

# WALL, STEWART MONTGOMERY

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WALL, STEWART MONTGOMERY, born in Virginia, 1834; son of William and Martha Wall, both natives of Virginia; married, Sarah F. McCoy at San Bernardino, California, August 18, 1870; children, Angus, Annie, Celia, Margaret (Mrs. Snelling) and \_\_\_\_\_ (Mrs. M. C. McKenney).

Moved with his parents to Missouri at the age of 5 and crossed the plains with them to Merced County, California, in 1851; he went back to Missouri in 1857 and returned to California in the fall of 1859; the following is his account of the fight at Battle Flat, Yavapai County, A.T. late in May, 1864, as printed in the "Illustrated History of Southern California" in 1890:

In March, 1864, my brother-in-law, Franklin Binkley and myself with two pack horses started for the Arizona gold mines, crossing the desert and reaching the Colorado river, some 200 miles, in nine days. Hearing of the Indian outbreak in the Territory, we decided it best to remain at Bradshaw's Ferry, near La Paz, for a time, until we thought it safe to venture further, to work the placer claim located by Bradshaw and Binkley in 1863, some 40 miles east of Walnut Grove, and which was then considered, as it afterward proved to be, a very rich mine.

While stopping at Bradshaw's Ferry some three weeks, we enjoyed ourselves by hunting deer, fishing and prospecting. Finding three gentlemen who wished to join us, we started for Bradshaw's canyon, traveling up the Colorado river 60 or 70 miles, then leaving the river we went up William's Fork to Weaver's placer mines, and from there to Peeples Valley and over to Walnut Grove.

We remained at (John) White's and Bradshaw's ranch for some time, waiting for the Indians to quiet down, and finding our provisions getting short, failing to secure an escort and being anxious to reach the mines, five of us -- Fred Henry, Samuel Herron, Mr. Binkley (De Marquis)

Scott and myself -- with three pack animals, ventured to start. As we had been several times over the same trail that we proposed to travel, a distance of 20 miles, while out hunting and had seen no signs of Indians, we thought we could possibly reach the mines without any trouble.

We had made a practice of guarding our animals day and night, but we omitted this precaution. Reaching our camp near Turkey Creek about 30 miles southeast from Prescott, and 20 miles east of Walnut Grove, about two o'clock in the afternoon, the second day; Mr. Herron and myself made a circuit of our camp to ascertain if there were any fresh signs of Indians having passed along the trail, and found none; so we ate our supper and retired. Our animals exhibited some uneasiness about nine o'clock, but we paid little attention to it.

We all slept soundly until about an hour before daylight, when we were suddenly awakened by the Indian war-whoop and a shower of arrows falling on our bed. All our party arose and seized their arms. Mr. Binkley, being the first, served as a target for the savages, and was disabled by their first fire, receiving a half-ounce ball through his left breast, an arrow wound in his left eye, and another in his tongue. He was able, however, to retreat a short distance to the rear. By this time I had made one shot, and had received an arrow in my breast. A few moments later Mr. Herron and Mr. Scott were both wounded several times and about sunrise were compelled to retreat on account of their wounds.

One arrow cut the main artery of Mr. Herron's arm, causing severe loss of blood; another penetrated his stomach, which caused his death four days later by lock-jaw. Mr. Scott received a rifle bullet in his right elbow. Mr. Henry was also severely wounded but he and I held the camp until about nine o'clock, when the conflict grew so hot that I suggested a retreat. Mr. Henry thought we had better "stay with them" a while longer, and I remained a short time, receiving one wound after another until I had 14 wounds

in all.

I then told Mr. Henry good-by and made my way up the hill as fast as I could go some 50 yards, where I found Binkley, Scott, and Herron in a horrible condition and covered with blood. A few moments later Mr. Henry came running up to where we were, receiving one more wound on the way up. A hasty consultation was held, and, as Mr. Binkley and Mr. Henry were able to travel on foot, the rest of us requested them to leave us and make their way to Walnut Grove, which they, after much urging, consented to do and started off through the brush, avoiding the trail.

The Indians watched the trail hoping to cut them off, but failed. When the Indians found they were foiled in this, they returned to the rest of their party, who were standing guard over us. We were at this time about a hundred yards from our camp under a clump of small oak trees. Here we were again attacked, the fight lasting about an hour and a half, and I received three wounds and Scott two. Our last two shots did good work and our assailants left us and took possession of our camp.

They built 16 different fires and in plain sight of us butchered two of our horses and had a feast, eating all of our provisions except what they packed away on my horse, Old Joe.

After the Indians left the camp we remained at the last battle-ground until dark, though we suffered greatly for water, but were afraid to go to the spring, which was only 25 yards from our camp, and was all the time held by the Indians, and we feared they were waiting in ambush to trap us at that point. We moved under cover of the darkness a little further up the hill and camped under a big juniper tree, under which were a great many dry leaves, which we used as covering. We covered Mr. Herron up with the leaves, and Scott and I guarded till daylight.

With much difficulty on account of the soreness of our wounds, we then reached the spring, and after slacking our thirst, crawled down the ravine and hid among some willow bushes,

where we remained until three o'clock in the afternoon, when to our great surprise and delight, we heard the sound of horses' shoofs approaching down the trail from the direction of Walnut Grove.

It proved to be a party of 15 men, headed by Jack Swilling, coming to rescue us. Messrs. Binkley and Henry had reached Walnut Grove in safety and sent us aid. The kindness shown us by those men is beyond description. Mr. Swilling and party examined the battle-ground and found, about 75 yards east of our camp, some fifty oak clubs, which no doubt, the savages expected to use on us in case we had retreated in that direction.

On July 20, 1864, he recorded a mining claim on the Washburn lode near Turkey Creek but did not remain in Arizona and by 1865 had settled in San Bernardino County, California; at the time of his death the San Bernardino Evening Index stated:

Mr. Wall was the first City Marshall of San Bernardino City and served five terms in that office, when the town was hardly more than a frontier trading point. He was deputy County Recorder in 1880-83 under Recorder McKenney, and in 1885 was appointed as County License Tax Collector, making excellent records in all public offices he held.

Died at San Bernardino, California, January 22, 1913, aged 78; buried in the San Bernardino City Cemetery.

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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- Barnes, W.C. - Arizona Place Names, 1935, p. 39.
- Yavapai County Book of Mines, 1864, p. 19.
- U. S. Census, San Bernardino, California, 1880.
- San Bernardino County Marriage records - Book 1, 1870.
- California Vital Statistics - Death Certificate, 1913.
- The Los Angeles Times, January 23, 1913, pt. 2, 9:1 (death notice).
- The Evening Index, San Bernardino January 23, 1913, 4:4 (obituary).
- The Los Angeles News, July 7, 1864, 2:2.
- The Arizona Miner, Prescott, July 6, 1864, 3:1.
- The Journal-Miner, Prescott, September 17, 1887, 3:3.