

HON. JONAH H. MOSIER, deceased. The records of the Mosier (Mozer) family have been twice destroyed by fire, therefore but little, comparatively, can now be obtained. Some time in the seventeenth century members of the family came from Germany and landed on Chesapeake Bay, Maryland. Some time before their emigration eighteen million dollars left by early ancestors was given to the Catholic church instead of being divided among the heirs, as they would not conform to some requirements of the bequest. This points out to what church the Mosier's originally adhered. Our subject was probably married in Maryland and had a family of six children. They had five sons and one daughter, Jonah H., born March 10, 1821, being the youngest. The mother died when he was an infant and the family moved to Fayette county, Pennsylvania and some years later came to Ohio, settling in what is now Crestline Crossing. In 1839, we find our subject's father in Platte county, Missouri, he having in the meantime married a widow, with two sons, whose name was Leveridge. Two sons of the family remained in Ohio and one died there. Jonah served an apprenticeship with a cabinet maker and later, they moved to Gentry, Missouri, the date of this, being about 1844. Our subject followed carpentering there and also clerked in a dry goods store. He later became one of the proprietors of the store and soon afterwards went to Clay county, where he met Miss Jane Rollins, whom he married on May 14, 1846. In 1849, a party of six or seven young men, among them, J.H. Mosier, formed a partnership and equipped themselves for the gold fields of California. After a hard trip they arrived at their destination and for some time, made and sold hay. The partners refused to assist him and he did all by his own personal efforts, making a good stake for himself. Eighteen months later, he returned home by way of Panama. In the early months of 1851, his father died, probably in Nodaway county. In April, 1853, Mr. Mosier joined an emigrant train then fitting for Oregon and in company with a friend, Hiram Smith, made the long trip with his wife and children to the Pacific slope. He arrived at The Dalles with one dollar and seventy-five cents in cash and three head of oxen, three having died while on the way, one cow and an old, worn out wagon. Nothing daunted, however, he cast about for some occupation. The Dalles was a military post and the only store was kept in a large tent with a hewed log for a counter. Only two dwellings were in evidence and some tents completed the entire settlement. Mr. Mosier took hold as a builder erecting a store for W.D. Bigelow and another for M.M. Cushing and Lowe. After that, he put up several dwellings and with Col. N.H. Gates and Judge Laughlin laid out a town. Owing to a scarcity of building material, Mr. Mosier saw the opportunity of supplying the same and early in 1855, sought out a mill site which he found sixteen miles below The Dalles on a stream tributary to the Columbia. Here he took a donation claim and this was the headquarters for the remainder of his life and here he lies buried beside his faithful wife who preceded him to the grave twenty-nine years. His death occurred in 1894, when he was aged seventy-four. He erected a mill in 1855 in partnership with Thomas Davis. There was money in the lumber business and also there was very much hardship and trial and labor connected with the same. His family increased, expenses were high, the Indians troubled him and all these things had to be overcome. Mr. Mosier never used a gun or a knife upon the savages and never knew fear. When they were committing their depredations he would appear in their midst and with telling blows from his fist or club scatter them. Owing to this and also to his just and fair treatment of them, they learned to respect him. The firm took another partner, Mr. Noah Mull. Later, Mr. Mosier bought Mr. Davis' interest and finally purchased the interest of Mr. Mull. A freshet carried away the mill, which however was soon rebuilt. In those days, lumber sold for fifty dollars per thousand but it was an expensive proposition to produce it. However, little by little, Mr. Mosier improved his place and good buildings replaced the log cabins. His home was headquarters for travelers and many were entertained in those days. His better buildings were burned and later he erected a fine, modern, two story structure, which still stands. In the spring of 1862, Mr. Mosier went into the Caribou country, with cattle, being accompanied by a partner, who died at Deep Creek, British Columbia, in that year. Our subject realized a handsome profit in this venture, and in 1865 he again gathered a herd of cattle and went to the Kootenai mines where he established butcher shops in the various camps, where he made a small fortune with his partner, E.D. Warbass. Late in the fall, he learned that his wife had died during the summer and he hastened to collect what he could of the outstanding indebtedness and placing the balance in the hands of his partner hurried home in December. He never received any further returns from the business he had left. However, in the next year he gathered another herd of cattle, going to the Willamette valley to purchase the same. There, he met his old friend, Hiram Smith, who introduced him to a fascinating young widow, Mrs. Lewis, who had three children and to whom he was married on December 16, 1866. His seven children at home and these three, with two more that were born made an even dozen for Mr. Mosier to look after. In 1867, he drove his cattle to Montana but did not realize so well on the venture. In 1868, he drove another bunch to that territory. Mr. Mosier was chosen representative to the territorial legislature and in politics, he was a staunch Democrat. His death occurred on October 5, 1894. Jane (Rollins) Mosier was the daughter of Lee and Susan (Penn) Rollins, being the second child in a family of fourteen and was born February 14, 1824, near Paris, Kentucky. Her paternal grandfather, Joshua Rollins, married Sophia Kennedy, who came from old Virginia and Pennsylvania families. John Kennedy, the father of Sophia, fought in the Revolution and with a neighbor was taken prisoner at Guilford courthouse and held on the old Jersey prisonship until his death, then being buried by the British in the sand of the seashore. Lee Rollins and Susan Penn were married in Paris, Kentucky. In 1830, they removed to Clay county, Missouri where they remained until their death. All of their fourteen children, except one, who was accidentally poisoned, lived to become the honored heads of large and respected families. The maternal grandparents of Jane (Rollins) Mosier, were Joseph and Charlotte (Aker) Penn, natives of Pennsylvania, Joseph being a direct descendant of the noted William Penn. Thus in the union of Jonah Mosier and Jane Rollins, two long lines of pioneers joined their fortunes to form another pioneer family. While the greater part of Oregon was yet an unbroken wilderness, teeming with hostile savages, Mr. and Mrs. Mosier pushed their way into the untrodden wilderness and made a home amid the crags of the Cascade mountains. Their first dwelling was situated on the banks of the broad Columbia, and these two faithful pioneers toiled steadily on until called to rest. From a family of seven children, four are still living, three daughters and one son. Two daughters by the second marriage also reside in Oregon. At the time of the Indian massacre at the Cascades when so many pioneers were killed, the Mosier family fled in the middle of the night on horseback over the almost impassable roads, to the fort at The Dalles. Mr. Mosier was shot at many times and although the bullets grazed his body, he was never seriously injured. Much rest and peace were enjoyed when finally the cruelties of the savages were put down and people were assured that they would not be driven from their homes in the midst of the night by murderous redskins. Mr. Mosier was a faithful man and did his work well. He was a member of the A.F. & A.M., a zealous laborer for educational advantages, a genuine path finder and a noble man. Although he made several fortunes during his life time, he died in only reasonable circumstances. The estate of one thousand acres was largely wild land, which has been improved by his son since. At the present time, a town is growing up on the old donation claim, called Mosier, the same being promoted by his only living son.