

GILSON, WILLIAM

GILSON, WILLIAM, born in Leinster, Ireland, about 1834; married Elizabeth Monihan at Haverhill, Massachusetts, 1883; children, William, Jr., and Bessie (Mrs. Frank Clancy).

Arrived at La Paz from California, October 14, 1863, and went from there to the Weaver Diggings; listed, Territorial Census, 1864, 3d District (Yavapai County), age 30, born in Ireland, resident in Arizona six months; occupation - Miner; settled at Date Creek where he was appointed election Inspector for that precinct on April 6, 1869; the Prescott Arizona Miner of May 21, 1870, reported that:

Shafts are being sunk upon one or two lodes in the Martinez district with fair promise. Indeed, it is asserted that the ore now being taken out is extraordinary rich. Geo Ho Kimball and Wm. Gilson, of Camp Date Creek, are now here, purchasing tools, powder, etc., to be used in sinking upon these ledges.

Listed, U. S. Census, 1870 at Date Creek, age 34, occupation - Farmer; on November 5, 1872, he was elected Justice of the Peace; the following was printed in the Miner of April 16, 1875:

"We spent the night at the home of William Gilson, a brave old pioneer, who with his sister and her bright little girl have a charming home on Date Creek, two or three miles below the post. Mr. Gilson has a large band of American cattle, fine farm, orchard, and other good things."

The following references to him appeared in the Prescott Courier:

May 13, 1882 - - William Gilson, a veteran Arizonian, is up from his fine farm and stockranch below Camp Date Creek.

February 17, 1883 - - William Gilson, of Date Creek, has sold his cattle and ranch to Messrs Hugo Richards, Jim Oneal and General Crook for \$30,000.

March 31, 1883 - - Messrs. Oneal and Gilson will go to Date Creek today to see to the gathering of the cattle recently sold by Mr. Gilson.

May 5, 1883 - - William Gilson, who was one of the first citizens of the County to engage in stock raising and carp production, is here from Date Creek.

July 14, 1883 - - William Gilson, who recently sold his cattle and range on Date Creek to a Prescott Company, has purchased the George Roberts place in the Salt River valley. He is now about to visit Gila Bend, after doing which, he may visit relatives in Massachusetts.

Was a member of Aztlan Lodge No. 177 (1) F. & A.M. at Prescott until 1885; moved to the Salt River Valley and became a successful farmer; died at his home on the Tempe road east of Phoenix, Maricopa County, A. T., January 31, 1909; buried, St. Francis Cemetery, Phoenix; at the time of his death the Arizona Republican said of him:

He came to the Territory in 1863 and engaged in mining at Walnut Grove with W. H. Kirkland and others. After that he settled on Date Creek. At that time that was an Indian country and Indians were at their worst. Mr. Gilson took his part in the struggle of these settlers against their depredations and their murderous raids.

Mr. Gilson came to this valley in 1883 and bought the old Roberts ranch. He built the St. John's canal and the Gilson block at the corner of Second and Washington streets, now known as the Dennis block. In fact few men have done so much for the building of Phoenix and the Salt River Valley as Mr. Gilson.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- Farish, To E. - History of Arizona, Vol. 8, p. 303.
 Probate Court of Maricopa County - Docket No. 1401.
 Bensel & Co. Co., Phoenix City Directory, 1892.
 The Arizona Republican, Phoenix, February 1, 1909, 12:3 (obituary).
 The Arizona Miner, Prescott, April 17, 1869; May 21, 1870, 2:3
 January 20, 2:2, September 14, 2:1, November 30, 1872, 1:2, and
 April 16, 1875, 2:2.
 The Prescott Courier, May 13, 1882, 4:2, February 17, 4:1, March 31, 4:1,
 May 5, 2:3; July 14, 1883, 4:1; October 24, 1884, 4:9.
 The Arizona Enterprise, Prescott, September 5, 1891, 1:7.