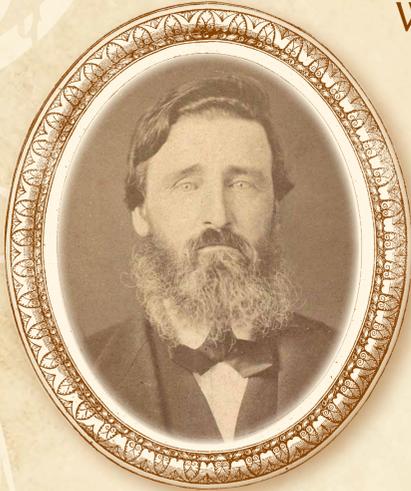


William Dewey Hobson



W.D. Hobson at age 44, c.1873
J.C. Brewster photo
Photo courtesy of the Smith-Hobson Family Archives

William Dewey Hobson is rightly called the “Father of Ventura County” for his leadership and legislative efforts to create it in 1873, carved from Santa Barbara County. His sons Abe and Will continued his legacy of building the city’s major civic and business structures that led to the opening of the Ventura County Courthouse (today’s City Hall) a century ago.

Family Man

The forty-niner left his search for gold in Sacramento for a new career in cattle and especially construction in Ventura with his new wife, Isabel Jane Winemiller, in 1851.



Wedding Photo: c.1851
Photo courtesy of the Smith-Hobson Family Archives



Seven of the Hobson’s ten children lived to adulthood.
Photo c. 1863 courtesy of the Smith-Hobson Family Archives & the Hobson/Hoffman/Haley Family Archives



Revere Hotel (Goodwill) Einstein & Bernheim – Chaffee & McKeeby Spear’s Hall

Palm & Main Streets, J.C. Brewster photo c.1882
Photo courtesy of Museum of Ventura County

Master Builder

W.D. Hobson built many business buildings found on Main Street as well as the city’s first meatpacking house (near Patagonia), Hill School and Spear’s Hall, Ventura’s first city hall.



The original W.D. Hobson Meatpacking Plant (left) c. 1880 & Hobson Bros. Packing House (right) c. 1923
Photo courtesy of the Smith-Hobson Family Archives



Ventura County Courthouse built in 1873
Photo courtesy of the Smith-Hobson Family Archives



Hill School, dedicated in 1873
Photo courtesy of the Smith-Hobson Family Archives



Ventura House a.k.a. Occidental Hotel c. 1880

Photo courtesy of the Smith-Hobson Family Archives

His “Ventura House” – later called the Occidental Hotel at Santa Clara and California Streets where the Masonic Temple stands today – was one of the earliest ‘modern’ hotels in Ventura.

Honored Venturan

Hobson was among the first recipients of the Pioneer Badge given to members of the Society of Ventura County Pioneers whose members arrived in Ventura prior to 1873. He died quietly in his room at the Anacapa Hotel, which he maintained for business purposes, on August 28, 1915, leaving a legacy that would last through three centuries.



W.D. Hobson’s Pioneer Society Badge c.1891
Photo courtesy of the Smith-Hobson Family Archives