

ST. JAMES, LOUIS BENJAMIN

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ST. JAMES, LOUIS BENJAMIN, born at Mine La Motte, Madison County, Missouri, February 4, 1833; son of Lasondria and Mary St. Gemmes, both natives of Missouri; married, Carrie E. Pine at Prescott, A.T., May 14, 1879, who was born in California about 1861; children, a married daughter living in Oakland, California, at the time of his death.

Listed, U. S. Census, 1850, with his parents in District 54, Madison County, Missouri; said to have been a trader at Denver, Colorado, in 1860 under the firm name of St. Vrain and St. James; employed by the Quartermaster at Fort Union, New Mexico, as Property Clerk from May 1, to October 7, 1863, and as Wagonmaster from October 8 to November 30; left Santa Fe late in 1863 in party headed by James Shelby with 5 teams loaded with provisions for the new gold discoveries in northern Arizona.

He brought along a stock of goods and on March 14, 1864, at a meeting held in St. James store on Lynx Creek, the second Woolsey Expedition against the Apaches was organized; at that meeting he was appointed on a committee of 3 to confer with Governor Goodwin in regard to military protection against hostile Indians and to keeping open communication with sources of supply of provisions and clothing; Augustus Brichta, who was in command of 25 men under Colonel Woolsey, states in his reminiscences, written in 1909, that when the Expedition was returning, they had nothing to eat for two days until they came to a camp of pack animals with provisions on the Verde River:

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We went to work and cooked a meal good for the Gods. Slapjacks, bacon and beans. Our pack train had arrived and there I found my saddle bags and I had two plugs of tobacco; as in two days we would be on Lynx creek, I divided my tobacco among the boys as far as it would go.

The next day we started for the creek and arrived all in good health. There is one thing I never shall forget. It was about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to my partner's camp. I was out of tobacco and asked Louis St. James to credit me with a plug; that I would come down the next day and pay him. He said NO. I hope he is alive yet so he can see this. I found my partner well with plenty of gold dust.

Listed, Territorial Census, April, 1864, 3d District (Yavapai County), resident in Arizona 4 months, occupation, Trader, property valued at \$2650; the Journal of the Walker Mining District indicates that he did not do much grub staking since his name is included as one of the locators on only three mining claims in 1864; the Prescott Arizona Miner of February 9, 1867, reported that he was with Emmet A. Bentley, Aaron Wertheimer and Henry Colquette when they were attacked by Indians a few days before on the divide between Skull Valley and Prescott; all except Wertheimer were wounded with arrows, St. James above the knee, Colquette in the pit of the stomach, and Bentley died from his wounds in Prescott, on February 27.

For a time he was in partnership with Thomas Barnum in the general merchandise business and they hauled their goods with their own freight teams from Hardyville on the Colorado; later he left Yavapai County, but an item in the Prescott Arizona Miner of August 12, 1871, reported his intention to return;

L. B. St. James, formerly of this place, is now a resident of Pioche, Nevada, and recently resigned a position in the Sheriff's office at that place. In a recent letter to Mr. Aaron Wertheimer, he says he will start for this Territory about the first of September. The letter stated that many persons had already started for Arizona, and many more were preparing to go.

On December 4, 1876, he was appointed Post Trader at Camp Apache, A.T., and held that position until he sold out and resigned on May 1, 1878; there are two references to him in that capacity in the Arizona Miner:

June 29, 1877 - - L.B. St. James, sutler at Camp Apache, who has been absent in the East for two months purchasing goods, has returned to his place of business.

September 21, 1877 - - L. B. St. James, Post trader, accompanied Col. C. P. Head from Apache, and arrived here yesterday. He looks hearty and seems to be gathering flesh, which he says comes from having to spend much of his time in riding about over mountains and trails of the Little Colorado country. He buys his grain and has a large trade with the settlements on that stream.

He was Justice of the Peace at Equator, Yavapai County, 1903-04, and at Jerome in 1896-98, and again in 1901-08; the Prescott Courier, of October 25, 1907, reported that:

Justice Louis St. James is in the city from Jerome. When he left, the great copper camp was moving along in its accustomed prosperous way, with no signs of slump or let up. He says Jerome is not dependent upon copper at all; that if copper should drop to eight cents, the precious metals in the ores around Jerome would keep the wheels of industry humming right along, and this same rule applies to all this section.

Admitted from Yavapai County to the Arizona Pioneers' Home, Prescott, February 6, 1911, where he died, May 31, 1914, aged 81; buried, Pioneers Cemetery, Miller Valley, near Prescott; at the time of his death, the Prescott Courier stated:

If coming to the West in 1860 and striving against the conditions found in a rugged frontier country for a half century entitle a man to be numbered among the pioneers, then Louis B. St. James amply earned that title and the home which the State afforded him in his declining years.

The following is taken from an obituary in the Prescott Journal-Miner:

He came to the Territory as early as 1863, being a member of the old and well known firm of St. James and Barnum, which dealt in merchandise, and were the first to open up the northern party of the country by introducing freight teams, entering via Hardyville, on the Colorado river. Practically speaking this firm blazed the way for wagon road communication, and under dangers that were attended with the possible loss of life and property.

Abandoning this pursuit later, the deceased engaged in local traffic as well did he follow merchandising, mining and other pursuits, in all of which his methods were stamped with honesty and his dealings with all were characterized with a just regard for the trials of those who were struggling to gain a foothold in the new land.

In the 70s the deceased was given the post trader store of the military at Camp Apache, where he accumulated quite a snug little fortune. His generosity in later years led to his financial downfall. With the closing of another Hassayamper's career, it may truthfully be said that L. B. St. James was one of the best of men, was true to his friends and an exemplary citizen.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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The Quartermaster General's Office - Old records and files.
The Great Register of Yavapai County, 1876-1908.
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Farish, T. E. - History of Arizona, Vol. 2, p. 249; Vol. 3,
p. 219; Vol. 5, p. 316.
McClintock, J. H. - Arizona, The Youngest State, 1916, p. 617.
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pp. 3, 4.
Arizona Pioneers' Home, Prescott, - Admission and death records.
The Arizona Miner, Prescott, February 9, 2:1 and March 9, 1867, 3:1;
August 12, 1871, 3:2; June 29, 3:2 and September 21, 1877, 3:2.
The Prescott Courier, October 25, 1907, 2:1; June 6, 1914, 8:6
(obituary).
The Journal-Miner, Prescott, June 2, 1914, 8:2 (obituary).

ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- The Arizona Enterprise, Prescott, February 23, 2:2-3, April 17,
2:2, May 18, 4:1, May 29, 1:4, June 22, 3:3, July 27, 1:3,
November 20, 4:1, and November 27, 1878, 2:1.
The Arizona Miner, Prescott, March 7, 4:2, May 9, 3:2, and May
16, 1879, 3:3 (wedding).
The Prescott Courier, August 22, 1884, 3:7 and November 28,
1892, 4:1.
The Alta California, May 24, 1865, 1:1 (fight with Apaches in
which Sheriff Francis M. Larkin was wounded).