

JOHN SLAUGHTER'S CHANGING WEST: TOMBSTONE, BULLETS, AND LONGHORNS

Exhibit Opens September 8, 2018 through August 31, 2019

John Horton Slaughter and his beloved wife and partner, Cora Viola Howell Slaughter shaped southeastern Arizona, in the aftermath of the OK Corral shootout. As sheriff, John brought peace to a fledgling Cochise County, making it safer for his cattle and his extended ranch family to thrive in the lush, well-watered grasslands. Their San Bernardino Ranch was a magnet for anyone passing nearby, who could be assured of generous hospitality.

The Slaughters saw Geronimo and the last of the Chiricahua Apaches board a train, never to return; saw Mexico's civil strife erupt into outright war, and the United States' efforts to keep the invisible national border from being breached. They turned the promise of a successful cattle ranch into fruition, and watched the Arizona Territory struggle to become a state in its own right. Throughout the many challenges John and Viola faced, the couple retained their integrity. John was the essence of the tough Western man: tight-lipped, forceful, ready to use his weapon when necessary, but loyal and loving with his ranch community.

This exhibit explores one couple and their border ranch, as their world changed dramatically, and an era of large range cattle ranching came to an end.



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