

Bower, William Horton ^[1]

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by Janet L. Blair, 1979

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William Horton Bower, lawyer, legislator and congressman, was born near Wilkesboro, the son of David E. and Rebecca Horton Bower. He attended several academies and Finley High School in Lenoir, completing his formal education by the time he was sixteen. He lived on a farm until 1869, when he began the private study of law in the office of Colonel G. N. Folk; he was admitted to the bar in 1870. He practiced in Lenoir until 1876, when he moved to California to teach school. He remained there until the summer of 1880 and then returned to Lenoir.

In 1882, Bower was elected to the general assembly from Caldwell County ^[2]. There he served on the Judiciary, Internal Improvements, and Privileges and Elections committees and was chairman of the Committee on the Public Library. In 1884 he was elected to the state senate.

In 1885 he was appointed solicitor of the Tenth Judicial District by Governor A. M. Scales ^[3], and the next year he was elected without opposition to a four-year term as solicitor. Bower was an unsuccessful candidate for the Democratic nomination to Congress from the Eighth District in 1890. On the 147th ballot, he was defeated by W. H. H. Cowles. In 1892, Bower was elected as a Democrat to represent the Eighth District in the Fifty-third Congress. During his term, which lasted from 4 Mar. 1893 to 3 Mar. 1895, he served on the Committee on Indian Affairs and the Committee on Railways and Canals. He was defeated for reelection to Congress in 1894 by R. Z. Linney ^[4].

After his defeat, Bower returned to Lenoir and resumed his law practice. There he died; he was survived by his wife, the former Annie Malthaner of Pennsylvania, and a son, David. Bower was buried in Elkville Cemetery in Caldwell County.

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