

# FRENCH, ADNAH

FRENCH, ADNAH (Abner), born in Vermont about 1833, came to Arizona from New Mexico with the Walker Party; listed Territorial Census, April, 1864, 3d District (Yavapai County), age 31, born in Vermont, single, resident in Arizona 15 months, occupation, Miner, property valued at \$50.

The Journal of the Pioneer and Walker Mining Districts shows that placer claims numbered 3 and 28 above the discovery of gold in the Oolkilsipava (Hassayampa) River were awarded to him on June 12, 1863, placer claim No. 11 on Big Bug Creek, June 15, and a like claim on Lynx Creek, June 25, 1863, all in the Pioneer District.

On May 3, 1864, he joined with 5 others in locating 1400 feet on the Henry Clay lode in the Walker Quartz Mining District, 100 feet of which he later sold to W. R. Basham; joined with Richard C. McCormick and Marcus D. Dobbins on May 26, 1864, in locating the following named quartz claims; Plymouth, Alhambre, Magnolia, General Grant, General Cass and Andrews lodes; on the 28th of that month he sold a half interest of 100 feet each in the Titic and Henry Clay lodes to R. C. McCormick.

The Prescott Arizona Miner of November 2, 1867, made the following mention of him:

Our friend, A. French, who is a miner by trade and a quartzist by profession, recently worked in an arastra from Lynx Creek about three tons of refuse rock from his Tye-Tye Lode, which yielded \$21.15 to the ton.

The Miner of August 14, 1869, reported the discovery of rich pay dirt and stated:

A. French, who arrived in town a day or two ago, from Walker's Camp, head of Lynx Creek, informs us that himself and others, found, recently, on top of Bradshaw mountain, dirt that prospected all the way from three to fifty cents a pan, but as there was no water close by, they could not work it. He says Jackson & Co. are having a shaft sunk on the Box Elder lode, at Walker's, out of which they have taken some very rich rock. uncle Billy Pointer was also taking good rock out of his lode.

He was a member of a party of 29 prospectors headed by Calvin Jackson which left Prescott on September 8, 1869 to prospect for gold in eastern Arizona; on September 26 at the junction of Canyon Creek and Salt River they were joined by a similar party from the Phoenix settlement under the leadership of C. E. Cooley; no placer gold was found on upper Salt River and, after the departure of the Cooley party, the Jackson party explored the Pinal Mountains, then returned to Prescott, arriving on November 7, 1869, with nothing much to show for two months of effort.

Edmund W. Wells, who knew him personally, gives the following description of him in "Argonaut Tales":

Adnah French was a veritable gold prospector. He was a native of Vermont and came to Arizona in 1863 with the Captain Joe Walker exploring party from Colorado, for the purpose of prospecting for gold mines on the head of the Hassayampa River. In physique he was tall and thin. Climatic exposure, self-denial, and disappointing hopes in his professional life, had reduced him to a frame of bone and sinew, apparently able to resist and withstand every hardship crossing his trail.

His face was thin and covered with a straggling light, shadowy beard; his features prominent and genial, were lit up by a pair of blue-gray eyes giving out a sunny rather than a sombre expression. The hair was the same color as his beard, sprinkled

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with threads of gray, and from under a slouch, gray felt hat, fell in long spare locks back of his ears down his thin neck.

Judge Wells then goes on to tell of how he died of thirst on the desert in southern Yavapai County where his body was found by Ed. Peck, but the Judge was mistaken in that regard as is shown by the following report printed in the Arizona Miner o f July 19, 1873:

Death of Abner French -- Mr. Orlando Allen, Postmaster at this place, has just learned, by letter, that Mr. Abner French, a pioneer Arizona miner and prospector, died, recently, at Santa Fe, New Mexico.

#### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- W.P.A.- Journal of the Pioneer and Walker Mining Districts, 1863-65, Phoenix, 1941 Manuscript, pp 1, 24, 25, 41, 50, 52, 80, ,99, 102, 110, 112, 134, 150.
- Wells, E. W. - Argonaut Tales, N.Y., 1927, pp. 173-180, 180, 199-207.
- The Weekly Arizona Miner, Prescott, August 14, 2 and September 11, 1869, 3:1; July 19, 1873, 2:4 (death notice). December 10, 1880, 3:3.