

# IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## REFERENCE SERIES

JAMES HENRY HAWLEY

Number 407

1971

Leaving his original home in Dubuque, Iowa, a year after he graduated from high school, James H. Hawley (January 17, 1847-August 3, 1929) came to Boise Basin in 1862. Active as a miner in that region, he left Placerville for San Francisco to study law in October, 1864. Coming back to resume his Idaho mining career in 1868, he was elected to the legislature in 1870. He was admitted to the bar at the end of that legislative session. In 1874 he was elected to the territorial council; in 1876, a Boise County commissioner; in 1878 and 1880, district attorney. He almost became the Democratic congressional candidate in 1884, but, with Grover Cleveland's presidential victory that year, he served a four-year term as United States Attorney instead. Then in 1888 he got the Democratic congressional nomination, but could not overcome the Republican anti-Mormon combine.

After the Coeur d'Alene mine labor war in 1892, he acted as attorney for the miners' union at the time his clients organized the Western Federation of Miners. In 1899, though, he served as special prosecutor for the state when the mine labor war erupted again with the dynamiting of the Bunker Hill and Sullivan concentrator at Wardner. He continued in this capacity during the conspiracy trials following the assassination of Frank Steunenberg. Following his election in 1902 to a term as mayor of Boise, he was chosen governor of Idaho in 1910. Missing reelection by a narrow margin in 1912, he ran for United States Senate in 1914 and tried for another nomination in 1918. Aside from his political career, he was one of the really outstanding criminal lawyers of the west: his most notable achievement being the freeing of Diamondfield Jack Davis in a sheep and cattle war of 1896 to 1902. He also specialized in irrigation law, dealing in water litigation over a forty-year period.

Publications--450 N. 4th Street, Boise, ID 83702--208-334-3428