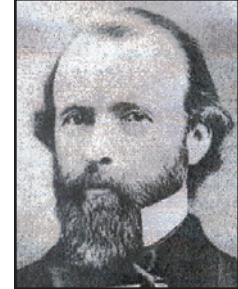




## County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors



### **SUPERVISOR JOHN GATELEY DOWNEY**

Term: 1866 - 1868  
District: Not Applicable  
Date of Birth: June 24, 1827  
Death: March 1, 1894

John Gateley Downey served one term as county supervisor. He assumed office in 1866.

Downey was born June 24, 1827, in Roscommon, Ireland. In 1840, at age 13, he came to the United States and settled in Maryland. Downey began learning the pharmaceutical business and in 1846 moved to Cincinnati, Ohio, where he managed an apothecary store.

In 1850 he moved to San Francisco and soon thereafter came to Los Angeles, where he formed a co-partnership with Dr. James P. McFarland in the drug business.

In 1856 Downey was elected a member of the Legislature. He became very active in politics, and in 1859 was elected lieutenant governor of the state. Milton S. Latham, who at the same time was elected governor, soon left office after being elected to the United States Senate, and Downey became governor. His platform of working in defense of the people's interests and vetoing corrupt measures won him unbounded popularity.

At the close of his term Downey returned to his home in Los Angeles to run his pharmaceutical business. In 1866 he was elected county supervisor.

After retiring from public office, he continued his business interests.

Downey is credited with being one of the first businessmen to start a bank in Los Angeles. The city of Downey was named after him.

In 1883 Downey's wife of 31 years was killed in a railroad accident. Downey survived and remarried five years later.

On March 1, 1894, Downey died. He was 66.

Sources: Los Angeles County Records; The Governors of California; California Historical Society Quarterly.