

ANDREW JACKSON THAYER

Andrew Jackson Thayer, second child of Gideon and Anne (Dodge) Thayer, was born in Lima, Livingstone County, New York, on November 27, 1818. He received an academic education at what was known as the Wesleyan Seminary and afterwards studied law in the office of Doolittle & Thayer, the latter being his cousin. He was married to Melissa D. Chandler on the 9th of October 1842.

He was admitted to the bar of the Supreme Court of New York in 1849 and entered into partnership with his brother, E. A. Thayer, at Buffalo, remaining there until March 28, 1853, when, accompanied by his wife he crossed the plains bound for Oregon and arrived at Salem, August 28, 1853. From Salem he went to Corvallis and on the 9th of October of that year, settled on a farm near Corvallis.

Upon the admission of Oregon into the Union, in 1859, Judge Thayer was appointed by President Buchanan the First United States District Attorney, a position which he held six months. In 1860 a question arose in Oregon as to the proper time for holding the Congressional election, the portion of the party to which Judge Thayer belonged contending it should be held in November, and that the election held in June was illegal. Accordingly, Judge Thayer was nominated and at the election of 1860, elected representative of Oregon in the 37th Congress. He was admitted to the seat at the extra session in July 1861, and held it until the close of the session.

In 1862, he was District Attorney for the Second Judicial District, holding that office two years. In 1870 he was elected Associate Justice of the Supreme Court in the same district, which office he held until the time of his death, which occurred at Corvallis April 28, 1873.

As a lawyer he won the respect and esteem of the entire state. As a gentleman he was kind, affable and courteous. As the head of a family he was devoted and affectionate. As a judge, firm and dignified. It can be said with pride that he held the scales of justice evenly poised and always impelled the right to incline the balance.