

RILEY E. STRATTON

Judge Stratton was born in McKean County, Pennsylvania, about the year 1823. In his youth he learned the trade of a millwright, which, however, he did not follow long. He afterwards began a collegiate course of study, and graduated at a college in Ohio. It was his purpose, at the time, to enter the ministry, but, changing his plans soon afterwards, he began the study of law. He was admitted to the bar at Madison, Indiana, where he practiced until 1852, when he determined to come to Oregon. Taking passage by way of Cape Horn, he arrived in Oregon toward the close of 1852, and established himself in the southern part of the territory. He engaged in his profession at Scottsburg, in 1853, and was also interested in mercantile pursuits there. In the winter of the same year he was elected prosecuting attorney, by the territorial legislature, for the southern district of Oregon -- a position to which, on the expiration of his term, he was reelected by the people. When the state government was formed, in 1858, he was elected judge of the second judicial district, and was re-elected in 1864. In politics Judge Stratton was, in early life, a Democrat, but possessed of strong antislavery tendencies. He supported Van Buren and Adams, the Freesoil candidates for President and Vice President, in 1848. He acted with the Democratic party of Oregon until the Civil War, when he severed his connection, refusing to follow in opposition to the war for the preservation of the Union. Since that time he acted steadily with the Union party. He was a man of generous impulses, and was equally esteemed in private life and on the bench.

His death occurred at his residence at Eugene, Oregon, on December 26, 1866.