



County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors

SUPERVISOR PRESCOTT F. COGSWELL

Term: 1918 -1926
District: First
Date of Birth: Oct. 23, 1859
Death: Jan. 15, 1960

Prescott F. Cogswell served four terms as county supervisor, beginning in 1918. He was elected to the office again in 1920, 1922 and in 1924.

Born Oct. 23, 1859 in Ontario, Canada, he was the son of Asa H. and Mary L. (Allen) Cogswell. His father was a farmer and part-time Methodist minister. Young Cogswell received his education in the public schools of his home community in Canada, and later attended Albert University in Bellville, Ontario. In 1883 he came to California and settled in what is now the city of Tustin. He purchased a 20-acre tract of land and planted fruit trees. Two years later, Cogswell married Jane Belcher, and they eventually had three children - Frederick, Harold and Irene.

In 1888 Cogswell and his family moved to El Monte and he began investing in real estate. He formed a partnership and purchased close to 500 acres of land, and began planting walnut orchards. He was among the first farmers in the area to advance farming through the use of irrigation. He pioneered the development of the English walnut industry in El Monte, and organized the first Walnut Growers Association.

Cogswell's leadership abilities and influence helping the city of El Monte grow did not go unnoticed. He became involved in politics, and served 10 years in the State Legislature - six in the Assembly and four in the Senate. In 1918 Cogswell was elected to the County Board of Supervisors, serving until 1926.

In 1925 Cogswell got remarried to socialite Isabel Adams after his first wife died. They had two sons, Prescott and Horatio.

His credits include being a member of the State Land Settlement Board, which provided farms for returning soldiers; member of the Board of Trustees of the University of Southern California; vice president of the First National Bank of El Monte and of the Los Angeles County Mutual Fire Insurance Company; and director of the Southern California Walnut Growers Association. He was also a member of Lexington Lodge of El Monte, the first Masonic lodge organized south of the Tehachapi.

On Jan. 15, 1960, Cogswell died. He was 100.