

Henry John Johnson



HENRY JOHN JOHNSON, one of the foremost men of Fernie, is the oldest citizen of the town in point of years of residence here. He was appointed postmaster in May, 1898, prior to the opening of the postoffice in Fernie, and has ably filled the position throughout the intervening fifteen years. He also founded and for several years conducted the Crow's Nest Trading Company in association with Joseph H. Bricker, building up one of the largest department stores in southeastern British Columbia. His birth occurred in Berlin, Ontario, on the 21st of September, 1860, his parents being William and Hedwig (Krug) Johnson, the former a native of Pennsylvania and the latter of Hanover, Germany. In childhood they accompanied their respective parents to Ontario, Canada. William Johnson passed away in 1868, being for more than four decades survived by his wife, who was called to her final rest in 1911. The former returned to the States at the time of the outbreak of the Civil war and joined the Seventeenth Michigan Infantry. The exposure and hardships which he underwent as a soldier resulted in his early demise.

Henry J. Johnson was reared under the paternal roof and attended the common schools in the acquirement of an education. When seventeen years of age he secured a clerkship in the establishment of F. Krug in Tavistock, Ontario, this being the largest department store in that section. He remained with the firm for twenty years but decided to come west, believing that greater opportunities awaited him in this part of the country. In 1897 he set his face toward the great northwest and eventually arrived at Crow's Nest lake, which was at that time head of construction of the Crow's Nest Pass line of the Canadian Pacific Railway. There he founded the Crow's Nest Trading Company in association with Joseph H. Bricker, but about three months later transferred the business to Fernie, moving the stock by wagon teams. Mr. Johnson was thus actively identified with mercantile interests in Fernie until 1901, building up one of the largest