

John Gately Downey -Timeline with Endnote

Seventh Governor of California



June 24th 1827 - March 1st 1894
Born Castlesampson Town-land
Taughmaconnell Parish
South County Roscommon
Ireland

In his own handwritten notes archived at the Bancroft Library, in Berkeley California, John Downey describes himself as being 5' 6" tall, with a square build, fair complexion, auburn hair which turned white in later years, and hazel eyes. He claims a quick manner of address, concise and to the point, and said he was very forceful. He wanted it known that even though he was a Catholic; he donated the land for the Methodist oriented University of Southern California.

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Introduction

By any historical measure, the life and times of Governor John Gately Downey are recent history. His story had its beginning in the town-land of Castlesampson, at the southern tip of County Roscommon, in the Irish midlands, on June 24th 1827. Just two lifetimes ago. Two of my own great-grandfathers were born in that same area around that very same time.

John Downey's life story is a powerful and compelling tale of a young Irish lad who came to America shortly before the Irish famine, and who during his lifetime achieved enormous success in the world of business and politics. A confluence of events and timing placed in his hands the opportunity to exert a powerful influence over the eventual outcome of the American Civil War, a war that cost some 642,000, lives. Decisions that he made as governor at the outbreak of the American Civil War, at the age of just thirty-two years, have had repercussions for the United States of America and for the world at large that continue to reverberate to the present day.

His term in office over while still a very young man, he returned to the southland where his status as the first Governor of the State of California from Southern California gave him tremendous stature and made him extremely influential in that rapidly growing region of the American West.

Recounting the achievements of John Downey without including his siblings and the extended Downey family would only be telling part of the story. Therefore, included in this timeline you'll find references to his brother Patrick, his sisters Eleanor and Annie and their respective husbands. Patrick died relatively young, and didn't have an opportunity to make his mark in California, but the Downey sisters, Eleanor and Annie certainly did

Also scattered throughout this timeline can be found names and dates unrelated directly to the story. I've included these dates as milestones to remind the reader about what was going on in the world during this period, and to further illustrate the flavor of times in which he lived. This was a period of tremendous change and growth, and he was in a unique position to be a central figure in much of the meaningful progress achieved in the Los Angeles area and beyond. California advanced as much in the generation immediately following the Civil War as the East Coast had during the previous three hundred years and John Downey played a critical role in the development of the region during that most important generation. He had tremendous energy and foresight and he proved to be the right man, in the right place, at the right time for the United States of America, the State of California and for the Los Angeles basin. I know of no other Irishman who during his lifetime impacted his adopted homeland, the state where he settled, and the region where he lived, as completely as John Downey did. I believe that he is the most remarkable man of Irish birth to ever set foot on the North American continent.

Gene O'Sullivan

May, 2012

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Timeline with Endnotes

1734

John Gately Downey's grandfather, Denis Downey, (known as Honest Jack) was born in the town-land of Castlesampson, in the parish of Taughmaconnell, in South County Roscommon. According to John Downey's own handwritten notes, "*my grandfather was Jack Downey, known as "Honest Jack"*".

1775

August 6th. Daniel O'Connell is born

1776

July 4 – American Revolution: United States Declaration of Independence. The United States officially declares independence from the British Empire.

1781

Los Angeles was founded by the Spanish on the site of a Native American village.

1795

Denis Downey, father of Governor John Gately Downey is born.

1796

¹One year after the birth of Denis Downey, John Downey's grandfather, Denis (Honest Jack) died. The inscription on his gravestone in the old cemetery in Taughmaconnell reads as follows.

PRAY FOR THE SOUL OF DENIS DOWNEY
WHO DIED DECEMBER THE 20TH 1796 AGED 62 YRS
ERTD BY HIS SON DENIS

1790

²Bridget Gately, mother of John Gately Downey was born in South County Roscommon..

1817

Bridget Downey and John Martin marry.

³ Before marrying Denis Downey, Bridget Gately had been married to a man by the name of John Martin.

Bridget Downey and John Martin marry.

1818

⁴ Mary Martin is born,
John Martin dies after the birth of his first daughter and before the birth of his second daughter.

1819

⁵April 11th. Winifred Martin is born.

Bridget Gately marries Dennis Downey she and her two daughters move to the Downey home in

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Castlesampson. Based solely on the year of birth of their first child, the year of their marriage was probably 1819. Dennis was 24 years old and Bridget 29.

⁶Edward Martin, Eleanor Downey's husband is born in Enniscorthy.

1820

⁷Patrick H Downey born.

This is the first child born to Bridget Gately and Dennis Downey.

Patrick died in Los Angeles in 1867 at the age of 47 years

1822

⁸Peter Donahue, Annie Downey's husband born (1822-1885)

1824

November – Andrew Jackson receives more popular votes than John Quincy Adams in the U.S. presidential election.

1825

February 9 – After no presidential candidate received a majority of electoral votes, the United States House of Representatives elects John Quincy Adams President of the United States.

1826

Severe drought and frequent earthquakes rock California, scarcely any rain fall and cattle died by the thousand.

July 4, Both Thomas Jefferson and John Adams die.

1827

John Gately Downey (1827-1894) was born June 24, in ⁹Castlesampson, Taughmaconnell parish, County Roscommon, Ireland, to Dennis Downey and ¹⁰Bridget Gately

President: John Quincy Adams (Democratic-Republican/National Republican) Vice President: John C. Calhoun (Democratic-Republican/Democratic) Chief Justice: John Marshall

1828

¹¹ September 8, 1828, Eleanor Downey is born. (1828-1928)

December 3 – U.S. presidential election: Challenger Andrew Jackson beats incumbent John Quincy Adams and is elected President of the United States.

1829

March 4 – Andrew Jackson is inaugurated as the seventh President of the United States.

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1832

¹²Mary and Winifred Martin immigrate to Baltimore, Maryland, USA e they would join their mother's brother, Michael Gately.

1835

¹³

Los Angeles had been little affected by the revolution that replaced Spanish rule with that of an independent Mexican government in 1821.

November 25, Andrew Carnage was born

1836

March 6 – The Battle of the Alamo ends; 189 Texans are slaughtered by about 1,600 Mexicans.

1837

¹⁴Dennis Downey, John's father, dies in the family home in Castlesampson.

¹⁵Annie, the youngest of the Downey children is born..

Maria Jesus Guirado, John Downey's first wife is born in Los Angeles County

April 17. JP Morgan born

1837 to 1841

¹⁶John was ten years old when his father died. His older brother Patrick was seventeen years old and able to help his mother run the farm.

1842

At the age of fifteen years, John Downey immigrates to America to join his uncle Michael Downey, and his two ¹⁷stepsisters in Baltimore Maryland. It had been his Mothers hope that he would enter the priesthood.

President: John Tyler (Whig/none) Vice President: *vacant* Chief Justice: Roger B. Taney

March 5 – Mexican troops led by Rafael Vasquez invade Texas, briefly occupy San Antonio, and then head back to the Rio Grande. This is the first such invasion since the Texas Revolution.

1843

¹⁸Attended Latin School in Charles County Maryland, taught by John F Corcoran, for one year.

1844

¹⁹Apprenticed to John Callan, a druggist in Washington DC., and began to learn the druggist business.

1845

²⁰Moves briefly to Vicksburg for a year, where he was connected, in business, with Oliver

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Woodburn, who had a drug and stationary business.

Rosa Kelley, second wife of John Gately Downey, born in Ireland (1845-1892)

The Irish potato famine begins with devastating results in John Downey's home area, County Roscommon. Before it's over, many of his schoolmates and his uncle would die of starvation (1845-52) County Roscommon was the hardest hit of all the Irish counties during the famine.

1846

²¹Went to Cincinnati where he was a partner with John Darling in a drugstore there for three years on the corner of 6th, and Fremont Street.

1847

January 16 – John C. Fremont is appointed Governor of the new California Territory.
February 11. Thomas Edison is born.

May 15th. Daniel O'Connell dies.

1848

Wyatt Berry Stapp Earp born (March 19, 1848 – January 13, 1929)

1849

²²Against the best advice of his partner, John Darling, John Downey joined the gold rush to California. His journey took 87 days to complete.

²³November 13th. California voters approve a state constitution.

December 3rd. California formally asks for admission into the Union.

²⁴San Jose selected as the first State capitol of California

1850

²⁵After an unsuccessful attempt at gold mining, John worked for a time at the wholesale druggist, Henry Johnson and Company, on Dupont Street, (today's Grant Avenue) San Francisco. While living in San Francisco he became fluent in Spanish. This allowed him to fit seamlessly into the business and social life in Los Angeles when he moved there at the end of the year.

With steady employment, John began to save his money and became engaged in the business of money lending. Around this time he met ²⁶James McFarland who told him about the opportunities in the Southland. By the autumn of 1850, John had accumulated a tidy nest egg and was looking for an opportunity to invest in.

September 9th. California is admitted into the Union becoming the 31st. state in the Union. A measure of just how isolated California and especially Los Angeles was from the nation's capital, the news doesn't reach Los Angeles for twelve weeks. During his time in San Francisco

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in 1849 and 1850, John Downey met two men who would play an enormous part in his life in the years ahead. David Broderick & James Porter McFarland

²⁷ November 1850. Purchased ship's cargo of pharmaceutical compounds at a discount in San Francisco and took delivery at the port of San Pedro, today's Los Angeles Harbor.

²⁸ Arrived in Los Angeles in December, Just as the news that California had been admitted into the Union reached the community.

Opened a drugstore with ²⁹Dr. J MacFarland. It was the only drugstore between San Francisco and San Diego. Their store was located in a long one story adobe owned by B D Wilson, on the northwest corner of Los Angeles and Commercial streets. John resumes his involvement in the money lending business.

1851

John Downey becomes an American citizen.

³⁰ Bridget Downey, John's mother, and his two sisters, Eleanor and Annie, and his brother Patrick, came to Maryland to join Bridget's two older daughters Mary and Winifred Martin. They had experienced great difficulty in Castlesampson, but had survived the famine.

First American child born in Los Angeles, John Gregg Nichols, April 15th, 1851

³¹ Downey involves in incident with desperado

1852

February 10th. 1852. Married ³²Maria Jesus Guirado
John Downey married the daughter of ³³ Don Rafael Guirado, a Los Angeles native from a family of early Spanish settlers.

1852,

³⁴ August 16: Jim Savage shot and killed by Walter H Harvey. (In 1858, Harvey married Eleanor Downey. He was the father to John Gately Harvey, one of the beneficiary of John Downey's estate).

³⁵ October 23, advertisement in the Los Angeles Star Newspaper

1852-56

³⁶ Served as a Los Angeles Councilman and later County Supervisor. These were his first elected political office.

1853

He is a member of first Volunteer police force (posse) in Los Angeles. (See Harris Newmark's, Sixty Years in Southern California-pp35)

³⁷ In 1853 Senator William Gwin, a leader of pro-slavery interests in California, proposed to

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divide California to create a pro-slavery southern half. He was opposed in this effort by California's other US senator, David C. Broderick.

Downey and MacFarland sell their drugstore.

1854

1854 Jan 4, Gov. Bigler, supported by Senator David C. Broderick, addressed the 5th Legislature and called to move the capital to Sacramento (from San Francisco).

In November of 1854, just five years after arriving in California, in partnership with Don Benito Wilson, William Stanford and Phineas Banning purchased a large part of ³⁸Ranch De San Pedro, 2400 acres, for the purpose of laying out a new city and harbor. This property strategically fronted on San Pedro Harbor. (Los Angeles Harbor today).

1855

Attempt made in the legislature to devise the State into three states, Shasta, in the north, California, in the middle, and Colorado in the south.

The Know Nothing Party gets a foothold in California politics. They are anti-Irish, anti-Catholic and anti-immigrant and their nativist message plays a large part in Downey's decision to enter statewide politics. The Know Nothing Party would ultimately succeed in electing J Neely Johnson, Governor, before dwindling away as a legitimate political force in the State.

John Downey elected Los Angeles county supervisor

³⁹1855 David S. Terry (32), born in Kentucky and raised in Texas, was elected to the state's high court and soon appointed as chief justice.

⁴⁰William Mulholland (September 11, 1855 – July 22, 1935)

His stepsister, Mary Martin, dies in Brayertown Maryland at the age of 37 years.

1856

⁴¹January 9, John Neely Johnson, the Know Nothing Party candidate is elected governor of California.

February organized and was a partner in the Pioneer Oil Company along with Phineas Banning and others. Brother Patrick is the secretary. The first oil company in California

Helped the Irish Sisters of Charity become established in Los Angeles, and contributed to building their first hospital.

May 22,

John Downey's sisters, ⁴²Annie and Eleanor and brother Patrick arrived in California.

Partner in the Los Angeles Oil Company, the first oil drilling enterprise in California

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⁴³September 5th, John Downey was elected Assemblyman to represent Los Angeles in the California State Legislature.

Appointed Collector Port of San Pedro, a position he passes on to his brother Patrick

Appointed Superintendent of Lighthouses

Appointed US Treasury Agent by President Buchanan

February 1856 letter by John Downey

<http://www.webroots.org/library/usahist/pndobjh5.html>

1856

Nov 4, (Irish American) Democrat James Buchanan was elected US president. The American or Know-Nothing Party had nominated Zachary Taylor over Millard Fillmore. The Know-Nothing Party was an anti-foreigner, anti-Catholic political organization. Buchanan easily won the presidential election, gaining 174 electoral votes to Republican John C. Fremont's 141, and Fillmore's eight. Fremont failed to carry California after⁴⁴ Jasper O'Farrell testified against him bringing to light Fremont's part in the 1846 murder of 3 Californios at San Rafael.

1857

May, Major Walter Harris Harvey a native of Georgia, arrived from Washington with an appointment as Register of the Land Office. Harvey would later marry Eleanor Downey.

Bridget Gately Downey dies in Brayertown Maryland at the age of 67 years. She did not live to witness her children's successes in California or to see her son become the Governor of the State.

1857

Los Angeles feels the Great Fort Tejon Earthquake, which, at 7.9 on the Richter scale, is the largest earthquake ever recorded in U.S. history at that time. Only two deaths are connected to the earthquake. Los Angeles Sheriff James Barton and three of his deputies are killed in an attempt to capture a fugitive Mexican guerilla in San Juan Capistrano. The fugitive is later captured and hanged.

Wells Fargo & Company opens an office in Los Angeles. Stagecoach baron Phineas Banning founds Wilmington.(later annexed by the City of Los Angeles) The Los Angeles Water Works is formed and a water wheel begins operating at the *Zanja Madre* dam.

1858

⁴⁵In 1858 Senator James Henry Hammond of South Carolina replied to Senator William H. Seward of New York, "King Cotton"

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⁴⁶October 7th, the first Butterfield Overland Stagecoach from the East arrived at the Belle Union Hotel on South Main Street, 21 days after leaving Saint Louis.

October 27, 1858, Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt is born

Sister Eleanor married ⁴⁷Walter Harvey

1859

⁴⁸The State of California experienced a financial depression in 1859.

February 14, 1859 - Oregon is the 33rd state admitted to the Union.

There were 33 states and 9 territories

I W Hellman⁴⁹, later to become John Downey's partner in Farmers and Merchants Bank, arrive in Los Angeles with his brother Herman.

A bill by Assemblyman Andres Pico from San Bernardino County to divide the state into two states is approved by the legislature and signed by the governor. The measure gets overwhelming voter approval but is killed by the federal government.

Along with drugstore partner, James P McFarland, he purchased Santa Gertrude⁵⁰ Rancho (17,602 acres)

⁵¹Los Angeles Newspaper article about the city.

Los Angeles County proposes to build a road from Los Angeles to San Francisco.

⁵²Elected Lieutenant Governor of California

⁵³Silver is discovered in Virginia City Nevada.

⁵⁴The Democratic Ticket for the California State Election

James Porter McFarland returns permanently to Tennessee sells his interest in Rancho Santa Gertrude to Downey.

⁵⁵September 13th. US Senator David Broderick and California Supreme court Justice David Terry face off in a duel in San Francisco.

September 16th,
California US Senator David C Broderick dies.

1860

⁵⁶Jan 9, Milton Latham (1827-1882), the 6th governor of California, gave his inaugural address. Once Latham took office he had the legislature appoint him to Senator Broderick's seat.

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⁵⁷January 14th, John G. Downey became the seventh governor of California (1860-62) at the early age of 32 years. (The youngest Governor in California history)

⁵⁸His inaugural address was brief.

The States was running a large defecate when he took office and he immediately went to work to balance the budget.

March 2, Governor Downey signed the Bill that made Sacramento the permanent capital of California.

In 1860, the Supervisors of the City of Sacramento deeded to the State of California, the tract of land bounded by L and N, 10th and 12th Streets, and the Legislature appropriated \$500,000 for the erection of the Capitol Building.

April 13,
The first ⁵⁹Pony Express rider from St. Joseph Missouri reached Sacramento. The rider carried a message from the President of the United States, James Buchanan, to the governor of California, John G. Downey. The journey was completed in eight and a half days.

⁶⁰Pont Express reaches San Francisco.

April 16th.⁶¹Bullhead Bill Vetoed By vetoing the Bulkhead Bill Governor Downey prevented a politically powerful syndicate from looting the treasury and stealing from San Francisco her waterfront. (Judge Levi Parson)

July,
A big pro Breckenridge rally is held in Los Angeles. Milton S Latham was the chief speaker. Breckenridge was the pro succession pro slavery candidate for President of the USA.

Breckenridge out polled Lincoln in Los Angeles 263 to179, taking approximately 60% of the votes cast.

⁶²1860, When the Chivalry organized the California Democratic Party to support Vice President John Breckenridge in the 1860 national election for President, with their slogan of “peaceful secession,” Downey again broke with the leaders of his state’s party and supported Stephen Douglas.

⁶³August 11, newspaper article in the Los Angeles Star denouncing Downey for not supporting the Party

⁶⁴November 6th 1860, Abraham Lincoln is elected president. See election map, footnote #61

⁶⁵December 13th. Letter to President Lincoln

December 20th, South Carolina became the first state to secede from the Union. The civil War

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Between the States was now much more likely to occur.

⁶⁶Sister Eleanor gives birth to a son, John Downey Harvey, 1860-1949

The population of Los Angeles in the census conducted of 1860 was 4399.

⁶⁷October 8th. Telegraph line completed between San Francisco and Los Angeles.

⁶⁸December 17. H W Halleck letter

1861

⁶⁹March 4, Abraham Lincoln is sworn in as President of the United States of America.

January 7th.

⁷⁰Governor Downey presented the State Legislature with his State of the State address on January 7, 1861, which made clear the political direction that he would guide California:⁷¹

January 9th. Mississippi succeeds

January 10th. Florida succeeds

January 11th, Alabama succeeds

January 19th. Georgia succeeds.

January 26th. Louisiana succeeds.

February 1, Texas succeeds.

February 6th.

Six secessionist states send delegates to Montgomery Alabama; the new capital of the Secessionist States, later a constitution is adopted.

⁷²March 4th, Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated as President of the United States.

⁷³March 22, 1861. Winfield Scott letter

April 17th, Virginia succeeds.

⁷⁴A proclamation issues by the Board of Supervisors of the City of San Francisco honoring John Gately Downey for his veto of the Bulkhead Bill.

April 12

⁷⁵The American Civil War begins (1861-65). It took twelve days for the news to reach Los Angeles.

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⁷⁶ President Lincoln imposes newspaper censorship.

May 6th. Arkansas April 17th, Virginia succeeds..

⁷⁷May 11th. Pro Union Demonstration held in San Francisco.

May 15,

⁷⁸Oversaw the laying of the corner stone for the new State Capital Building in Sacramento.

⁷⁹May 17. No. IVIII -Concurrent Resolution

May 20th. North Carolina April 17th, Virginia succeeds..

May 25th. President Lincoln suspends the writ of habeas corpus during the Civil War

June 8th. Tennessee April 17th, Virginia succeeds..

July 1861,⁸⁰ the War Department requested that California's Governor Downey raise a force of volunteers

July 14, 1861,

Raised one regiments of infantry and six companies of cavalry for the Union forces in the Civil War.

⁸¹Governor Downey wrote to President Lincoln:.

⁸²July 24, Added an additional four regiments of infantry and one of cavalry

July 15.

A street fracas occurred on in San Francisco between Gov. Downey, John Middleton, a leading auctioneer, and Myles D. Sweeny, president of Hibernia bank, over his veto of the Bullhead Bill. Downey, evidently not amused by the other gentleman's comments, he punched Middleton on the forehead knocking him to the ground. Calmer heads prevail and order was quickly restored. All three were prominent Douglas Democrats.

August 14th.

⁸³Simon Cameron, Secretary of war, letter to governor Downey.

August 15· 1861.

⁸⁴Secretary of War Cameron, letter to Governor Downey.

⁸⁵August 23rd. Issued call for volunteers to meet the request of Secretary Cameron dated August 14th.

⁸⁶The Governors message to the legislature regarding the States Contingent.

⁸⁷September 18. H W Hallack Letter

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⁸⁸September 19, 1861,
Patrick Downey marries Mary Reilly, at San Gabriel Mission. The witnesses were, Patrick Ray and Mary Delaney. There is no record of children from this union

October.

⁸⁹In the first ever cross-continent telegraphic message sent from California, Governor Downey stated to President Lincoln, "I will keep California safe for the Union."

The overland telegraph had been completed and in October 1861 he sent a congratulatory message to the President Lincoln on establishment of this new means of communications between East and West

November 7th, Telegraph was opened to the public. The cost of using this service was prohibitively high

December 20,

⁹⁰Appointed John A Sutter as Major General, 5th.Division, of the California State Militia.

⁹¹Col. Agoston Haraszthy, was asked by Calif. Governor John Downey to go to Europe and to find sample cuttings of the best European varieties of grapes. When the legislatures refused to fund this venture the governor contributed generously out of his own account.

⁹²Governor's agenda...

1862

Downey left office with the state's finances showing a surplus.

Under Downey's leadership, the state adapted more humane policies towards the Indian population.

He saw to it that the State set aside money for a complete geological survey.

Governor Downey implemented policies to establish and to support a State library System.

⁹³January 10, Leland Stanford inaugurated as Governor

⁹⁴May 1, the port of New Orleans falls to Admiral Farragut. The south has lost its principle port for the export of cotton to Europe, and thereby its principle source of income to finance the war.

August 6th. 1864, Sister ⁹⁵Anna (Annie) married San Francisco industrialist, Peter Donahue

On September 22, 1862, Lincoln issued a preliminary proclamation that he would order the emancipation of all slaves in any state of the Confederate States of America that did not return to Union control by January 1, 1863

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⁹⁶JGD Register his ranch brand for Warner Ranch.

Severe floods followed by years of drought decimate the cattle industry. Downey turns to raising sheep

Heavy rains continue to flood the area. Later, however, the first of several great droughts begins. The droughts persist over the next two years resulting in the loss of 70% of Los Angeles County livestock and the end of the old ranching industry. In order to protect Union interests in Southern California, Fort Drum is established to house a garrison of U.S. Army troops.

Sister Eleanor gives birth to a daughter, Mary Harvey.

⁹⁷October 21, 1862. John Downey letter to Governor Stanford.

November 19, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln delivers his Gettysburg Address.

1863

⁹⁸January 1, 1863. Lincoln's Emancipation Declaration

⁹⁹January 8, 1863, Governor Downey presents the Governors Annual Address, to the state legislature.

¹⁰⁰ Czar Alexander II's decided to send a fleet to San Francisco and New York.

¹⁰¹Re-nominated by the Democrats, but defeated in his attempt to be re-elected Governor by Low.

July 30. Henry Ford is born.

¹⁰²November 19, Lincoln delivers the Gettysburg Address.

1864.

¹⁰³Elected as a delegate to the national convention of the ¹⁰⁴National Union Party.

¹⁰⁵Nominated from the first district as their congressional candidate by the Democratic Party, but declined to accept the nomination

1863, A smallpox epidemic spread through the Los Angeles community resulting in many deaths

1865

¹⁰⁶Partners with Phineas Banning in the development of Pioneer Oil Company, the first oil company in California. They soon acquired to all petroleum, or rock oil in San Pasqual Rancho.

¹⁰⁷Begins subdividing his Santa Gertrude Rancho.

¹⁰⁸April 9th Civil War ends. See map with footnote # 105

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April 14th, John Downey issues the first deed of land in the Santa Gertrude tract to Joseph H Burke. The price, \$500.00 for 250 acres of land.

¹⁰⁹Built a brick residence at 345 South Main Street, located between Third and Fourth Streets. It was the first house in Los Angeles with a ballroom. Downey exchanged some land in the new town of Downey with JH Burke for the Main Street property. Burke has operated a blacksmiths shop on the site. Today, The Ronald Ragan State of California office building sits on that site today.

April 15th, Abraham Lincoln is assassinated.

1866-67

¹¹⁰November 13th, Downey ran an advertisement in one of the Los Angeles newspapers.

Elected Los Angeles Supervisor.

July 24th. Tennessee is the first of the confederate states readmitted into the Union.

1867

Served as Los Angeles Supervisor.

The Governor's only brother, Patrick Downey, died in Los Angeles, at the age of 47 years. .

Eleanor's daughter, Mary Harvey dies.

Brother-in-law, Walter H Harvey died.

1867. The Fenian rising occurs in Ireland.

1868

¹¹¹March 23 – The University of California is founded in Oakland

Entered banking business with ¹¹² James Heyworth
John Downey and James Alvinza Hayward founded Los Angeles' first "official" bank.

May 23 – Kit Carson, American trapper, scout, and Indian agent dies (b. 1809)

His Los Angeles Water Co. drilled the first artesian wells in Compton. They were later acquired by the city of Los Angeles and merged into what now is the Los Angeles Water & Power

November 3 – U.S. presidential election, 1868 Ulysses S. Grant

1869

Along with Phineas Banning organized and financed the ¹¹³San Pedro Railroad.

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¹¹⁴ Begins building the ¹¹⁵Downey Block on Main Street at Temple, in Los Angeles. It became the center of retail in the fledgling City of Los Angeles, and the first organized shopping center on the West Coast. By selecting that location, John Downey established the “City Center” in this new and growing community. Today, Los Angeles City Hall sits on that very block.

¹¹⁶Began his acquisition of the Warner ranch, in San Diego County.

April 10th, The Union Pacific and the Central Pacific meet at Promontory Flat Utah and celebrated the completion of the transcontinental railway.

May 13th. Sister ¹¹⁷Eleanor married Edward Martin from Enniscorthy County Wexford

November 17 – In Egypt, the Suez Canal, linking the Mediterranean Sea with the Red Sea, is inaugurated in an elaborate ceremony

December 7 – American outlaw Jesse James commits his first confirmed bank robbery in Gallatin, Missouri.

The British Parliament ends transportation to Australia as punishment for criminals.

1870

¹¹⁸February 10th. Anaheim California, is incorporated.

July 15th.

Georgia becomes the last of the eleven confederate states to be formally readmitted into the Union.

1871

January 10 – John D. Rockefeller incorporates Standard Oil.

Along with Isaiah Hellman organized and became President of the ¹¹⁹Farmers and Merchants Bank. The first chartered Bank in Southern California.

March, Organized the Southern California Agricultural Society for the counties Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, San Bernardino, Kern and San Diego.

October 8-1. The Great Chicago Fire. Downey and two others are the only ones to answer appeal for help in Los Angeles..

(See Harris Newmark’s, Sixty Years in Southern California-pp431-432)

1872

December 7th, Involved in the creation of the ¹²⁰Los Angeles Library. Sat on the board of Directors of the Library for six years. Donated his personal library to help stock the libraries bookshelves.

April first

He went to San Francisco along with Harris Newmark, and was successful in representing Los Angeles in discussions with Collis Huntington, with regard to Los Angeles’s efforts to bring the

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Southern Pacific Railroad through Los Angeles.

May 18th, 1872, A public meeting was held at the Los Angeles Courthouse. Governor Downey called the assembly to order. And resolutions were adopted pledging financial assistance from to county providing the railroad was constructed within a given time

¹²¹December 7, 1872. Organize the Library Association.

1873

¹²²The Russian Atlantic fleet sails into New York harbor. The Russian Pacific fleet sails into San Francisco Bay

Was chairman of the group that established the Board of Trade, now known as the ¹²³Chamber of Commerce.

Old West historical marker:

May 11th. Wild Bill Hitchcock shot dead in Deadwood Gulch, Wyoming

Oct 13, ¹²⁴ Established the City of Downey

¹²⁵October 1873. John Downey addresses the Irrigating Convention, held in Los Angeles, Downey suggested a number of measures, including the employment of Ericsson steam-engine pumps, that should be taken to improve the water supply situation “for the good of the whole State.” Believing that there was sufficient water available for the population, Downey invoked the Constitutional idea of protecting the “general welfare” in order to solve the problem of obtaining the necessary infrastructure:

1874

In 1874, John Downey’s, Downey Land and Development Company, started the community of East Los Angeles using in his publicity such slogans as "Splendid Home sites for all." East Los Angeles comprised all of the land east of the Los Angeles River.

He was a key organizer of the Los Angeles City Water Company.

John Downey, in partnership with John S Griffin, organized and financed the laying of iron pipe water destitution system throughout East Los Angeles

September 28,

Along with partners, O. W. Childs and John M. Baldwin, organized development of a horse-railway in Los Angeles also known as the ¹²⁶Main Street Line

¹²⁷John Downey wrote in The Overland Monthly for June 1874, about the cultivation of citrus and grape crops in California

¹²⁸Mr. and Mrs. Downey contributed generously to the construction fund to build Saint Vibians Catholic Cathedral on South Main Street, Los Angeles. (Across the street from the Downey

John Gately Downey -Timeline with Endnote

residence at 245 South Mains Street

November 11, Sir Winston Leonard Spencer- Churchill was born.

1875

Purchased ¹²⁹Warner Ranch in San Diego County. (10 leagues .X 4428 acres per league.)

1876

¹³⁰ Ex-governor Downey presides at driving of the golden spike, which marked the completion of the rail line linking San Francisco with Los Angeles.

Ex-Governor Downey represented Los Angeles at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia.. He traveled to Philadelphia in his brother-in-law's, Peter Donahue, (Father of California Industry) private rail car along with James Flood (The Bonanza King,), his sister Anna Downey Donahue. Marvin Donahue, Peter's son, and his other brother-in- law, Edward Martin, and his wife Eleanor Downey Martin)

On June 25, 1876, George Armstrong Custer perished at Little Big Horn

¹³¹**1876:** Otto von Bismarck states,

1877

¹³²His final will was dated May 15th, 1877.

1878

In the September 17th edition of the San Diego Union newspaper, Governor Downey writes about his experiences. In particular, he discusses the subdivision of his Santa Gertrudes Rancho, and talks about small farms and that part this they played in the settlement of the of that area

1879

With Isaiah Hellmann and Ozro Childs John Downey donated 308 acres of land for the establishment of the ¹³³University of Southern California Campus, and to provide the necessary seed money for the construction of the first buildings on the campus.

John Downey was a member of the executive committee of the ¹³⁴New Constitution Party

Declined the nomination for governor offered by the ¹³⁵Workingman's Party.

Edison developed the electric light bulb.

November 10, 1879. Padraig Pearse was born in Dublin

21st December, 1879, Joseph Stalin, was born in Gori, Georgia

John Gately Downey -Timeline with Endnote

1880

Douglas MacArthur was born 26 January 1880

¹³⁶On May 12th, Edward Martin, Eleanor's husband dies in San Francisco.

In 1880, John Edward, along with Mr.Ozro Childs, and former Governor Downey persuaded the State of California to purchase 160 acres in Los Angeles to foster agriculture in the Southland. The property then known as Agriculture Park still exists for the benefit of the people today. It is now known as Exposition Park, home to the Los Angeles Coliseum and the Los Angeles County Museum.

Elected to the first board of trustees of the University of Southern California

In 1880, John G. Downey became sole owner of Warner's Ranch. Travelers had been coming to the hot springs in increasing numbers and in 1894, Downey began issuing pamphlets advertising the spa. The first guest cabins were built in 1900, and as the automobile replaced the stagecoach, visitors multiplied with every passing year.

¹³⁷October 23, 1880

President Rutherford B Hayes visited Los Angeles on October 23, 1880. General William T Sherman, and the Sectary of War, Alexander Ramsey accompanied President Hayes. The President was received by Governor John Gately Downey.

1881

July 2, 1881, President James Garfield is assassinated.

As a marker to show where all of this fits into the history of the Wild West.
July 13-14, 1881 - At midnight, Sheriff Pat Garrett shot Billy the Kid dead.

¹³⁸October 26, 1881 the Gunfight at the OK corral took place in Tombstone Arizona.

1882

January 30, 1882, Franklin Delano Roosevelt was born. (FDR)

Historical Marker: April 3, 1882 -- Bob Ford killed outlaw Jesse James.

1883

¹³⁹February 2, 1883. Newspaper article about Maria Downey's death.

He was the founder and vice president of the Historical Society of Southern California.

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Maria Guirado Downey met an untimely death in a train accident in the Tehachapi Mountains in January 29, 1883. John Downey survived, but the horror of this event affected him for the rest of his life, and effectively brought to an end the highly productive part of his life

John Gately Downey -Timeline with Endnote

141

John suffered a nervous breakdown following the death of his wife, Maria. He states in his own notes that he did not return to Los Angeles for three years following Maria's death. He spent time with his sisters in San Francisco immediately following this personal tragedy.

1884

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Governor Downey explained how he spent his time in the years after Maria's death.

May 8, Harry Truman was born.

1885

¹⁴³In September of 1885, John embarked on a journey around the world.

November 26, Peter Donahue, Annie's husband dies after a very short illness.

1886

After returning from his round the world tour he again resumed control of his business interests. His nephew, John Downey Harvey, had managed his interests while he was away.

1887

It appears however that he spent most of his time at the Warner Ranch from then on.

1888

Married Rosa V. Kelley, a close family from Ireland.

Rosa was a music teacher, and her name shows up in the 1880 census under the list of residents at the Downey home.

¹⁴⁴Submitted autobiographical information to Hubert Howe Bancroft. (See page 148-49-50)

1889

After remarrying, he and Rosa appear to have spent most of their time split between their home in Los Angeles and the Warner Ranch.

1889 Aug 14, David S. Terry, former Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court (1857-1859), was shot by a bodyguard of Stephen Field, an associate justice of the US Supreme Court, after Terry slapped Field in the face at a railroad restaurant in Lathrop, Ca. (SFC, 9/7/09, p.C6)(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_S._Terry)

1890

1891

February 12, 1891, Historical Society of Southern California is incorporated. John G Downey Vice-President

1892

John Gately Downey -Timeline with Endnote

1892 Heavy rains flooded the entire Central Valley and produced a lake that was some 250-300 miles long and 20-30 miles wide. Sacramento was under water for 3 months and in LA it rained for 28 straight days. Sonora had 102 inches by the end of Jan. Prof. William Brewer, the principal ass't. to state geologist Josiah Whitney, supposed that one-fourth of the taxable state property was under water. [some confusion here with the deluge of 1862]

1893

¹⁴⁵Rosa V Kelley, his second wife died.

1894

March 1, after an attack of pneumonia, Governor ¹⁴⁶John Gately Downey died at his home, 345 South Main Street in Los Angeles at the age of 66 years and nine plus month.

John Downey's will, which was not found until sometime after his death, was finally settled in November of 1900. Many of the beneficiaries were dead by that time so the bulk of his estate went to his sister Eleanor, and her son by Walter Harvey, John Downey Harvey. Harvey, an attorney, probated the estate. A considerable portion of the inheritance that went to Harvey may have been lost as an unfortunate result of the San Francisco earthquake of 1906. See below

1896

¹⁴⁷Annie Downey Donahue, died at her home in San Francisco. She was 59 years old.

1897

John Downey's stepsister Winifred Martin dies in Baltimore Maryland and is interred with her sister and mother in Saint Mary catholic graveyard in Brayertown Maryland

1920

Los Angeles surpassed SF in population 576,673 to 506,676.

1928.

¹⁴⁸Eleanor Downey Martin, sister of John Gately Downey the seventh Governor of California, dies in San Francisco.

1929

Wyatt Berry Stapp Earp died January 13, 1929

1949

John Gately Harvey, nephew of John Gately Downey dies in San Francisco.

¹⁴⁹Downey Extended Family Tree (in America)

¹⁵⁰Notable Irish people in the American West during the John Downey period.
