

Henry Klippel

Henry Klippel was a pioneer, soldier, entrepreneur and politician. Born in Germany in 1833, he migrated with his family to Ohio in 1837. When gold fever struck, Klippel and two brothers took a wagon train to Oregon City, Oregon where he worked briefly as a ferryboat hand, drove an ox cart to California and placer mined – all with little success. When gold was discovered in Jacksonville, he joined the gold rush but also had little success. In the 1850s, Klippel was a soldier who fought in the Rogue Indian Wars.

Following the Wars, he married Elizabeth Bigham and shortly thereafter left for Idaho to mine, remaining there for two years. This time he was successful, returning home to Elizabeth a wealthy man. In the ensuing years, he pioneered the first quartz mine in Oregon, built the first stamp mill to extract gold from crushed rock, owned a billiard saloon, invested in real estate, mined cinnabar and quicksilver deposits, operated a hardware store and co-owned the new Democratic Times newspaper.

Klippel became Jackson County's Democratic party boss for over a quarter of a century, serving as Jacksonville's Recorder, Trustee, Mayor, and County Sheriff. He chaired the party's State Central Committee, presided over the Governor's Commission to build Oregon's second State Capitol, and was one of Oregon's Commissioners for the 1892 World's Fair.

Although he ostensibly left politics in 1884 to pursue stock raising, his passionate involvement in local politics remained. When he died in 1901, he was an active member of the Medford City Council. He is buried beside his daughter, Allie, and infant son George. Brother Jacob and son Lannes are also interred here.