

R. S. STRAHAN

Judge R. S. Strahan was proud to call himself a "self-made man". He was born in Lawrence County, Kentucky, January 1, 1835, and attended the public schools in his youth in Missouri, his father having moved to that state in the year 1841.

As a boy Judge Strahan had few opportunities and acquired most of his education by individual effort, reading from books at his leisure and studying at home by the fireside. He attended an academy at Mexico, Mo., for a short time only. When he reached the age of 21 years he returned to his native state, Kentucky, where he obtained a position to work and study law in the office of an uncle, Honorable R. F. Canterbury, at Louisa, Ky. In two years he was admitted to the bar and immediately went West again to Missouri and entered into the practice of his chosen profession at Milan. He was soon appointed Probate Judge and exercised the duties of that office for four years. In 1865 Judge Strahan came to Oregon, going East first and coming by way of the Isthmus of Panama. He first settled at Corvallis, Benton County, where his ability as a lawyer was soon recognized, and in 1868, he was chosen Prosecuting Attorney for the district embracing that county. In 1870 he was honored by an election to the State Senate from that county for four years. In 1876 he removed to Albany, in Linn County, and for ten years engaged in the active practice of his profession. In the year 1886 he was elected Justice of the Supreme Court and by regular rotation succeeded to the office of Chief Justice in 1890, his term expiring in 1892.

As a practitioner Judge Strahan was wonderfully successful in criminal law and boasted that no client whom he defended had ever been convicted. His written opinions while on the bench commanded attention beyond the borders of the state, and at the close of his term on the bench he located at Portland and soon acquired a lucrative practice. In the year 1895 he died suddenly of heart failure.

During his residence of more than thirty years in the state, he had occupied high positions at the bar, on the bench and in politics. He was an able man, and has left an impress of his work upon the jurisprudence of Oregon.