

MONTGOMERY, JOHN BRITT

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MONTGOMERY, JOHN BRITT, born at Decatur, Macon County, Illinois, January 4, 1839; son of George Bruce and Mildred (Britt) Montgomery; married, Alabama (Allie) Greenhaw Fitzpatrick at Phoenix, Arizona, November 1, 1876, who was the second woman school teacher in Maricopa County; children, Roscoe, John Greenhaw (Sheriff of Maricopa County, 1919-22) and Beulah (Mrs. George F. Cocks).

Migrated to California in 1853 and went to Idaho in 1862; arrived at Wickenburg, A.T., from California just before Christmas, 1864; worked at the Vulture Mine where he and James Miller whip-sawed mine timbers, they being the only two in the camp who knew how to do it; in 1865 he put in a crop on the right bank of the Hassayampa about two miles below Wickenburg; as a witness in behalf of the Indian depredation claim of F. L. Brill at Phoenix on May 6, 1902, he gave the following testimony:

Q. Did you have any trouble with the Indians yourself?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What was the nature of your trouble?

A. I was putting in some sorghum and some corn and one thing and another about a mile above Brill's ranch. I had two horses there -- been plowing them and cutting grain and buying barley and feed for them. When we got short of barley we took them out and herded them on some grain by the Hassayampa under some cottonwood trees.

I was herding them one morning, and I was sitting right on the edge of a little mesa. I had a rifle and a six-shooter, of course, watching them horses; been there about an hour and a couple of Indians came down the wash. The brush was pretty thick there, and I never seen them till they got on the trail about 40 or 50 yards. I didn't wait long. As soon as they got straightened out, one after the other, I fired. The bullet went through them both.

One died up on the side of the hill there. The other one got down to Tyson's Wells. The other Indians, the Apache-Mohaves, carried him in and he died down there they claim - at least the white men that seen them, old man Freeman and Young, they asked who shot them and they said I did.

He made a prospecting trip in the spring of 1866 as far as to Clifton, in eastern Arizona, but returned to his place on the Hassayampa in September; moved to the Salt River Valley early in 1868 where:

He shoveled the first dirt on the construction of the Phoenix town ditch and became known as the father of that work. He was one of six men who first farmed by irrigation in the Salt River Valley.

Listed, U. S. Census, August 30, 1870, at Salt River Valley, Yavapai County, A.T.; occupation - Farmer; he subsequently bought 160 acres of land (S.W. $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 8, T. 1 N. R 3 E) from Darrell Duppa all but 10 acres of which he platted as the Montgomery Addition to the City of Phoenix and recorded the same on July 10, 1885; the present limits of that Addition are Central Avenue on the East, Yavapai Street on the South, 7th Avenue and 5th Avenue on the West and Grant and Harrison Streets on the North; his personal popularity was such that, notwithstanding the large Democratic majority in Maricopa County, he was elected on the Republican ticket in 1890 to be Sheriff and served until 1892.

In later years he engaged in the cattle business on the Gila below the mouth of the Hassayampa; his range extended about 25 miles down the Gila and his brand was recorded as the Flower Pot, the ear-marks being square crop on the right and upper half on the left; died at Palo Verde, Maricopa County, Arizona, December 24, 1916, aged 77; buried

Greenwood Memorial Park, Phoenix, Arizona; the following is taken from an obituary printed in the phoenix Arizona Gazette:

He first engaged in the business of raising beef cattle at the Vulture, after coming over from California. It was there that he got the idea that there should be farms in Arizona. Mines were too remote from farm product centers. The price of grain for cattle was prohibitive.

His first farm was what later became the Montgomery addition to Phoenix, lying south of the Espee depot. Later he removed to Arlington and after his retirement went to live with his daughter at Palo Verde. He was a great lover of blooded livestock and at one time owned one of the finest herds in Arizona.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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- The Arizona Journal, Prescott, April 4, 1884, 3:4.
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