

HON. ZELEK M. DONNELL, deceased. The following memoir is devoted to one of the earliest pioneers of Oregon, a worthy man, and, in life, a most excellent citizen. His occupation was that of a stock raiser. He was born in Indiana, May 5, 1829, the son of James Donnell, of Scotch-Irish ancestry, who came to America early in the eighteenth century. The youth of our subject was passed on a farm with his father, sixty miles south of Indianapolis, in Decatur county.

February 3, 1852, our subject was married, and March 1st, of the same year he left with his bride by steamer from Cincinnati, Ohio, for St. Joseph. Here he outfitted, and with ox teams began the long journey across the plains. This trip was uneventful, and in September, 1852, they arrived at The Dalles. As the company was mostly made up of young couples they walked the greater portion of the way, the train being known as Dr. Crawford's company. Leaving The Dalles our subject and his young wife went down the Columbia river to Portland. During this trip Mrs. Donnell went through the Cascade Rapids -- with a sick child whose mother died en route -- in an Indian bateau. The Donnells finally located near Brownville, on donation land. Here they lived until November, 1858, and then disposed of the claim to Captain James Blakeley, father of Judge George Blakeley, of The Dalles, elsewhere mentioned in this work, and engaged in the cattle business and was among the first to range cattle between the Des Chutes and John Day rivers. In this business he continued until his death, November 28, 1873, at the age of forty-four years. In 1866 Mr. Donnell and his family removed to The Dalles in order to provide his children with educational advantages. June 4, 1864, he was elected Territorial senator from Wasco county, serving one term each in two regular sessions, and one special session held for the purpose of ratifying the Thirteenth Constitutional Amendment. At this period he was a prominent and leading Republican. Mr. Donnell was a charter member of the first Congregational church organized in The Dalles, in 1859.

The marriage of Mr. Donnell took place at Greensburg, Indiana, the bride being Camilla Thomson, a native of Indiana, born April 3, 1827, in Decatur county. Her parents, John and Spicy (Hamilton) Thomson, were natives of Kentucky and pioneers of Indiana. Mr. Donnell left four children, Lulu, wife of Charles J. Crandall, elsewhere mentioned; Orvilla, living in Montana, and Martin Z., a druggist at The Dalles. At present Mrs. Donnell resides at The Dalles with her son, Martin.