
IN MEMORIAM

JOHN DUSTIN BICKNELL

John Dustin Bicknell was born in Chittendon County, Vermont, June 25th, 1838. About the year 1850 his parents removed to the state of Wisconsin. His education was begun in the public schools of his native state and completed at Albion Academy, and the University of Wisconsin.

Early in 1859 he moved to Howard County, Missouri. In the spring of 1860 he joined a company of emigrants bound for California. Early upon the trip he was chosen to take charge of the train which consisted of forty wagons. There were eighty men in the company and a number of women and children.

Accompanying the train there were about three thousand head of stock—horses and cattle. The route taken by this train was what was then known as the Landers Cut-off, which was by the way of Fort Hall and Snake River.

The Indians were hostile all along the route that year and but few emigrant trains escaped their depredations.

Bicknell's train suffered from the Bannock tribes, whose country lay along the Upper Snake River.

Although his train suffered considerably in loss of stock, Mr. Bicknell brought the train through to Sacramento without the loss of a man. The ox train was five months and a half on the journey from the Missouri River to Sacramento.

In 1862 Mr. Bicknell joined the famous "Ho! for Idaho" gold rush and spent nearly two years in prospecting and mining in the Salmon River placer mines. Late in 1863 he returned to Wisconsin and took a law course in the University of that State. After graduating, he entered the law office of H. W. and W. D. Tenney at Madison, Wis. During the year 1866 he traveled through several of the Southern States looking for a location. He finally located in Greenfield, Dade County, Missouri, where he entered on the practice of law, and built up a large and lucrative practice. His health failing, he returned to California, and in the spring of 1872 located in the city of Los Angeles. In 1876 he formed a co-partnership with Stephen M. White. The firm ranked among the leading firms of the State. It was dissolved in 1888, when Mr. White was chosen United States Senator.

Mr. Bicknell, although always interested in civic affairs, was never an office seeker. In 1904 he consented to take the nomination of a member of the non-partisan city board of Education. The other nominees of this Board were J. S. Slauson, William J. Washburn, J. M. Guinn, Charles Cassat Davis, Joseph Scott and Emmet Wilson. They were pledged to take the schools out of politics. Although the Republican party had a majority of over ten thousand in the city, the non-partisan nominees were elected over the nominees of that party by a majority of three thousand. Mr. Bicknell was elected president of the Board. He devoted himself assiduously to the settlement of several legal questions without remuneration. In December, 1905, he resigned to accompany his daughter on a return voyage to meet her husband, an army surgeon, located in the Philippine Islands.

He joined the Historical Society of Southern California March 8, 1898. He took a deep interest in its work, and was a faithful member, although not often present at its meetings.

He died July 7th, 1911.
