

BARNETT, AARON

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BARNETT, AARON, born in France, about 1841; married Rachel A. Rich at San Bernardino, California, January 9, 1879.

Came to Prescott, Arizona, in 1865; the following references to him appeared in the Prescott Arizona Miner:

June 27, 1866 - - Aaron Barnett is in town with lots of ladies goods, groceries, etc.

November 30, 1867 - - Should any of our readers have occasion to go to our **sister town** of Wickenburg and need to purchase any of the good things of this world, we advise them to call upon A. Barnett, who will be happy to see them and do the fair thing by them. He keeps a capital supply of this world's goods and is governed in his dealings with men by honesty and one price only. He does not expect to go to Congress; therefore he can afford to deal honestly with his fellow-citizens north of the Gila.

December 28, 1867 - - Mr. Barnett, the boss merchant and musical prodigy of the foothills, is doing a good business selling goods to the Wickenburgers and charming them with banjo-ical strains of delightful music.

April 11, 1868 - - Mr. A. Barnett writes us that he came from La Paz to Wickenburg in Mr. J. Grant's stage in one day and a half. We can now reach San Bernardino, Cal. in six days, which is a matter of great importance to the people of this portion of the Territory.

May 30, 1868 - - A. Barnett of Wickenburg, in a letter to us, says the mills were running, the houses going up and everything prospering. Barnett says trade has been good with him and his big stock of goods was disappearing fast. Success to Wickenburg and its generous, industrious, wholesouled Democratic population.

September 19, 1868 - - Mr. Barnett, the oldest merchant in Wickenburg, and one of the oldest citizens in the Territory, in a letter dated the 10th inst. says it is actually necessary that soldiers be stationed on the La Paz mail route and in the vicinity of Wickenburg in order to protect the lives and property of citizens and keep the mail route open. The Indians are numerous and bitterly hostile.

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February 13, 1869 - - We are pleased to learn that **A. Barnett, of Wickenburg, in this County, has received the appointment of Postmaster of that place. Mr. Barnett has attended to the duties of the office for over a year past, gratuitously.**

November 20, 1869 (advertisement) - - **NEW GOODS. A. Barnett, of Wickenburg, is in constant receipt of new goods purchased from Hooper, Whiting & Co., Arizona City, Yuma County, at prices which enable him to undersell any other trader in Yavapai County.**

November 12, 1870 (advertisement) - -

BARNETT AND BLOCK

Dealers In

Groceries, Provisions, Clothing, Dry Goods

Wickenburg and Phoenix

Sell cheaper than any other merchants in Central Arizona.

Listed U. S. Census, August, 1870, at Wickenburg, Yavapai County, A.T., age 29, born in France, occupation - Merchant; Postmaster at Wickenburg from December 8, 1868 to February 9, 1870; in July, 1870, he formed a partnership with Benjamin Block about which James M. Barney has written:

Barnett and Block, who operated a store in the Salt River Valley near the "Phoenix Settlement" - before the Phoenix Townsite was laid out, moved within the limits of the latter about the middle of 1872, and immediately took a prominent place among the businessmen of the town. They constructed a large adobe building on the southeast corner of Center and Jefferson Streets, and stocked it with such articles of merchandise as were then in demand by the farmers of the Salt River Valley.

For several years the firm of Barnett and Block was one of the successful trading establishments of the Valley, doing a heavy business in government contracts and the buying and selling of grain and flour. Their freight teams were numerous and were constantly on the road throughout central Arizona.

About the middle 70's, they were forced, through unsuccessful business ventures, to turn over their

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Phoenix interests to the Prescott firm of Wormser and Wertheimer, who continued the business at the same location for several years.

The old Barnett and Block adobe building was demolished when the Jefferson Hotel was erected on that site. Although once a fine and spacious structure, it had to give way before the march of progress.

The partners moved to Tucson with their freight teams and engaged in hauling goods from the end of the Southern Pacific railroad then under construction eastward across Arizona; the Prescott Arizona Miner of October 24, 1879, reported that:

Mr. Aaron Barnett of the firm of Barnett and Block, Maricopa, forwarding and commission merchants and government contractors, north of the Gila, arrived per Gilmer, Salisbury and Co's stage this morning. Mr. B. comes to Prescott for the purpose of attending to freight matters, preparatory to visiting the Eastern States.

He was listed in the 1880 Census as a forwarding agent, age 38; Barnett and Block kept in advance of the construction of the railroad with their freighting outfits until Benson was reached in 1881 where they located a store which was later moved to Fairbanks.

An epidemic of yellow fever occurred on the west Coast of Mexico in the summer of 1883 causing more than 800 deaths in Mazatlan, more than 200 in Guaymas and about 100 in Hermosillo; Barnett was stricken with the fever and the Prescott Courier of September 29 stated that he died in Hermosillo on September 20, 1883; the following death notice was printed in the Tucson Citizen of September 29, 1883:

Barnett - In Guaymas, Mexico, September 20, 1883, of the prevailing epidemic fever, A. Barnett, formerly of Tucson.

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SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- Farish, T.E. - History of Arizona, Vol. 3, p. 206; Vol. 6, pp. 92, 99, 198, 216, 232; Vol. 8, p. 294.
- U.S. Post Office Department - Appointment records.
- Barney, T.M. - Early Annals of the Wickenburg County, Manuscript, 1942.
- The Arizona Miner, Prescott, June 27, 3:1 and November 16, 1866; November 30, 3:2 and December 28, 1867, 2:1; April 11, May 30, 3:2; and September 19, 1868, 3:2; February 13, 2:1 and November 20, 1869; July 23, 3:1, and November 12, 1870, 3:5; January 20, 3:2 and January 27, 1872, 3:4; February 15, 3:1 and March 9, 1873, 1:2; October 24, 1870, 4:2.
- The Weekly Star, Tucson, May 16, 3:2 and November 14, 1878, 3:1.
- The Arizona Citizen, Tucson, January 18, 3:3, February 8, 3:2 and ~~September 29, 1883, p. 4 (death notice).~~
- The Arizona Sentinel, Yuma, December 21, 1878.
- The Prescott Courier, September 29, 1883, 1:5 (obituary).