

# IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## REFERENCE SERIES

ALONZO LELAND

December 7, 1817-October 25, 1891

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Moving from his native Vermont to Oregon in 1850, Alonzo Leland became a leading citizen of Portland (where he had a conspicuous part in establishing the school system, in addition to serving as postmaster and newspaper editor) prior to joining the Idaho gold rush. He launched the first three daily newspapers in Portland, and in the Pacific Northwest, for that matter; the last of them he used to promote the Idaho mines. Settling in Lewiston in 1862 (after losing a mine in Florence to claim jumpers), he had a versatile career as a surveyor, attorney, journalist, and member of the legislature. He worked tirelessly to develop North Idaho, bringing saw mills and stamp mills to the mining country and interesting his community in railroads and Snake River navigational improvements. His main ambitions, very nearly realized, was to get Congress to establish a new territory for North Idaho, eastern Washington, and adjacent Montana, or lacking that, to get North Idaho returned to Washington. He served as a leading member of the Washington constitutional convention of 1878 (representing North Idaho), but after more than twenty years of practically unanimous North Idaho support, this effort finally failed and Washington and Idaho came into the union as separate states.

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