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John Alexander Henderson

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Birth: May 29, 1856
 San Bernardino
 San Bernardino County
 California, USA
Death: Mar. 28, 1938
 San Bernardino
 San Bernardino County
 California, USA

Mayor of San Bernardino May 12, 1919- May 2, 1821
 San Bernardino Chief of Police

BIOGRAPHY FOR JOHN ALEXANDER HENDERSON

John Alexander Henderson started his working life in the saw mills of the San Bernardino Mountains. But Henderson's most prominent role was that of 7th mayor of San Bernardino from 1919 to 1921.

Henderson's mother, Margaret, came to San Bernardino from Scotland in 1856, a year before John Alexander was born. He was the youngest of her ten children and the only child fathered by her sister's husband, John/James Easton. She briefly became a plural wife after the death of her husband, David Henderson, near St. Louis, Missouri.

Mr. Easton and his wife, Agnes, moved on to Oregon and Margaret left the Mormon Church, staying behind in San Bernardino with her children. She resumed using the name of Henderson and John eventually adopted the Henderson name.

Henderson attended public schools in San Bernardino and worked on his mother's cattle ranch beginning at age 9. He helped his mom for about eight years.

He then got a job in a saw mill owned by the Tyler brothers in the San Bernardino Mountains. Henderson worked there for about a year before moving on to a saw mill owned by Van Slack and Summers.

He stayed there several years. His pay came in lumber, not money. The only belongings he had were a six-shooter and a watch.

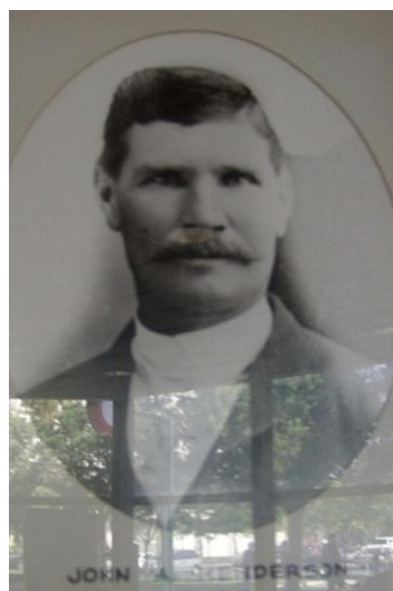
Henderson was promoted to head sawyer after starting there wheeling sawdust. He already was beginning to display a talent for hard work.

After several years, Henderson decided he needed a change and moved to Santa Maria on California's Central Coast to work for his uncle, William Laird Adam, who owned a general store there.

But Hendersons didn't like to stay indoors, so after a while, his uncle gave him a job driving a mule team. He also worked on a ranch. Henderson must have been a restless sort because in 1878, a year after heading to Santa



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Maria, he moved back to San Bernardino to work for his former employer, Van Slack and Summers.

Henderson drove a team for them until 1880. Then, he wound up in Bishop Creek, working at a 320 acre farm owned by a man named Mallory.

The ranch featured grain, cattle, hogs and chickens that were being sold to miners around Bellville. After only a month on the job, Henderson was made foreman and began hauling grain to Bellville. The grain sold for five cents a pound. Henderson also took out hogs, chicken and cattle.

Henderson returned once again to San Bernardino in 1882. He got a job with his first employer, the Tyler brothers, and worked as a lumberman for two years. Then, Henderson decided to go into business himself.

He bought a mule team and began hauling freight into the mountains and lumber on the return trips. He did this for seven years until he was elected city marshal of San Bernardino in 1889.

This started Henderson's journey to the mayor's seat. Henderson was also elected ex officio tax collector and held that office, as well as being city marshal, until 1901.

But he lost his bid for re-election. So he worked in the Police Department for four years and as a special officer with the Santa Fe Railway for seven years.

The same year he was elected city marshal, he married Asenia Ferrel Wilson. But he had to resign from the railroad job when she became ill.

Henderson, though, couldn't stay away from political office. He was later elected councilman from the 5th Ward and mayor in 1919. He served for two years. He died in 1938.

Courtesy of chloe perdew

Family links:

Parents:

[David Henderson \(1811 - 1849\)](#)

[Margaret Ada Adam Henderson \(1816 - 1900\)](#)

Spouse:

[Asenia Ferrel Wilson Henderson \(1867 - 1952\)](#)

Burial:

[Pioneer Memorial Cemetery](#)

San Bernardino


San Bernardino County

California, USA

Created by: [Barbara LeClaire](#)

Record added: Aug 12, 2008

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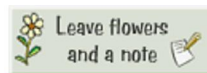
- [Sharon](#)

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