

# PAGE, JOHN HEMPSTEAD

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PAGE, JOHN HEMPSTEAD, born in Maryland about 1834; married, Larcena Ann Pennington, daughter of Elias G. and Julia Ann (Hood) Pennington, at Tucson, December 24, 1858; daughter, Mary Ann (Mrs. John Charles Handy).

Jefferson Ake is quoted in "They Die But Once" as saying of him:

page came in with the filibusters from California. That was Crabb's second bunch - the ones that got to Fort Yumato late to join Crabb. The first bunch, you know, was killed off at Cavorca in Sonora, (April 7, 1857). In this second bunch was Bill Ake, my cousin, and John Page..... Dad contracted to cut timber for the mines at Arivaca and Sierra (Cerro) Colorado. We two boys and John Page drove the teams over to the mines with timber.

Later he became interested in producing lumber, which then sold for 25 cents a board-foot, an operation of which Ake gives the following description:

Page, Alf Scott, Joe Ashworth, Jim Cotton and George Fulton had a sawmill up in the Santa Rita hills. They had a saw pit and sawed the lumber by hand, one man down in the pit and one on top, they would saw almost through the log for each board, but leave 'em together at one end for a tie.

In March, 1860, he went to the saw pit accompanied by his wife, a little Mexican girl named Mercedes Sais who was 9 years old, and J. J. Reynolds (listed in the Census that year as a laborer from New York, age 31); his wife afterwards testified as to what happened the next morning after her husband and Reynolds had gone into the woods:

Q. Were you ever at any time captured by Indians?

A. Yes, sir. I had chills and fever and the people told me to go up in the Santa Rita Mountains and the pure air and water would restore me. That is where I was captured.

Q. Where did the Indians carry you when you were captured?

A. Right along on the foothills of the mountain, and when they could not carry me any further rather than leave me they tried to kill me, stripped me of my waist and beat me and took off my shoes and left me for dead. I suppose I lay there for several days and when I came to I crawled along the best I could until I made it to camp. It was a long time before I recovered.

Q. Are you the woman they threw over that cliff?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What direction were they going when they left you?

A. Going right north. They took the little girl along; she was small and they could take her; her people had sent her to me; she was a Mexican girl; they carried her and could not carry me so left me for dead.

Q. Was the little girl recaptured?

A. Yes, Captain Ewell recaptured her.

Q. Were any of the members of your family killed by the Indians at any time?

A. Yes, 4 of them, two brothers, my father and first husband were all killed by the Indians.

Q. What was your first husband's name?

A. John H. Page, he was killed by the Indians between here and Fort Breckenridge, now camp Grant, he was an escort for wagons.

Listed, U.S. Census, September 1, 1860, at Middle Santa Cruz Settlement, age 26, born in Maryland, occupation - Farmer, property valued at \$600; wife, age 23, born in (Nashville) Tennessee. Dr. R. H. Forbes of Tucson in "The Penningtons, Pioneers of Early Arizona" states how he came to his death:

In March or April, 1861, Mr. Page was ambushed and killed by Apaches north of Tucson while conducting a load of goods to old Camp Grant. He was buried where he fell, at the top of the hill beyond Samaniego's ranch, on the old road; and all that Mrs. Page ever saw of him was his handkerchief, his purse and a lock of his hair.

#### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

O'Neil, J.B. - They Die But Once, N.Y., 1935, pp. 28, 35, 36.

Forbes, R.H. - The Penningtons, Tucson, 1919, pp. 12-22.

U.S. Court of Claims - Indian Depredation Docket No. 8773 (Lazard).