

BLOCK, BENJAMIN

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BLOCK, BENJAMIN, born in France, March 17, 1838; left Tucson in May, 1878, for a visit to France and returned there with his wife, Florence, in April, 1879; their children were Clarence and Celda (Mrs. _____).

Came to Arizona late in 1862; listed, Territorial Census, April 1864, at La Paz, A. T., age 27, born in France, resident in Arizona 19 months; occupation - Clerk; he contributed \$25 to the third Woolsey expedition against the Apaches at La Paz in May, 1864; associated with M. Wormser and Aaron Wertheimer who established the second store in Prescott late in 1864; naturalized as an American citizen at Prescott, June 22, 1867; the following references to him were printed in the Prescott Arizona Miner:

November 28, 1868 - - Ben Block, of the firm of Wormser & Co., of La Paz and Prescott, arrived here from La Paz, a short time ago and returned again last week. Ben is a good fellow and has hosts of friends in this, his old home.

July 23, 1870 - - Our former fellow townsman, Ben Block, has purchased an interest in the store of A. Barnett of Wickenburg and has just returned from San Francisco, where he purchased largely of groceries provisions, etc., which are now on the way to Wickenburg. He informs us that Wells, Fargo & Co. will soon establish express offices at Prescott and Wickenburg. Mr. B. had to work and talk like a good fellow in order to get the Company to agree to start said offices.

April 6, 1872 - - The Miner believes that the appointment of B. Block, as Postmaster at Wickenburg, in this county, will give, (if it has not already given), the people of Wickenburg and of the entire county, better satisfaction than it can possibly give the newly appointed gentleman, who, like other Postmasters in the Territory, will find that a great deal of work and very little money will fall to his lot.

Served as Postmaster at Wickenburg from February 28 to November 7, 1872; that year the firm of Barnett and Block built a large adobe

BLOCK, BENJAMIN

- 2 -

store at the southeast corner of Center and Jefferson Streets in Phoenix and planted a grain crop east of Phoenix to provide feed for their freight teams.

He and his partner, disposed of their business in Phoenix to Michael Wormser and engaged in hauling Government freight to Army posts in Arizona with their headquarters in Tucson; they were at Yuma when the Southern Pacific Railroad reached there and the Tucson Arizona Citizen of August 15, 1879, stated:

"Barnett and Block's excursion from Yuma to Santa Monica and back, good for 8 days, at \$20 was a success. They could have filled two cars."

That they kept pace with the construction of that railroad is indicated by the following item in the Prescott Arizona Miner of April 16, 1880:

Two old timers, formerly merchants of Prescott, Ben Block, who with W. H. Wanderlich, Aaron Wertheimer (both now deceased) and M. Wormser, started the first store in town after that of Manuel Ysara. Ben is now of the firm of Barnett & Block, freighters and commission merchants at Maricopa.

When the railroad reached Benson in 1881 they established a store there which was later moved to Fairbanks; after the death of his partner in 1883 he continued in business in Cochise County but later returned to Maricopa County as shown by the Phoenix Herald of September 12, 1891:

Ben Block has a \$5000 contract up about Prescott to supply wood and lumber to some of the mines in that region and is said to be prospering accordingly. Miss Celda is reported as a great favorite among the young folks at Prescott.

BLOCK, BENJAMIN

The Prescott Courier of July 19, 1891, printed the following item:

"Ben Block, now of Phoenix, a pioneer of 1863, has been here all the while; been rich, been poor, always brave and jovial; has been in La Paz, Ehrenburg, Yuma, Tucson, Prescott, Wickenburg, the Salton Sea."

On January 23, 1897, he stated in a petition filed in the Probate Court in Phoenix that his children were in France with his wife and was appointed their guardian so that he could cancel two life insurance policies in order to take out insurance of a different type; the records of the Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York show that he died on January 3, 1905, but the place of his death is not shown on the Company register.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Farish, T.E. - History of Arizona, Vol. 6, pp. 92, 99, 198, 216, 232.
 Probate Court of Maricopa County, A. T., - Docket No. 372
 U. S. Post Office Department - Appointment records.
 Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York - Register of policies.
 Barney, J. M. - Early Annals of the Wickenburg Country, Manuscript, 1942.
 The Arizona Miner, Prescott, November 28, 1868, 3:1; July 10, April 17,
 November 20, 1869; July 23, 1870, 3:1-2, April 6, 1872, 3:2
 The Arizona Sentinel, Yuma, September 13, 1879
 The Arizona Citizen, Tucson, November 21, 1874, 3:2; April 18, 3:2;
 August 18, 1879, 2:1
 The Weekly Star, Tucson, May 16, 1873, 2:2
 The Prescott Courier, July 19, 1891, 1:7