



County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors

SUPERVISOR FRANCIS MELLUS

Term: 1858
District:
Date of Birth: 1824
Death: Sept. 14, 1864

Francis Mellus was elected county supervisor for a one-year term in 1858 but resigned on January 11, 1858. He was replaced by Ralph Emerson.

Mellus was born in Salem, Massachusetts on June 11, 1838. He came to California via a ship called the Horn under the command of Captain Arthur. When the vessel arrived in Santa Barbara, Mr. Mellus continued his travels to San Francisco. There he became the representative for a large eastern firm that dealt in hides and tallow. His duties involved traveling along the coast of California purchasing materials for the company. These goods were then taken by sailboat to San Diego where they were dried; and, once a sufficient amount had been collected to fill a ship (which usually took a couple of years), they were sent back east.

After spending 11 years in the shipping trade industry, Mellus came to Los Angeles where he partnered with former County Supervisor David W. Alexander, to own and operate a general merchandise business. The firm was called Alexander and Mellus. Prior to the days of warehouses, and long before the advent of railroads, Mellus owned the public hay-scale which stood alone in the center of Los Angeles Street. Between the time of 1855 and 1868, he at one time owned a small mill, operated by water, known as Eagle Mills.

In 1849, following the adoption of a State Constitution, Mellus was elected city treasurer, succeeding Don Manuel Garfias. In 1854 he also served as a State Assemblyman. Four years later, he was elected county supervisor. Mellus resigned the seat on January 11, 1858, and went back to running his businesses. Meanwhile, his brother, Henry Mellus, served as the Mayor for the City of Los Angeles but died 1861 shortly after being elected to that post.

In 1863, upon dissolving his business partnership of Alexander and Mills, Mellus became a representative for the Wells Fargo Express Company.

Mellus died Sept. 14, 1864. He was 40. Mellus was survived by his wife Dona Adalaida Mellus, who later married David W. Alexander, his former business partner and former county supervisor.

Sources: Newmark, Harris, 1834-1916, *Sixty Years In Southern California, 1853-1913*, 3rd Edition; Guinn, James M., *History of California and Extended History of It*, 1907, Volume 2; Los Angeles County Records; *History of Los Angeles County*, Vol. 1; *Historical Sketch of Los Angeles County*, 1876; *Federal Census of Los Angeles City and County*, 1850.