

SLACK, JOHN BURCHEM

01

SLACK, JOHN Burchem

Born in Hardin County, Kentucky, May 20, 1820. Son of _____ and _____; never married.

Enlisted June 9, 1846, at Elizabethstown, Hardin County, Ky., to serve one year during the Mexican War as Private, Company A, 2d Kentucky Volunteer Infantry; participated in the battle of Buena Vista, February 22 and 23, 1847; honorably discharged at New Orleans, Louisiana, June 9, 1847; returned to Kentucky and served as Sheriff of Hardin County.

Went to California in 1849 and came to Arizona in 1862; listed, Territorial Census, 1864, 3d District, (Yavapai County) age 44, single, occupation - Miner, resident in Arizona 2 years; elected from Turkey Creek as Representative from Yavapai County, 3d Arizona Territorial Legislature, 1866; the following is copied from an affidavit which he made at St. Louis, Missouri, on November 8, 1873, giving his occupation as Carpenter and builder:

I joined the mule-train of the Walnut Grove Gold-Mining Company, at the Point of Rocks, six miles from Prescott, Ariz., about the 15th of September, 1865, and assisted in making the road from there to Bully Bueno mine, where I then resided. After arriving at the mine we immediately commenced preparations for the erection of the 20-stamp quartz-mill, saw-mill, and other buildings. I took the contract for getting out all the timber for both mills, and after filling my contract I continued in the employ of the company nearly four years, until the mills and other buildings were burned by the Indians in July, 1869.

I went to California in 1849, and remained in the mining districts of the Pacific coast until 1871, and am familiar with the cost of erecting buildings and machinery, and in no instance in an experience of 22 years have known a 20-stamp mill inclosed in a suitable building as that was, at a cost as little as \$118,000.

I was on the ground during most of the time of their operations in Arizona, and feel safe in saying from my own personal knowledge, that their claim is just and reasonable, and can name more than fifty mills in California and Nevada having no better or no more extensive machinery, and with fewer out-buildings and those inferior to the houses at the Bully Bueno, which have cost from double to five times the amount claimed by the Walnut Grove Gold-Mining Company.

He was at Ralston City, New Mexico, in October, 1870, then returned to California, where he remained about a year, and was in St. Louis in 1873; the following is taken from an obituary in the White Oaks, New Mexico, Eagle of July 30, 1896:

At the close of the Mexican War he returned to his home in Kentucky, but when the gold excitement occurred in California in 1849, he again came West passing through Las Vegas during that year on his way to the Golden Gate. Much of his life since has been spent in the mining camps of the Rockies and Sierra Nevadas. He located at White Oaks in 1880 and engaged in the cabinet and undertaking business.

Mr. Slack was one of the oldest and most universally respected residents of White Oaks. Although a man of firm conviction and pronounced in his opinions on all leading questions of the day, his expressions were not obtrusive or offensive to those who took opposite views. He was honest and always just in his intercourse and dealings with his fellow men and generous to those who gained his ready sympathy and confidence.

White Oaks Lodge No. 20, A.F. & A.M., of which he was a member, adopted resolutions on his demise which included this statement:

Not only this lodge or his relatives, nor a narrow circle of friends, but the whole community today mourns the sad demise of him whose honesty, sterling character, and kind heartedness made him not only a respected and honored brother and citizen, but whose virtues were proudly claimed by all who knew him, as next worthy of emulation.

Died at White Oaks, Lincoln County, New Mexico, July 26, 1896, aged 76; buried, Masonic Cemetery at White Oaks.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

43d Congress, House Misc. Document 16 - Memorial of the Walnut Grove Gold Mining Company, December 8, 1873.
Farish, T. E. - History of Arizona, 1916, Vol. 4, p. 165.
Kelly, G. H. - Legislative History, Arizona, 1926, p. 24.
The Adjutant General of the Army - Military Service records.
U. S. Veterans Administration - Pension records, Mex. S. C. 11, 349.
Lincoln County, N. M. - Probate Court records.
The Arizona Miner, October 27, 1866, 1:2; September 25, 1867, 3:1.
The Weekly Arizonian, Tucson, October 29, 1870, 2:3
The White Oaks Eagle, July 20, 1896, (obituary).