

Henderson, William B. ^[1]

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Fl. 1892–98

William B. Henderson, African-American state senator, farmer, and resident of Middleburg, was elected to the North Carolina General Assembly ^[2] in 1892 as a Republican ^[3] representative from the Eleventh District (Vance ^[4] and Warren ^[5] counties). Almost immediately, on 24 Jan. 1893, Henderson's seat was challenged by his recent opponent, John P. Leach of Warren County ^[5]. Leach claimed that he was the "legitimate" candidate. Henderson and several other Republicans found themselves displaced by legislative action. He appealed to Congressman Thomas Settle ^[6], pointing out that his election had been certified by the Democratic Canvass Board and that he had defeated Leach by 653 votes.

The appeal was unsuccessful. The era was one of great emotion, rivalry, and charges by the Democrats ^[7] of collusion between the Populists ^[8] and the Black Republicans. Henderson ran again, was elected, and served in the North Carolina Senate in 1897 and 1898. He was not active and seldom spoke, although on occasion he proposed measures pertaining to fences and livestock as well as the desirability of a register of deeds and a dispensary for Vance County ^[4]. He served on committees dealing with penal institutions, public roads, the psychiatric hospital, and claims. In 1898 Governor D. L. Russell ^[9] named Henderson to be chief fertilizer inspector, replacing James Young.

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Thomas Settle Papers (Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill).

Additional Resources:

North Carolina General Assembly. "Resolution to pay W. B. Henderson one hundred dollars, expenses in election contest." *Public laws and resolutions of the State of North Carolina passed by the General Assembly at its session of 1893*. Raleigh [N.C.]: E. M. Uzzell, 1893. <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/public-laws-and-resolutions-of-the-state-of-north-carolina-passed-by-the-general-assembly-at-its-session-of-...1893/1956314?item=2130187> ^[11] (accessed January 7, 2013).

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Authors:

Macfie, John ^[15]

Origin - location:

Vance County ^[16]

Warren County ^[17]

From:

Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press.^[18]

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