

WITFIELD, GUSTAVUS, born in Dusseldorf, Rhenish Prussia, Germany, January 2, 1825; never married; obtained a good education and studied chemistry at the University of Bonn; arrived in New York City in April, 1848 and went from there to New Orleans where he was employed in a drug store; went via Panama to California, landing at Monterey in March, 1850; engaged in mining in northern California and on the Fraser River in British Columbia; went to Arizona as a prospector in 1861 but did not remain long in the Territory.

Returned to California and was employed by a large wholesale drug house; went to Panama in 1862 to engage in a commission business in drugs and chemicals; made a business trip to London in 1867 and the following year sold out and went back to California where he opened a drug store at San Diego in Old Town; bought a lot on 5th Street, between E. and F. Avenues, where he built and established the first drug store in New Town, San Diego.

In 1878 he loaded his entire stock of drugs and supplies on three wagons and went across the desert to Tucson and there opened a store at No. 32, Camp Street where he conducted a successful business; became a charter member of the Society of Arizona Pioneers, February 9, 1884; later that year he sold his drug store and made a visit to Germany to see his relatives and friends; settled in San Diego in 1885 but never resumed active business except to care for his several interests.

On April 18, 1889, he joined San Diego Lodge No. 35, F. and A.M. and became a 32d degree Mason in the Scottish Rite Lodge of Perfection at Tucson; willed all of his estate to the San Diego Masonic Lodge but the Supreme Court of California in August, 1899, decided that his property should be inherited by his brothers and sisters in Germany; died at San Diego.

California, September 15, 1894, aged 71; buried, Masonic Cemetery,
San Diego.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Lewis Publishing Co. - Illustrated History of Southern California,
1890, p. 112.
Distarnell, W.C. - Arizona Business Directory and Gazetteer, 1881,
pp. 196, 213.
Barter, G.W. - Tucson City Directory, 1881, p. 113.
The Weekly Nugget, Tombstone, October 2, 1879, p. 4, c. 1 (Advt.).
The San Diego Union, September 17, 1894 (obituary).