

MILLER, JACOB LEROY

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MILLER, JACOB LEROY, born in Rock Castle County, Kentucky, February 13, 1830; son of John J. and Meridosia Miller; married first to Jane Reeves in Illinois, 1851; children Leroy D., (who married Rachael Weebright); Cynthia (Mrs. Thomas D. Sanders) and Syrilda (Mrs. Harley H. Cartter); his second marriage was with Sarah F. Allen at Prescott, A.T., July 18, 1884.

Moved with his parents to Illinois about 1835; went with his brother Samuel to Nevada in 1858 where they engaged in freighting and ran a pack train between Virginia City and Placerville, California; they were in Kern County, California, with their father when they all joined the Walker Party in 1861 to seek gold on the little Colorado River but not finding it went on to New Mexico and Colorado; returned with the party to New Mexico in 1862 which went on into what is now Yavapai County, Arizona where gold was discovered in the spring of 1863.

He and his brother, Samuel are named in the Journal of the Pioneer and Walker Mining Districts as original prospectors who, on June 12, 1863, recorded claims numbered 12 and 13, each 100 yards long and 50 feet wide, above the discovery on the Oolkilsipava (Hassayampa) River; three days later they also recorded claims numbered 1, 4, 19 and 20, of the same size on Big Bug Creek; the Journal also shows that on January 23, 1864, he bought from Fritz Martin for \$300 "an undivided half of claim no. 22 on Lynx Creek, being the first claim below the falls on said creek."

Listed, Territorial Census, April, 1864, as resident in Arizona 1 year, occupation-Miner, married, family in Illinois, property valued at \$740; U. S. Census, 1870, at Prescott, occupation, Freighter; was one of the organizers, on December 25, 1870 of the Salt River Ditch Company which proposed to take out a large canal opposite the McDowell Mountain to irrigate the south side of the Salt River Valley; such a canal was built by the U. S. Reclamation Service about 40 years afterwards.

He and his brother began hauling freight with teams between Prescott and Fort Mohave on the Colorado River and later engaged in the same business between Ehrenburg

and Prescott, their freight trains making four round trips each month; the Arizona Miner of September 14, 1877, stated:

"A team belonging to Miller Brothers, with fast freight, arrived last evening from Ehrenberg, making the trip in the extraordinarily quick time of four and three-quarter days. This is almost stage time, and quite unlike some of the other freighters who take ten and twelve days to make the trip."

On October 19 of that same year the following article was printed in the Miner:

"As will be seen by an advertisement, the Messrs. Miller notify the merchants and others of this section that they do not longer find it convenient to transport merchandise from Ehrenberg, having withdrawn their teams from that route to the new road via Greenwood to Colorado. As we intimated in yesterday's Weekly, the Miller Bros. are making the necessary arrangements for the establishment of a new town above Aubrey, whereby Prescott will be brought within 135 miles of navigation, and from that point the firm intend freighting at a much reduced figure from that charged from Ehrenberg."

In the Miner of November 2, 1877 appears another account of their freighting activities:

"S. C. Miller returned on Saturday from the Big Sandy, where he, in connection with his brother Jake, have large freighting contracts. The Signal Mill Company has a contract with the Miller Bros., extending over a period of sixteen months, for the delivery of sixty tons of ore per day from their claim on the McCrackin lode to their mill on the Big Sandy, a distance of eight miles, for which they pay \$5 per ton or daily average of \$300.

"The McCrackin Company, who are now busy in the erection of a new twenty stamp mill, which will be completed in about sixty days and ready to commence its work of reducing the mountain of ore discovered by Jackson McCrackin, from whom the mine derived its name, have also a contract with the Millers for the hauling of one hundred tons of ore per day, commencing in about sixty days from the present time.

"Times on the Big Sandy are flourishing. New buildings are going up all along the Sandy for a distance of three miles, and the town has been appropriately named Scatterville.

"The machinery for the new twenty stamp mill has been landed at Aubry and the Miller Bros. have the contract for freighting it to the mill site. Taking the several contracts that our old freighters and fellow townsmen have with the operators in quartz and quartz mills at the McCrackin, it is no small thing, but amounts to hundreds of thousands of dollars."

Unfortunately these contracts did not prove to be as profitable as anticipated and in March, 1878, they made an assignment for the benefit of creditors with liabilities of \$40,000.

On December 30, 1884 the 160 acre homestead upon which he had settled twenty years before, about a mile north west of Prescott, was patented to him; he and his brother, Samuel, together thus obtained title to 320 acres in what has since been known as Miller Valley, where in later life they engaged in farming and stock raising.

Died in Miller Valley, near Prescott, A.T., April 7, 1899, aged 69; buried, Citizens Cemetery, Prescott.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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 Jackson, O. - The White Conquest of Arizona, L.A., 1908, pp. 14, 17.
 Hinton, R. J. - Handbook to Arizona, S.F., 1878, Appendix, p. 59.
 Barney, J. M. - Story of the Walker Party, Manuscript, pp. 3, 6, 12, 16, 30.
 W.P.A. - Journal of the Pioneer and Walker Mining Districts, 1863-65, pp. 1, 5, 35,
 100, 103, 108, 109, 111, 114, 150
 U. S. Census, Peoria County, Illinois, 1850.
 The Great Register of Yavapai County, 1876-98.
 The Arizona Miner, Prescott, August 3, September 14, October 12, 19, 26 and November 2,
 1877; February 28, March 1 and 22, and December 6, 1878.
 The Arizona Journal-Miner, Prescott, April 7, 1909 (obituary).