

# A Lookback At The Pima County Courthouse

by Janet Mitchell

The photo at the right was taken in the Board of Supervisors office in the Pima County Courthouse, Tucson, Arizona, in January 1899. Left to right are the three members of the Board of Supervisors: Noah Worthington "Nonie" Bernard, democrat; Rollin Rice Richardson, republican; and Mariano G. Samaniego, democrat and Chairman of the Board. At right is William P. B. Fields, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors.

The courthouse, built in 1881 under the direction of John Harlow, was located on the northwest corner of Pennington and Court, on land just north of the site of the first courthouse. The parcel was purchased from Robert N. Leatherwood, then Pima County Sheriff.

The second Pima County Courthouse was a large two-story structure with a small tower on top. It was used until 1928 when it was demolished to make way for the third courthouse, which was built in the same location the following year. This building still stands and is noted for its beautiful dome.

"Nonie" Bernard was a cattle rancher from Tucson. He died at the age of 54 in 1907.

Mariano Samaniego also died in 1907, at the age of 65. He was an original member of the Arizona Pioneers Historical Society, and one of

the prominent members of the Democratic Party in Arizona. Among the offices he held were Tucson City Councilman, Pima County's first Assessor, five terms on the County Board of Supervisors, and Pima County's delegate to the 11th, 13th, 16th and 18th Territorial Legislatures.

R. R. Richardson arrived from Pennsylvania in Crittenden, Arizona, around 1876 where he was engaged in ranching and mining activities. About 1897 he bought the town of Crittenden "lock, stock and barrel" and moved it several miles down Sonoita Creek to its present location, Patagonia. Richardson made a fortune from his mining properties, and it is presumed that he wanted his town located closer to the Patagonia mining district. He died in 1923 at the age of 76.

Clark William Fields served at least two terms for the Board of Supervisors, from 1896 through 1900. Afterwards, he held several jobs including bookkeeper for the F. Ronstadt Company, Tucson City Auditor in 1917 and 1918, and Deputy County Treasurer in 1920. His activities after 1920 are unrecorded.

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