

SWETNAM, JAMES MANOAH

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SWETNAM, JAMES MANOAH, born on a farm in Lawrence County, Kentucky, November 11, 1842; son of James and Rebecca (Osborn) Swetnam; married, (1), Laura P. Ferguson at Catlettsburg, Kentucky, October 21, 1871 who died in 1876; daughter, Nellie Sherer; (2), Mrs. Nellie E. Breckett at Augusta, Kansas, October 21, 1877, who died in 1879; (3), Mrs. Mae E. Black at Omaha, Nebraska, December 27, 1887; daughter, Louise (Mrs. Edwin Malcolm Hall) and step-son, Howard Black.

At age 22 came to Arizona from New Mexico with the family of his uncle, John P. Osborn, and arrived at Prescott in July, 1864; left Prescott early in January, 1865, with a party of nine men headed by James Parrish to explore the Verde Valley for the purpose of locating a farming colony; went back to Prescott and then returned with William L. Osborn, Thomas S. Ruff, Ed. A. Boblett, H.L.D. Morse, Joseph Melvin, C.M. Ralston, Mac Foster, John Lang and Jacob Runstein and ten head of oxen to establish a settlement at the junction of the Verde and Clear Fork about five miles below the present town of Camp Verde.

With stones from a prehistoric ruin they built the walls of a seven foot high enclosure, 60 by 40 feet, erected a cabin in each corner and dug a well inside for water in case of siege; a canal was taken out of Clear Fork (now known as West Clear Creek) to irrigate 200 acres; late in March five of the party went to Prescott and returned with Mrs. Boblett, Mr. and Mrs. Whitcomb, Charles Yates, John A. Culbertson and 45 head of cattle.

The first Indian depredation occurred early in May, 1865, when 3 oxen were stolen about 9 o'clock one morning; he joined four other settlers in pursuit of the Apaches and the animals were recovered late that evening, all with arrows sticking in them; things went smoothly for a time except that their only horse was stolen by the Apaches who also made a break in the

brush diversion dam so that the canal was dry for a day.

Shortly after 1 p.m., on June 23, about 60 Apaches drove off 19 head of cattle which had strayed from the corral at the noon hour and, although hotly pursued by the settlers for four miles, got away with them; within two weeks two horses were stolen, one of which had been wounded in the neck in the previous affair; the next attack occurred late in July when Culbertson was slightly wounded in the hand and Hamstein more severely in the hip; the settlers rallied to attack the Apaches, who had stopped to kill an ox, and shot several of them.

The barley crop was harvested and sold in August to the Quartermaster at Fort Whipple at \$17 per hundred pounds but when the corn began to ripen the Indians pilfered quantities of it from the fields at night; he lost 100 bushels, worth \$8 per bushel; about the middle of September, Lieutenant Baty and 17 soldiers were sent from Fort Whipple to protect the settlers but the force was inadequate; for a month later the Apaches stole all of the remaining cattle except 7 out of a total herd of 60 brought to the Verde Valley; in the fighting, two settlers, Sanford and Culbertson were wounded, the latter quite seriously.

Some additional reinforcements from Fort Whipple, commanded by Lieutenant William McNeill of Company 1, 7th California Infantry, gave better protection but prior to that time the settlers had lost barley and corn worth \$2,000; horses worth \$500 and cattle to the value of \$6,000; William Elliott, one of the settlers, described his own loss as "six yoke of as good work oxen as ever went from Texas" worth \$200 per yoke.

