

GURLEY, JOHN ADDISON

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GURLEY, JOHN ADDISON, born in East Hartford, Hartford County, Connecticut, December 9, 1813; son of James and Susan (Bryant) Gurley; married Sarah Leonora Borden of Bordentown, New Jersey, at Cincinnati, Ohio, December 31, 1839; children, Delia Susan (Mrs. A.A. Bennett), John Addison, Emma, Laura, John Addison 2d, Clara (Mrs. Frank L. Barthelow), Harry Borden, and Florence Arizona Gurley, born June 4, 1863, who died when two months old.

Attended district schools and received academic instruction; learned the hatters trade; studied theology and became a missionary preacher in Maine at the age of 21; pastor, Universalist Society, Methuen, Essex County, Massachusetts, 1835-38, during which time a meeting house was erected.

Moved to Cincinnati, Ohio, 1838, and became owner and editor of the Star And Sentinel, later called the Star In The West, a religious journal which attained a wide circulation; also served as pastor of the Universalist society in that City but retired from the ministry in 1850; was a strong advocate of temperance and spoke throughout the West on that subject; sold his newspaper in 1854 and retired to his farm near Cincinnati where he recovered his health and by judicious investment of his means acquired a comfortable estate.

Was a Democrat but became a Republican after the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and the trouble over slavery in Kansas; unsuccessful candidate for Representative in Congress 1856; elected as a Republican to the 36th and 37th Congresses (March 4, 1859 to March 3, 1863); as chairman of the Committee on Printing, sponsored the Act \odot * June 23, 1860 (12 Stat. 177), which established the Government Printing Office in Washington.

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Made a speech in the House on January 16, 1861, rebuking treason and declaring that the West would never consent to the dismemberment of the Nation; served as Colonel and Aid-de-Camp on the staff of General John C. Fremont at St. Louis, Missouri, after the adjournment of Congress on August 6 but resigned on October 1, 1861, in compliance with the wishes of his friends and constituents who insisted that he could render greater service as a member of Congress; on January 29, 1862, he spoke in the House condemning the delay in attacking the Confederacy and urging a more vigorous prosecution of the war, an address which excited attention throughout the Country and was extensively quoted in Europe.

Was defeated for reelection by a small majority in 1862 due to changes in the boundaries of the congressional district; nominated by President Abraham Lincoln to be the first Governor of the Territory of Arizona and confirmed by the Senate, March 10, 1863; died at his home in Green Township, near Cincinnati, Ohio, on the eve of his departure for Arizona, August 19, 1863, age 49; buried in Spring Grove Cemetery, Cincinnati, Ohio.

In public life he was distinguished for his earnestness and zeal in the cause of this Country; was a ready and effective debater and a stirring and magnetic orator; in private life he was a man of large practical benevolence and a most open and generous hospitality; an editorial in the New York Evening Post said of him;

Mr. Gurley was ever deeply interested in the vast resources of the West and was among the first to advocate the organization of the Territory of Arizona. He may be said to be the father of the bill creating that Territory, and it is not likely that it would have become a law for some years to come but for his untiring exertions.

So thoroughly had he familiarized himself with the region constituting that far off district, that on the passage of the Act, he was by common consent selected for the post of Governor of the Territory.

Gurley Street in Prescott, Arizona, named for him.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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- The Universalist Church in Ohio, by Rev. Elmo A. Robinson, Ohio, 1923, p.176.
- History of Arizona Territory, by W.W. Elliott & Co., San Francisco, 1884, p. 209.
- Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1927, by Ansel Weld, Washington, 1928, p. 1041.
- Congressional Globe, 36th Congress, 1st Session, p. 2483; 36th Congress, 2d Session, pp 416-418; 37th Congress, 2d Session, pp 552-555.
- Executive Journal, U.S. Senate, Vol. 13, pp 228, 228, 261, 275.
- Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Series 1, Vol. 3, 16, 20, 52; Series 2, Vol. 1; Series 3, Vol. 1, 2.
- Arizona Place Names by Will C. Barnes, Tucson, 1935, pp 155, 187, 193.
- Cincinnati Daily Gazette, August 20, 1863 (obituary).
- The Arizona Miner, Fort Whipple, Vol. 1, No. 1 March 9, 1864, 4:2 (obituary)

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Any further references to him