

Monument Is Erected at Pioneer Grave

A grey granite monument bearing simply the names and dates of their births and death, but marking for generations to come the final resting place of Judge and Mrs. J. Quinn Thornton, was placed recently in Lee Mission cemetery as a tribute from Dr. Ellen Chamberlin of Salem.

To 93-year-old Miss Chamberlin, oldest living graduate of Willamette university and former instructor at that institution, from which she last spring received an honorary doctorate, the severely simple granite is not only a contribution to history. J. Quinn Thornton's name looms large in the story of pioneer Oregon, but the friendship the early state supreme court justice and his wife bore to her own parents is equally important to the donor.

Judge Thornton, appointed to Oregon's supreme court bench in 1847, a year after his arrival here, was shortly sent to Washington to urge formation of a territorial government. He was author, too, of tributes to the country's scenery and of a two-volume work "Oregon and California in 1848. Mrs. Thornton receives small mention in Oregon histories but friends of early days in Salem recall that she wrote well and that her skill was often used in preparation of the tributes published as parts of obituaries. Such a tribute she wrote when the mother of Miss Chamberlin and Mrs. Charles Weller died, the sisters recall.

Engraving on the monument, northeast of the mission plot, was arranged by Mrs. Jessie M. Crossan, foster daughter of the Thorntons. Small wooden markers such as were commonly in use when Judge and Mrs. Thornton died in 1888 and 1889 were replaced by the new stone.

[The Oregon Statesman, Salem, Oregon, Wednesday, September 2, 1942 p. 6, contributed by Kathy Cook]