

DANIEL M. FRENCH, deceased. It is quite impossible to compile a work of this character on Central Oregon without giving especial mention to the esteemed gentleman whose name is mentioned at the head of this article, and it is with great pleasure that we grasp this opportunity to grant to his memory this tribute of a review of the salient features of his active and important career.

Daniel M. French was born in Holland, Vermont, on June 16, 1828. His parents, Joshua and Polly (Mead) French, were born in New Hampshire, in 1803 and in 1801, respectively, and followed farming. Young French was reared on the farm and attended the district schools until he entered Brownington Academy where he completed his education. Then he spent two years in Massachusetts and later two years in Louisiana. After that he went with the western tide, traveling via the isthmus to California. For eight years he was a resident of the Golden State and for a portion of the time was engaged in the alluring employment of mining. Afterward he operated a ferry across the Stanislaus river in company with his brothers, then went to San Francisco and in partnership with his brother, Joshua W., conducted a roofing business until 1862. In that year, Mr. French journeyed to the north and finally selected The Dalles, then but a trading post, as his location. He soon opened a large general merchandise store, being in company with Granville B. Gilman, and the firm was known as Gilman, French & Company. Joshua W. and Joseph M. French, brothers of our subject, were also interested in the business, although at that time they were not residents of The Dalles. However, Joshua W. joined Daniel at The Dalles in 1864. The firm did business for some years and then our subject and his brother, Joshua W., purchased the interests of the others, the style of the firm being then, French & Company. This firm continued in the mercantile business, being leaders in that line, until 1875 when they sold out to Brooks & McFarland. For two years succeeding this sale, the French Brothers conducted a money brokerage business, handling loans, and so forth. In 1877, they formed the banking house French & Company, which has continued the leading financial institution of Central Oregon from that date to the present. Mr. French was a natural born financier, and added to this he had received a thorough schooling in business and he brought to bear in his labors all these qualifications with the telling result that he placed himself at the head of this strong banking house, making it what it has been and is to this day. His policy was always the wisest and best and his integrity, probity and unquestioned ability to handle financial problems gave his institution a standing second to none on the Pacific coast. Together with this, Mr. French was an ardent laborer for the growth and upbuilding of The Dalles and the state in general. His sagacity and his keen foresight were of inestimable benefit in these important lines and the name of Daniel M. French is indelibly stamped on the city of The Dalles and this part of Oregon. His popularity was as extended as his acquaintance and he was genial, kind and generous, which placed him in great esteem among the people. One point in the life of Mr. French, which we would not omit, was his kindly generosity that never turned away an unfortunate individual with-out ministering to him. He was always assisting his fellows in times of depression and many a one cherishes his memory on account of these good deeds. While Mr. French gave his personal attention to the bank mentioned, he was also associated with numerous important enterprises, being president of the Gilman French Land & Live Stock Company, and of the Arlington National Bank, director of the old Wasco Warehouse Company and the Wasco Warehouse and Milling Company, besides holding leading positions in various other ventures. While Mr. French took the part in politics that becomes every loyal citizen, he never aspired to office during his long and important business career, but untiringly labored for his friends content to have others fill public places. He was a strong Republican and was able to give good reasons for his political belief. Altogether, Mr. French was a leading citizen, a sturdy pioneer, a stanch business man, and a true and faithful friend and he stood one of the most popular residents of this part of the state.

In 1865, Mr. French married Miss Allie M. Gee, of Vermont, and to them were born two children; Herbert Bancroft, who died at the age of seven years; and Elsie Maude, now Mrs. Charles J. Pease, of Marin county, California. Mrs. French died in January, 1875.

In September, 1876, Mr. French married Miss. Samantha A. Carter and to them the following named children were born; Elizabeth E., the wife of Ernst L. Lueddemann, of The Dalles; Ruth Constance; and Paul M. in the bank with his uncle, Joshua W. French. Also they had two children who are now deceased.

Finally, on January 12, 1902, the summons came for Mr. French to lay down the things of time where he had wrought well and long and to enter upon the realities of the world to come. His funeral was a season of sincere and widespread mourning and grief, for all knew that a great man and a benefactor had passed from their midst.

Mrs. French is now residing in The Dalles and has a wide circle of admiring friends. She was born in Iowa, on August 8, 1850. Her parents, Robert and Eleanor (Howard) Carter, started across the plains in early days. The father died en route, but the mother lived to complete the journey and remained in the western country assisting in its upbuilding until her death at The Dalles, in 1897. Mrs. French was but eighteen months of age when the journey across the plains started. Cholera was the dread scourge that swept away the father, and the widowed mother with four children, two sons and two daughters, the girls being twins, made her way to Oregon City. The teams were oxen and the journey was attended with great hardship and suffering. Later Mrs. Carter married Charles Adams and they located on a donation claim near Oregon City. Four years later they removed to Albany and thence to Salem. In 1871, they came across the mountains, locating in the vicinity of Antelope. Mr. Adams, stepfather of Mrs. French, was a man of influence and prominence and was closely identified with church work where he resided. He was engaged much in raising stock but of later years retired from active business.

Mrs. French is an official member and active, earnest worker of the Methodist Episcopal church; she is also a member of the W.C.T.U. and the Sorosis club and is one of the leading ladies of The Dalles. She is a charming hostess and presides over her home with a gracious hospitality that renders it the center of refinement and comfort.