

**MEMOIRS AND  
VERSES OF JOHN H.  
ALEXANDER**

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Memoirs and Verses of John H. Alexander by Various

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**VARIOUS**

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VERSES OF JOHN H.  
ALEXANDER**



MEMOIRS AND VERSES

... of ...

JOHN H. ALEXANDER



COMPILED BY

HIS CHILDREN

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SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA.

1893.

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1893

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## BIOGRAPHICAL.

[From the "San Jose Daily Mercury," November 27, 1893.]

**J**OHN HENDERSON ALEXANDER, after a lingering illness of about a year, quietly passed away, at 9:30 o'clock, yesterday morning, at his home, No. 313 South Tenth Street, surrounded by his family.

Last June he received a slight stroke of paralysis from which he never recovered; although at times he rallied, he has been gradually sinking since.

He was born September 25, 1826, on the French Broad River, Greene County, Tennessee. He was the third son of James Russell Alexander, who served as Judge of the Circuit Court for twelve years, in Franklin, Indiana. Mr. Alexander was raised on a farm, where he developed a strong physique. He had hoped to go to college, but his father's heavy losses in the panic of 1837 made it necessary for him to stay at home.

Though deprived of this boon, he was not disconcerted, and set about to acquire an education as best he could. He always carried a little pocket dictionary and would look up and study the meaning of any new word he might hear.

Moving to St. Louis in 1844, he entered the employ of the wholesale firm of J. H. Gay & Co. as office boy. Here, by close application to business, attending night school, and by using every means at his command to cultivate and develop himself, he was rapidly promoted.

In 1849 he caught the gold fever, and joining with a large party, he started across the plains for the golden State. After the usual experiences of such a journey, driving oxen by day, and fighting



off Indians by night, he arrived in the northern part of the State after having been six months on the road.

He went immediately to the mines, where he did quite well ; but the work there completely broke down his health and he returned to St. Louis via the Isthmus route in 1850. He took his place in the old firm as book-keeper, where he remained until 1852, when the irresistible attractions of California again called him to this Coast.

He spent some time in the mines, but mostly in Sacramento and San Francisco, where he was in the employ of D. Lord & Co. as book-keeper and cashier. Here he remained until 1859, when he returned to St. Louis, again entering the employ of the old firm, now changed to Edward J. Gay & Co., serving them faithfully and well until 1880, when he resigned his position as book-keeper and cashier on account of failing health.

When in California before, he had heard of the Garden City, of its beauties and attractions, and believing a change would be a benefit, decided to make San Jose his home, and moved here February 3, 1880.

He was secretary and cashier of the San Jose Independent Mill and Lumber Company for a number of years, resigning the 1st of last January on account of broken health.

Those who knew Mr. Alexander best loved him most. He had a large circle of friends who miss his genial countenance and pleasant smile. He always had a pleasant word for everyone he met. He was an unselfish man, ever striving to do something for some one, forgetting self in his eagerness to help others.

Mr. Alexander never entered political life, although many opportunities were offered, always preferring his family circle to positions of state. There he will be most missed. He was particularly kind and generous at home, ever studying how he might give something to, or do something for his loved ones ; always kind and gentle, smiling and happy, never complaining ; and his large heart made warm the home which his smile brightened.

A man of more than ordinary intelligence, of the strictest integrity and sterling worth, an old friend says, "Whatever John

Alexander says he will do, you can depend upon its being done, no matter what the cost."

A Christian man, having perfect faith and confidence in the Almighty to keep that which he had committed unto that great day; a Bible student, ever enjoying, more and more, the study of that great work; a man systematic in all details, with high ideals, noble motives and pure aspirations.

He will be missed by many loving friends; all who knew him revered him.

\* He leaves a widow and five children--Henry J., Mrs. Nellie Keith, William G., Howard A., and John E.

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*[ Editorial from the "San Jose Daily Mercury," of the same date. ]*

By the death of John H. Alexander, San Jose loses a citizen whose personality was felt in many ways throughout the community. In business and in social circles his influence was widely and strongly impressed upon the city. A Southerner by birth and breeding, a Westerner by training, a California pioneer by experience, he was a fine example of the typical American. His nature developed under the diverse environments amid which he lived at different periods of his life into a character at once strong and tender, noble and lovable. He united the stately courtesy of the Old South with the freedom and ease of the West and the open-hearted, open-handed generosity and cordiality of California.

Having had an experience in life which developed to the fullest extent the powers and impulses of his many sided nature, Mr. Alexander was able to find points of mutual sympathy and interest with almost every one with whom he came in contact. Few men ever practiced more thoroughly than he the saying of Solomon: "He that hath friends must show himself friendly." The extent to which his friendliness was shown is attested by the wide spread circle that mourns his loss to-day, and shares the sorrow of his bereaved family. He will be remembered in many a heart and many

a household for the innumerable little acts of courtesy, of kindness and of help that made up the daily tenor of his life. He sought no political preferment, but he served the public welfare faithfully and efficiently in his private station. Every duty of a citizen, as well as of a friend, was fulfilled by him ; and the esteem in which he was held passed beyond the circle of those who knew him personally and was felt by the whole community.

