

James Pinckney Henderson

(31 Mar 1808 – 4 Jun 1858)

The Evening Star, June 5, 1858

Death of Senator Henderson

We have again to record an instance of the visitation of our legislative halls by the fell destroyer. Another member of that body has been stricken by the hand of death, and has fallen beneath the blow, after a protracted season of suffering. We refer to the Hon. J. Pinckney Henderson, U.S. Senator from Texas, who died at his lodgings in this city, last evening, of a pulmonary disease, with which he has been so greatly afflicted for months past as to prevent his regular attendance to his duties in the councils of the nation.

Senator H. was a North Carolinian by birth, having emigrated to Texas in the year 1836, and participated in the revolutionary difficulties and early formation of the government, when an independent republic. He afterwards filled numerous high positions of trust and honor, and on the admission of Texas into the Union, was its first Governor as a State of the Confederacy. He was unanimously chosen by the Legislature last year to succeed the lamented Thomas J. Rusk in the U.S. Senate. He was a lawyer, statesman and orator, of the highest order of talent, and his demise will deprive the nation, as well as the State of Texas, of invaluable services.

Biographical Directory of the United States Congress 1774-1989

A Senator from Texas; born in Lincolnton, Lincoln County, N.C., March 31, 1808; pursued academic studies in Lincolnton; was graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; served as aide-de-camp to Major General Dorrett of the Carolina Militia in 1830 and subsequently was elected colonel; studied law; was admitted to the bar in 1828 and commenced practice in Lincolnton, N.C.; moved to Mississippi in 1835 and recruited a company for service in behalf of the Republic of Texas; preceded his company to Austin, Tex., in 1836; was commissioned brigadier general and returned to the United States to recruit volunteers; raised a company at his own expense; appointed by President Houston as Attorney General of the Republic of Texas in 1836, and as Secretary of State in 1837; visited Europe as the diplomatic representative of the Republic of Texas in 1838, and in 1844 visited the United States as special minister to negotiate annexation; member of the State constitutional convention in 1845; elected as the first Governor of the State of Texas in 1846; commissioned major general in the United States Army and served in the Mexican War; received from Congress a vote of thanks and a sword for bravery in action; completed his term of office as Governor; declined to be a candidate for reelection; appointed as a State Rights Democrat to the United States Senate to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Thomas J. Rusk and served from November 9, 1857, until his death in Washington, D.C., June 4, 1858; interment in Congressional Cemetery; reinterred in 1930 in the State Cemetery, Austin, Tex.