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300 CITY HALL

CITY OFFICIALS

NAME Stephens, Jess E.

PUBLIC OFFICES HELD

(DATE)

CITY:

City Attorney, January 3, 1921 -July, 1929

COUNTY:

Superior Court Bench, 1938-1939

STATE

FEDERAL:

CIVIC ACTIVITIES:

City Club
Chamber of Commerce

BUSINESS OR PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Attorney
City official

PORTRAIT:

ATTACHED OR ENCLOSED IN ENVELOPE: None

PORTRAITS APPEARING ELSEWHERE (DATES)

Portrait Index

ANECDOTES AND PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS:

SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

BOOKS: See other page

NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS:

Los Angeles Times

PERSONAL INTERVIEW: None

INTERVIEWED BY:

DATE OF INTERVIEW

Written By: Clare Wallace
August 5, 1937

The Los Angeles Public Library
Local History Collection
Biography

NAME Stephens, Jess E.

Occupation Lawyer

Address _____

Birth (Date and Place) May 4, 1882, State Line City,
Illinois

FATHER Edwin Elias Stephens

Birth (Date and Place) Ohio

If Deceased, When 1927, Los Angeles

MOTHER Arminda Jane Rice

Birth (Date and Place) Ohio

If Deceased, When _____

IF MARRIED, TO WHOM Alice Cherry

Birth of Same (Date and Place) Iowa

If Deceased, When _____

When Married September 18, 1907, Los Angeles

CHILDREN (Married Names of Daughters)

Barbara: Mrs. Philip Maming

Harrison Lee

TITLES OF BOOKS, ARTICLES, MUSIC, OR OTHER
CREATIVE WORK

(In the case of printed matter, please give date and publisher; of periodical publica-
tions also name of magazine and date.)

REVIEWS, CRITICISMS, AND OTHER BIOGRAPHICAL
NOTICES

(Please note printed matter concerning yourself or your work. We would appreciate
any such material you may send, clippings, reviews, portrait.)

Southwest Blue Book, 1937

Spalding, History and Reminiscences of
Los Angeles City and County, vol 11, p 315

Who's Who in Los Angeles, 1926-27

Who's Who in Los Angeles County, 1927-28

Enclosed clippings

ANCESTORS OF DISTINCTION OR LOCAL INTEREST

(Please include names of local interest as "forty-niners," or any one connected with the affairs or development of the state or city, as officials, professional men, merchants, etc.)

Parents pioneered to Compton in 1884

EDUCATION (Schools, Colleges, Degrees, Etc.)

Public and grammar schools, Compton;

Los Angeles High School; Stanford University

CLUBS, LEARNED SOCIETIES, ETC.

B.P.O.E.; Auto Club; Mason; Whitley Park

Country Club; Shriner; A.R.&A.M. California and

Los Angeles County Bar Associations

RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION Protestant

POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS

RESIDENCE IN CALIFORNIA SINCE 1884; Los Angeles

1898

SKETCH

(Please make this as full as possible, giving business affiliations, positions of honor or trust with dates if possible.)

Jess E. Stephens was born May 4, 1882, in State Line, Indiana, and brought to Compton, California by his parents two years later.

He attended Compton schools and old Los Angeles High School. After graduating from the latter he entered the firm of Anderson and Anderson for the study of law, and was admitted to the bar in the last oral examination conducted by the Supreme Court of the state, held in Los Angeles County, 1904.

This was followed by a special course at Stanford University.

Mr. Stephen's career has been passed in Los Angeles. Beginning in 1904 he was associated with his brother, Justice Albert Lee Stephens, for two years, when he became vice-president of the California Title Insurance Company, then known as the Title, Abstract & Trust Company.

He remained with this concern until 1909, when he was appointed deputy City Attorney, and assistant City Attorney. In January of 1921 he was appointed City Attorney to fill the unexpired term of Charles S. Burner, being elected at the next regular election to fill the same office.

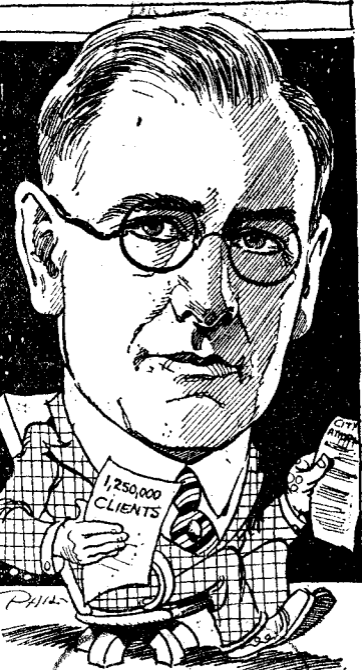
Mr. Stephens served as City Attorney eight years, to July of 1929, and retired to enter private practice.

Specializing in municipal and corporation law he was associated with L.P. Green for some time after 1929, under the firm name of Stephens and Green.

Mr. Stephens makes his home in the City and maintains offices in downtown Los Angeles.

53-26

Snappy Shots



Jess Stephens

JESS is an attorney with 1,250,000 clients.

Also, he tells the city council what to do, but sometimes they figure they're somewhat wiser and do not follow his advice. Then he has to put in some overtime getting them out of a jam.

But he figures it's all in the day's work and lets it go at that. Some men follow the footsteps of their fathers but Jesse stepped into the shoes of Brother Al when the latter became a judge.

Jess was born at State Line, Indiana, in 1882. Graduated from the Los Angeles High School, then took a special law course at Stanford. Deputy City Attorney and prosecutor 1909 to 1913 and worked nights as secretary for the San Pedro Chamber of Commerce. Chosen city attorney in 1920.

Jess is easy to get along with. Hosts of friends and a brilliant future.

YOU may be next.



JESS E. STEPHENS
Judge, Superior Court

920
832

STEPHENS WILL NOT RUN AGAIN

Announcement that he will not be a candidate to succeed himself as city attorney was made yesterday by Jess E. Stephens in a signed statement.

Determination of Stephens to terminate his long service as city attorney comes at a time when he is known to be under consideration for appointment as counsel for the Metropolitan Water District.

TEXT OF STATEMENT

The text of Attorney Stephens' statement follows:

"When for the fourth time I took the oath of office as city attorney four years ago I resolved, that upon the completion of the term I would establish my own law business and before it became too late endeavor to make a competence for myself and family. How well I have succeeded in my efforts to serve during my many years in this important position, how well I have met the capital emergencies that have come upon the city is not for me to say. I know I have kept the faith. I would have been unappreciative indeed, when my tenure of office drew short and men and women in all walks of life began petitioning me to remain for another term, if I had not found myself impressed and pleased.

"At about the time discussion as to my remaining city attorney became quite general I was approached by men in authority with the suggestion that my long municipal experience would be of value in connection with the Colorado River project and that I should accept the attorneyship for the Metropolitan Water District. This suggestion came from persons outside of and within this city. This, it seemed, would work in with my plans, and yet enable me to serve where I could be the most useful.

ADHERES TO PLANS

"I have very carefully considered the situation and have concluded to adhere to my original plans, regretful as I am that in doing so I seem to disappoint so many earnest citizens and friends. I therefore, definitely announce that I shall not be a candidate to succeed myself as city attorney. My successor in office will find me always willing and ready to give him the benefit of my long experience.

"I will not here attempt to put into words my deep gratitude to the people of this city who so many times and so generously have voted me their confidence."

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LOS ANGELES, CALIF.