 1846, and Sacramento, February 28, 1847; was with the Company on the march from Chihuahua to the lower Rio Grande and honorably discharged at New Orleans, Louisiana, June 21, 1847.

The following is taken from a newspaper clipping dated September 4, 1890:

Probably in no other section of the American union can be found so many men whose lives and histories are so replete with adventure and romance, as in this frontier land. It is well for us, who are now enjoying the blessings of an advanced civilization and prosperity, to sometimes let our thoughts wander back to the early days of Arizona, to the men who battled that white men might find a home within its silver ribbed boundaries.

Phoenix has one of these old sentinels in the person of Mr. W. N. Ozborn, who is a familiar figure on our streets. Mr. Ozborn is 68 years old, a native of Tennessee and served two years in the Mexican War, under Col. Doniphan of the 1st. Regt. of Missouri. The life of the old man has been an eventful one, he sailed in the first steamboat that ever ploughed its way up the Mississippi river 62 years ago, the old boat bearing the name of Phoenix.

Mr. Ozborn informs us that he crossed the Colorado at Yuma 41 years ago. Captain Jaeger now a resident of Yuma, ferried him across at that time. Captain Moorhead, a gallant soldier, was stationed at Fort Yuma, but few if any of the people lived in the vicinity. The Yuma Indians that year were troublesome, having killed many travelers and several soldiers, but Moorhead never rested till he had whipped the tribe into peace and quietness.

Our old friend was also in San Francisco during the exciting days of 1850-56, when the vigilantes held sway. Those were the days, says the old man, that tested men's nerves. From San Francisco, our friend in further search of adventure, went to Central America under the famous chieftain Walker, was appointed State Marshal of Nicaragua, which position he retained during Walker's reign, when he once more retraced his steps to the west.

During his voyage on the old George Law, the vessel went down with 526 passengers, 502 of whom went to the bottom forever. Mr. Ozborn was clinging to a hatch cover for two days tossed about by an angry sea, but a Norweigan bark passing that way picked him up, nearly in a dying condition.

Mr. Ozborn has been prospecting and mining in Arizona and Utah for 28 years, and like all men following this calling has had his days of prosperity and his seasons of poverty, but today he is the owner of the Ozborn Copper Mines, 12 miles from the Vulture, which are said to be among the most promising properties in Arizona, and our old friend is liable at any day to become wealthy.

Like all old miners he is a generous whole souled man, and we sincerely hope that fortune will come to him, as he travels down life's incline.

He was last paid a pension at the Soldiers Home, Los Angeles, County, California, on December 4, 1902.

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At Phoenix, A.T., on December 1, 1897, he applied for admission to the U. S. Soldiers Home at Sawtelle, California, and was admitted on July 11, 1898, where he died on January 2, 1903, aged 80; buried, Soldiers Home Cemetary.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The Adjutant General of the Army - Military Service Records.
U.S. Veterans Administration - Pension and Soldiers Home records,
S. C. 7, 529.
The Arizona Gazette, Phoenix, July 19, 1883, 2:7 and September
2, 1890, 3:2.