

The above pioneer was born in Patchogue, Suffolk Co. New York, and died in San Francisco, November 18th 1879, aged sixty one years and eight months, his birth according to the family bible having occurred February 26, 1818. His father was a "well to do" granger in Suffolk County. After acquiring the rudiments of an English education in School in his native town, young Abel went to the city of New York and entered the store of Justus C. Earle & Co. wholesale grocers and dealers in liquors, as Clerk. Next he migrated to Galveston, Texas, where for a season he kept a hotel in partnership with his brother. On his return he opened a store, his brother still being his partner. The gold excitement aroused even the more sluggish descendants of Holland's ancestral families on staid Long Island's sea girt shores, and when the news of California discoveries reached their sandy farms, both young and middle aged citizens were speedily prepared to make a "stampede" westward where the "Star of Empire" was taking its way. Mr. Biggs was one of the most earnest and active of the adventures. He in company with eight others organized the "Patchogue Mining and Trading Company" which left the home of Mr. Biggs, January 24, 1849, the latter being President of the Association. They sailed from New York, February 5th, 1849, on the bark "Keoka" for San Francisco. The craft touched at Rio and Valparaiso, and arrived in S.F. harbor, September 17th, 1849.

Shortly after going ashore Mr. Biggs perfected arrangements for a jaunt to the interior. Accordingly, after the unloading of the vessel, Mr. Biggs, in company with two others, sailed up the Sacramento river on the schooner "James L. Day", which connected with a stern wheel scow at Sacramento, the destination of the party being



"Rose's Bar" on the Yuba. The plan of Mr. Biggs, was to locate if possible, promising and favorable mining claims, for the occupancy by his company. He returned to San Francisco, and spent the winter of 1849-50 speculating for the Association of which he was a member. In February 1850, he still acting as President, convoyed the Company up to the mines, landing at Nieulans, where was purchased for their use, eleven yoke of cattle, and two wagons. The party mined at "Rough and Ready" and thereabouts from March until May, when Mr. Biggs went to "Poordlans Creek" on the South Yuba, and thence to Canon Creek where he mined until September when he came down to San Francisco. The Company having disbanded, Mr. Biggs left on a barque for Panama. He went thence on to New York, making a visit of two years in his ancestral home.

On his return to California, he and Messrs Kibbe and Overton opened a saloon on Montgomery Street. In company with Mr. Overton he likewise conducted a wholesale liquor establishment on Front Street. After two years experience in this business, Mr. Biggs became a Provincial landlord for six months, during which time he kept a hotel at San Leandro in Alameda County.

He next returned to San Francisco, and for some time acted as traveling Agent for A. M. Gilman & Co. wholesale wine and liquor merchants. He then resumed the business of saloon keeping on California, and other thoroughfares, and up to his last illness occupied the premises on the southwest corner of Sansome and Pine Streets. His final sickness was sudden and painful, and was pronounced by his physicians to be bilious colic. He was conscious to the last moment and but a few hours prior to his decease, conversed cheerfully and hopefully, with a daughter who stood at his bedside. He expired at his own home, surrounded by his affectionate wife and children, to



whom he was devotedly attached, and by return he was dearly loved. Deceased was a man of scrupulous integrity, great enterprise, and blessed with a disposition genial, and overflowing with humor, and amiability. He was exceedingly popular with all who enjoyed the pleasure of his acquaintance.

Abel R. Biggs was married in Patchogue, New York April 24th 1841, to Miss Mehetable Terry of the same place. He has left five children, namely, Francis Adelaide, married to J. E. Purdy, and living in San Francisco; Harriet Ophelia, married to S. McHenry, and residing in Oakland, Jerusha Terry married S.L.Coan, and living in the Sandwich Islands; May Eveline married to John Wood, and living in San Francisco ; and Harry Clinton Biggs, unmarried, and engaged in business in San Francisco.

Mr. Biggs belonged to no social or benevolent Society, save that of the Pioneer Society. In politics he was an ardent and uncompromising Republican.

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