

TYSON, JOSEPH

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TYSON, JOSEPH, born at _____, Pennsylvania, March 21, 1827; son of _____ and _____. Married, Mrs. Elizabeth A. Abbott, a native of Massachusetts, at San Francisco, California, February 25, 1864, by Rev. Thomas Starr King, which was the last marriage ceremony performed by that noted clergyman.

The following is derived from a newspaper obituary:

Joseph Tyson is known to pioneers as "Colonel" Tyson. He was educated and practiced law in Canada. When the days of '49 came, young Tyson came West. He landed at Montgomery Street in San Francisco from an Atlantic whaler and at once hurried to the mines

Tyson became much interested in mining and traveled from one end of the State to the other buying, selling, experting and prospecting. He made and lost hundreds of thousands of dollars.

San Francisco has always been his headquarters and he has been employed as a mining *expert* by dozens of wealthy speculators. Although at his best he was a mining man, "Colonel" Tyson at times acted as an attorney and was a deputy in the Office of City Attorney Edwin Stonehill. He was a man of the largest western type.

Stewart's "History of Siskiyou County" states that in 1855 he joined with David D. Colton, whose name is connected with building the first transcontinental railroad, and two others "in purchasing the Mountain Herald, the name of which was changed to the Yreka Union and published as a Democratic newspaper by J. Tyson & Co."

The following item printed in the Los Angeles News of February 8, 1864, indicates that he had been for some time engaged in mining in Arizona:

The teams of Capt. Tyson arrived here on Saturday last, from La Paz, with the large piece

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of metal from the Apache Chief, about which so much has been said. We did not learn the exact weight of the ore, but have heard it variously estimated at from 2500 to 7000 pounds. The "Pocket-piece" above mentioned is on its way to San Francisco.

The Prescott Arizona Miner Of March 9, 1864, reported that "Mr. Tyson, Superintendent of the Apache Chief Mine, 15 miles from La Paz, has completed a good well on the Prescott-La Paz road" which refers to the location of what became the stage station known as Tyson's Wells near the present site of Quartzsite; with reference to steamboat transportation on the Colorado River the Arizona Miner reported on May 25, 1864, that "Mr. Tyson, at La Paz, had forty tons of ore but did not want to ship it until he had a hundred or more ready. He has just commenced shipping that now"; on December 15, 1864, he was appointed by Governor Goodwin to be the first County Treasurer of Yuma County.

Probably early in the following year he went to Wickenburg and there erected a 5 stamp mill to work ore from the Vulture Mine; on June 30, 1865, he recorded the location of the "Queen of Sheba", "Old Abe", "Offten" and "Sangamon" lode claims in the Has sayampa Quartz Mining District; the Sheriff's census of Yavapai county taken in 1866 lists him and his wife at Prescott; a communication from Prescott printed in the Sacramento Union of April 11, 1866, which reported that Henry Wickenburg had sold 300 feet of the Vulture lode for \$75,000 of which \$25,000 was paid in money, went on to state that:

Immediately after the transaction took place Wickenburg purchased Tyson and Coulter's mill, and is now crushing rock from his extension claim. Tyson

- and Coulter are here in Prescott looking around for what they may judge the best lode whereon to locate a mill. They affirm that they are completely satisfied that it is much wiser to erect and run a mill in a timbered country than in a desert one.

The Tucson Arizonian of May 1, 1869, reported that "Col. Joseph Tyson, formerly extensively engaged in mining in this Territory", had written a letter from White Pine, Nevada, concerning his and other mines there; Captain George W. Coulter, a member of the Walker party, also went from Arizona to White Pine about 1868 and they may have been partners in operating the quartz mill at Wickenburg; listed, U.S. Census, 1870, at Hamilton, White Pine County, Nevada, age 44, occupation - Miner.

About ten years later he returned to *Arizona* with a device for recovering placer gold as stated by the Yuma Arizona Sentinel:

February 28, 1880 - - Jos. Tyson, Esq., arrived this week from San Francisco, and proceeded at once to Gila City to superintend the erection of the concentration machine, for the "Arizona Concentration Company." Mr. Tyson opened the well near Ehrenberg that now bears his name.

November 13, 1880 - - Capt. Tyson of the Arizona Concentration Company, left on the steamer Gila for Ehrenberg on the 13th inst. Capt. Tyson reports from the Plomoso District are very flattering and the success of the A. C. Co. is now established beyond a doubt, a few samples that we had the pleasure of seeing and which are taken out of the machines daily, show those famous placers, which, in early days were so prolific, are about to be revived and will rival the palmiest days in their production. We look forward to the time in the near future when the placers in Yuma county will attract the attention of that class of mining men who expect a speedy return for their capital invested.

The editor of that newspaper had the following to say about him on June 30, 1877:

The name "Tyson's Wells," in an Arizona paper, reminds us of the gentleman after whom the spot was called. He was one of those impulsive hopeful men, who believed, year after year, that Arizona was coming out strong "next spring." He was continually starting up some enterprise with millions in it; but he never succeeded in getting 'em out of it. Of such men was Arizona full in early days. Some of them are here yet. It does look now as if they might begin to get rich "next spring."

Died at San Francisco, California, December 20, 1903, aged

76; buried _____ Cemetery.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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- Bancroft, H. H. - History of Arizona and New Mexico, S.F. 1889, p. 585.
- Farish, T.E. - History of Arizona, Vol. 2, p. 213; Vol. 4, p. 281.
- Barnes, W.C. - Arizona Place Names, 1935. 351, 464.
- The Daggett Scrapbook, Vol. 1, p. 135 (undated and unidentified newspaper clipping giving an account of his accidental death from a leaking gas stove followed by an obituary).
- Yavapai County, Book of Mines, 1865, p. 132.
- W.P.A. Writers Project - Arizona, A State Guide, 1940, p. 361.
- Barney, J.M. - Political Activities of the Territorial Governors - Manuscript, 1942, p. 8.
- The Arizona, Tucson, May 1, 1869, 2:3.
- The San Francisco Chronicle, December 21, 1903, 12:1 (death notice).
- The San Francisco Call, December 21, 1903, 11:3 (death notice).
- The Alta California, San Francisco, February 26, 1864, 3:2 (marriage).
- The Los Angeles News, February 5, 2:2 and February 8, 1864, 2:1.
- The Arizona Sentinel, Yuma, June 30, 1877, 4:2; February 28, 3:2 and November 13, 1880, 2:1.
- The Arizona Miner, Prescott, March 9, 3:3 and May 25, 1864, 3:3. July 6, 1864, 3:2; March 15 and September 6, 1865; September 28, 2:2, October 5, 2:1 and 2:3; December 7, 1867, 3:1.
- The Arizona, Tucson, January 24, 1869, 2:3.
- The Arizona Enterprise, Prescott, April 13, 1878, 2:4.
- The Los Angeles News, April 11, 2:2, May 13, 2:2 and September 23, 1865, 2:3 (reprints from the Arizona Miner).