

TWO STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

1. THE TOWNS OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST WERE NOT FOUNDED
ON THE FUR TRADE
2. MORTON MATTHEW MCCARVER, FRONTIER CITY BUILDER

BY

EDMOND S. MEANY

Reprinted from the Annual Report of the American Historical Association
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By EDMOND S. MEANY,
Professor in the University of Washington.

1. THE TOWNS OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST WERE NOT FOUNDED ON THE FUR TRADE.

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At the meeting of the American Historical Association in 1893 Prof. Frederick J. Turner, of the University of Wisconsin, read a paper on "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," which has exercised a profound influence on subsequent students and writers. In that paper Prof. Turner says:

The trading posts reached by these trails were on the sites of Indian villages which had been placed in positions suggested by nature; and these trading posts, situated so as to command the water systems of the country, have grown into such cities as Albany, Pittsburg, Detroit, Chicago, St. Louis, Council Bluffs, and Kansas City. Thus civilization in America has followed the arteries made by geology, pouring an ever richer tide through them, until at last the slender paths of aboriginal intercourse have been broadened and interwoven into the complex mazes of modern commercial lines.¹

In a more recent publication the same distinguished author expands his thesis and uses these words:

Practically all of the Indian villages of the tributaries of the Great Lakes and of the upper Mississippi were regularly visited by the trader. The trading posts became the nuclei of later settlements; the traders' trails grew into the early roads, and their portages marked out the location for canals. Little by little the fur trade was undermining the Indian society and paving the way for the entrance of civilization.²

While conceding the full value and validity of the thesis as applied to that portion of the United States lying east of the Rocky Mountains, it is the purpose of this present paper to demonstrate that west of those mountains, in the Pacific Northwest, or the old Oregon country, the evolution of civilization did not follow the lines so successfully elaborated by Prof. Turner.

It should be stated at once that the quest for furs and the primitive trading posts have important places in the history of old Oregon, but

¹ American Historical Association, Annual Report, 1893, p. 210.

² Frederick J. Turner, Rise of the New West (in "The American Nation, a History," ed. Hart, Vol. XIV), 113-114.

much of the charm of that history lies in the fact that it was not the trading posts that became the towns.

The area in question was first observed from the sea by the Spaniard, Bartolomé Ferrelo, in 1543, and by the English captain, Drake, in 1579, but civilized man did not touch foot on that soil until the famous landing by Bruno Heceta, in 1775. Fur traders and explorers of different nationalities skirted the shores from that date until the crucial year of 1792 saw the discovery and exploration of Puget Sound by the Englishman, Capt. George Vancouver, and the discovery and naming of the Columbia River by the American, Capt. Robert Gray. It was inevitable that fur trade in such a wilderness, participated in by representatives of different nations, should arouse international contentions. And it is certain that from Gray's discoveries, in 1792, the new Republic of the United States was destined to have an interest in the long-drawn battle of diplomacy.

France, though represented among the explorers, did not gain a foothold. Spain finally abandoned her little fort at Nootka in 1795 and withdrew south of the forty-second parallel. Russia, in a treaty with the United States in 1824 and in another with Great Britain in 1825, fixed the southern boundary of her claims at 54° 40'. It remained for Great Britain and the United States to determine which should acquire sovereignty in the area thus limited. Each nation recognized in the contention the three necessary fundamentals of discovery, exploration, and occupation.

The American cause, starting with Gray's discovery of the Columbia River in 1792, was strengthened by the explorations of the Lewis and Clark expedition in 1805-6, and by the Winships' attempt in 1809 and the Astorians' success in 1811 in planting a fort at the mouth of the great river. American possession of a large part of Oregon appeared secure up to this point, when suddenly all seemed abandoned or destroyed in the War of 1812. Astor's partners treacherously sold the fort to British rivals, representatives of the Northwest Co., and while the transfer was being made the British sloop of war *Raccoon* entered the river and anchored before the fort, the name of which was promptly changed from Astoria to Fort George.

During those same years the British cause was even stronger than the American, especially in the northern part of old Oregon. Vancouver's discovery and exploration of Puget Sound, Vancouver Island, and the adjacent shores, were followed by Mackenzie's overland exploration in 1793, a dozen years before the arrival of the Lewis and Clark expedition. From 1805 on the representatives of the Northwest Co. were planting trading posts on the Fraser, Okanogan, Spokane, and other rivers. The purchase of Astoria carried with it the three interior posts on tributaries of the Columbia, thus

erasing the last vestige of American occupation. The British fur traders were in complete possession.

But possession by fur traders did not carry with it British sovereignty. In fact, when the War of 1812 was terminated by the Treaty of Ghent, the antebellum condition as to territory was interpreted to include Astoria, probably because of the presence of the sloop of war at the time of the transfer. In October, 1818, an American agent, J. B. Prevost, arrived at the mouth of the Columbia, and this lone citizen, representing the American Government, saw the British flag lowered from Fort George and the Stars and Stripes raised in its place over Astoria. In a few days he left and the British fur traders resumed sway. At that time, and for more than a dozen years thereafter, there was not a single American citizen in Oregon to represent his country's supposed share in the sovereignty over any part of the region.

In that same month of October, 1818, when the American agent participated in the interesting ceremonies of temporarily restoring the Stars and Stripes at Astoria, there was concluded in London a treaty relating to boundaries in America. Article III of that treaty provided that any country claimed by either party on the northwest coast of America westward of the Stony Mountains should—

be free and open, for the term of 10 years from the date of the signature of the present convention, to the vessels, citizens, and subjects of the two powers; it being well understood that this agreement is not to be construed to the prejudice of any claim which either of the two high contracting parties may have to any part of said country, nor shall it be taken to affect the claims of any other power or State to any part of the said country; the only object of the high contracting parties in that respect being to prevent disputes and differences amongst themselves.¹

This was the famous treaty of joint occupancy, and as the 10-year period drew to a close in 1827 a special treaty was concluded at London extending indefinitely the joint occupancy feature, and adding the provision that either party could terminate that agreement by giving to the other party due notice of 12 months.²

It is worth while to note here how three great Americans were continued in contact with the diplomacy of this Oregon question. Three of the five American commissioners who concluded the treaty of peace at Ghent on December 24, 1814, were John Quincy Adams, Henry Clay, and Albert Gallatin. In 1818, when the treaty of joint occupancy was signed, Adams was Secretary of State, Clay was Speaker of the House, and Gallatin was minister to France, but was ordered to London to assist Richard Rush in making that treaty. In 1827,

¹ Treaties and Conventions between the United States and other Powers, 1776-1887, 416-417.

² *Ibid.*, 426-427.

when the joint occupancy feature was renewed, Adams was President, Clay was Secretary of State, and Gallatin was minister to Great Britain. The interest of Adams in the question was certainly persistent, for his faithful diary shows that on March 25, 1843, he called on Secretary of State Daniel Webster after the conclusion of the Webster-Ashburton treaty, and had three hours of consultation in which Oregon was considered.¹

There is every reason why the British should have been perfectly complaisant in signing those two treaties of joint occupancy in 1818 and 1827, for in the region affected there was not one single American trader or settler, while there were many successful British trading posts. Bancroft cites a House of Commons report on the Hudson's Bay Co., dated 1857, locating 30 posts, nearly all of which were within the region under discussion, and many of them were in successful operation when the joint occupancy treaties were negotiated.² The Northwest Co. and the Hudson's Bay Co. were united in 1821, and in 1825 headquarters were moved from Fort George to the newly established Fort Vancouver, which became the capital of the British fur traders' dominion over the vast area between Spanish territory on the south and Russian territory on the north, and between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Ocean. A few American fur traders visited the Indians along the coasts, and a few even crossed the mountain barriers and attempted to get a portion of the trade by land routes, notably Jedediah S. Smith, in 1828, and Capt. B. L. E. Bonneville and Nathaniel J. Wyeth, from 1832 to 1836. Wyeth had the foresight to attempt the addition of fish packing to the industry of fur trading. But the Hudson's Bay Co., with its immense resources and its generations of trained officers and men, easily overcame such efforts at competition.

The development of the country was proceeding along the traditional lines of expanding the fur-trading posts into villages and towns. There is no doubt that, if that development had not been interrupted, the map of the Pacific Northwest would now show many examples of the evolution pointed out by Prof. Turner. As it is, but 4 of the 30 posts mentioned by the House of Commons report have continued as settlements of white men. These are Fort Vancouver, now the seat of Clark County, Wash; Fort Walla Walla, now Wallula, Wash.; Boise, now the capital of Idaho; and Victoria, now the capital of British Columbia; and Astoria, Oreg., which was not included in that list of 1857. The other posts have declined or disappeared, some of them being identified by interesting survivals of ruined log houses or blockhouse forts.

¹ Charles Francis Adams, *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, XI, 344-347.

² Hubert Howe Bancroft, *Works*, XXVII, 448.

There is no desire to minimize the great influence of the fur trade in extending the white man's civilization in wild territory. We are interested here in but one phase of that influence in a particular region. The present writer has said elsewhere:

As the ermine drew the Russian eastward to the Pacific, so the beaver drew the American westward to the same ocean. In that ocean were found furs much more valuable than the beaver. However, the deck of the vessel was the trading post, and profits were counted in Boston, London, or St. Petersburg. But the beaver was by no means to be despised.¹

For centuries the fur of the beaver had been highly prized and extensively used, especially for hats. In Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* is the line—

On his head a Flaundrish bever hat,

and "hattes of biever" were recorded as early as the twelfth century.² A sudden and extensive change in the world-wide fashion of wearing beaver hats would certainly affect the trade in beaver skins and arrest the development of posts engaged in that trade into villages and cities. That kind of a change took place with the result indicated when the silk hat supplanted that of beaver. The silk hat was made in Florence late in the eighteenth century and was introduced into France about 1825, after which it speedily became the vogue. That this new fashion in hats had a profound effect on the theme before us is made apparent by two letters written by John Jacob Astor from Europe in 1830. One letter was to St. Louis withdrawing his partnership in a fur-trading company and the other was to a friend in New York saying:

I very much fear beaver will not sell well very soon unless very fine. It appears that they make hats of silk in place of beaver.³

The date of those letters and the practical prophecy they contain are both important.

It now remains to trace a change more potential and more far-reaching than the one just indicated. During the decade from 1835 to 1845 there arose, in some way, between Great Britain and the United States an understanding that when the joint occupancy treaty should be finally interpreted on the fundamentals of discovery, exploration, and occupation, the quality of the occupation should govern. The trapper or fur trader would not count as against the actual settler or farmer; the trading post was not to be weighed in the same balance as the village of the true pioneer. We have a fine piece of evidence on this point from one whose words have a peculiar and pertinent authority. Dr. William Fraser Tolmie arrived at

¹ Meany, *History of the State of Washington*, 55-56.

² *Encyclopædia Britannica*, article Hat.

³ H. M. Chittenden, *History of the American Fur Trade*, I, 364.

Fort George (Astoria) in 1833, to serve as Hudson's Bay Co. physician. He rose in rank until he was the company's chief representative on Puget Sound at the time of the settlement between Great Britain and the United States. He then removed to Victoria, British Columbia, where he lived the rest of his long life, an honored pioneer of the Pacific Northwest. After he had completed a half century of experiences on the coast, this loyal subject of Great Britain was invited by the president of the Oregon Pioneer Association to participate in the annual meeting of 1884 at Salem, which he did by sending a lengthy letter. In this letter he says:

Had they [Hudson's Bay Co.] promptly adopted my suggestion, in 1844, their flocks of sheep might have overspread the unoccupied prairies between Nisqually and Cowlitz ere the 15th of June, 1846, in which case their rights would have been confirmed to these lands by the treaty.¹

Here we have a British recognition of the fact that in 1844 sheep and potatoes would count for more than beaver and mink in the diplomacy of Oregon. Continuing, the Doctor's letter says:

But, in that time, there was a general British supineness, in retrospect strongly contrasting with the enlightened, thoughtful energy of the natural leaders of the American pioneers, and the intelligent readiness of all for self-government. * * * True, most part of the country sought for was lost, but it must be remembered that, between 1834 and 1846, the United Kingdom had—besides several fighting and other troubles in various parts of the world—great embarrassment in regard to Canada, during 1837–38 in a state of open rebellion. What seems more natural in such a case than that apathy as to further acquisition of territory in North America should have prevailed in British councils?

When the War of 1812 was declared the Oregon case may be said to have rested on an even basis as far as are concerned the claims of Great Britain and the United States. During the three decades following that war there was a perfect sequence of events that in an unusually fortunate, though now apparently natural, way worked to the advantage of the American cause. These were the recognition of the American claim to Astoria in the Treaty of Ghent, the joint occupancy treaties of 1818 and 1827, the purchase of Florida in 1819, which included a quitclaim deed to any Spanish claims that might remain in the Northwest,² the treaty with Russia in 1824, the injury to the beaver trade through the development of the silk hat, the Canadian rebellion of 1837, which created an apathy on the part of the British Government toward extending territory in America, and the success of the Hudson's Bay Co. in holding Oregon as a game preserve until the time was ripe for a race toward actual settlement.

Geography and geology contributed no small share to this solution. St. Louis was the metropolis of the western American fur trade.

¹Transactions of the Twelfth Annual Reunion of the Oregon Pioneer Association for 1884. Salem, Oreg., 1885, pp. 25–37.

²Treaties and Conventions, 1776–1887, 1016–1021.

Between St. Louis and the barrier of the Rocky Mountains lay vast plains, part of which were known as the "Great American Desert." This double barrier checked the westward movement for a time, crucial for our theme, until conditions could mature for the great migrations between 1840 and 1860. That critical time is thus stated by Prof. F. G. Young:

The vanguard of the pioneers had reached the western limits of Iowa, Missouri, and Arkansas. Settlement of the plains beyond before the age of railroads was out of the question. The next move, then, must be, as it were, a flight to the Pacific coast, where communication with the civilized world would again be open by the sea.¹

To the northward, however, the system of rivers permitted the British fur traders to extend their chain of posts on into Oregon, giving them a kind of possession, which subsequently proved a hindrance rather than a help when it was concluded to consider the quality of occupation.

The first actual occupation by the Americans was made when the bands of missionaries sent by the Methodist Episcopal Church and the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions from 1834 to 1844 planted in Oregon their missions and their homes. In 1842 and more especially in 1843 the regular stream of American immigration into Oregon began. The question of actual occupation was then taking on a meaning which the British fur traders were quick to discern. They had already allowed some of their retired servants to settle on farms, and in 1839 had begun a systematic development along this line through the agency of their subsidiary Puget Sound Agricultural Co. In 1841 they imported a number of British settlers from the Red River territory. Though abundantly successful in establishing trading posts and in ruling a wild territory from their stockaded forts, their efforts at establishing agricultural settlements or securing actual occupation were feeble indeed as compared with those of the onrushing trains of American immigrants.

However, this last stage of the race for sovereignty was perfectly fair. The treaty of joint occupancy was still in effect. It was April, 1846, when the American Government gave Great Britain notice that that treaty would be abrogated at the end of the stipulated 12 months. Matters had come to such a pass at that time that, instead of waiting for the lapse of 12 months, the treaty fixing the boundary was concluded on June 15, 1846, less than 2 months from the date of the notice. A recent Canadian writer has gone so far as to say that had the joint occupancy continued another dozen years, until the Fraser River gold excitement of 1857-58, the Americans

¹ F. G. Young, ed., *The Correspondence and Journals of Capt. Nathaniel J. Wyeth*, in *Sources of the History of Oregon*, I, xiii-xiv.

would have wrested what is now the Province of British Columbia from the British Crown.¹

Though the treaty of boundaries was concluded in 1846, a final adjustment between the United States and the Hudson's Bay Co. was not reached until September 10, 1869. During that score of years the stations were held by representatives of the Hudson's Bay Co., but the posts dwindled away in power and importance. At the last many of them became the homesteads of the British caretakers, who became American citizens to acquire title. The present writer has visited Nisqually, once the chief settlement of white men on Puget Sound, and on the homestead of Edward Huggins, the last Hudson's Bay clerk at the fort, found many ruins and relics of the old days. Likewise a visit to Colville, the old capital of the upper Columbia trade, disclosed the fact that the McDonald family maintained there a farm, using the old blockhouse fort for a henhouse.

The American settlers built for themselves fresh new towns, the nuclei being usually a sawmill, a water power, a mine, or a convenient crossroads in the farming districts. Many of the pioneers had to build forts and stockades to protect their homes from Indians, but the dramatic life of the fur trade had vanished before the dawn of the real era of town building in old Oregon.

¹ James White, "British Diplomacy and Canada," in *University Magazine*, VII (October, 1908), 398-414.

2. MORTON MATTHEW McCARVER, FRONTIER CITY BUILDER.

By EDMOND S. MEANY.

The westward movement in American history is well exemplified in the life of Morton Matthew McCarver, whose career deserves more attention than it has hitherto received. He was one of those keen, brave, mentally alert Kentuckians, whose deeds have enlivened and enriched so many pages of western annals.

His parents, Joseph McCarver and Betsey Morton McCarver, moved, in 1799, from the woods of southwestern North Carolina into the wilderness of Kentucky and settled in Madison County near the new town of Lexington. There on January 14, 1807, was born to them the son who received the name of Morton Matthew. The mother was a leader in the sect of Shakers, and as such maintained a rule of the home that became irksome to the restless boy who eagerly fed upon stories of the rivers and a farther west. At the age of 14 the lad left his home, and by that act became "dead" to his strict Shaker mother, who ever after refused to see him again. Like Lincoln, who was born in the same region two years later than he, this boy received his introduction to the great outside world by a flatboat trip down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. For a few years in Louisiana and Texas he acquired many rough experiences, the bitter lesson most thoroughly learned being that a poor white boy had small chance for advancement in that region at that time.

He returned to Kentucky, obtained employment and proceeded vigorously with his self-education. In 1829 he moved into the newer State of Illinois, and on May 6, 1830, married Mary Ann Jennings, of Monmouth. He moved about from place to place, worked and traded, accumulating experience and property. He desired to cross the Mississippi River and secure a foothold in the wild Indian lands of the western banks. He picked out a place on which to build a new town. The Black Hawk War broke out and young McCarver fought with the Illinois troops. He was present when Black Hawk's

beaten tribe signed the treaty with Gen. Winfield Scott, by which the Indians gave up the lands that later became eastern Iowa.

The site that he wanted for a town was a rocky bluff which the Indians called Shokoquon and which the white men called Flint Hill. There were then associated with McCarver two kinsmen, Simpson S. White, who had married Mrs. McCarver's sister, and Amzi Doolittle, who had married Mr. White's sister. When the treaty was signed in 1832 these three men were the first to cross the river and take possession of that coveted hill. But the treaty had stipulated that the lands should not be opened to settlement until June 1, 1833. Soldiers came and drove the town builders away. They returned to the claim, and again the soldiers drove them off and burned their cabins. When the legal date arrived the three determined men crossed the river at daybreak, and this time they were not disturbed. They were joined by a Vermonter named John B. Gray, who urged the case so strongly that the town builders consented to call the new place Burlington, though for several years the local name of Flint Hill persisted, and, in fact, the post office was so called at first. A flat-bottomed ferryboat propelled by oars was maintained by McCarver and associates to give Burlington its first transportation facilities.

In September, 1834, McCarver, in the presence of citizens and soldiers at Montrose, read a proclamation by Gov. Stevens T. Mason, of Michigan Territory, declaring that the laws of the United States and of Michigan had been extended over the country in the "Black Hawk Purchase." Two years later, when Iowa had been transferred to the care of Wisconsin Territory, Congress enacted a law donating 640 acres for town purposes to each of the towns of Burlington, Fort Madison, Bellevue, Dubuque, Peru, and Mineral Point. McCarver, George Cubbage, and W. A. Corell were appointed commissioners to carry out the provisions of this law. McCarver devoted himself earnestly to this task, though the beneficent plan worked against the ready sale of his own town lots.

Iowa became a Territory in 1838, and on January 7, 1839, the first governor, Robert Lucas, as commander in chief of the Iowa military forces, issued an order appointing Morton M. McCarver to the position of commissary general. He took much interest in the office. The title of general clung to him through life. He saw active service in a similar office during Indian wars in Oregon. For a time McCarver prospered in Iowa. He did not confine himself to the expansion of his town of Burlington, but took part in the development of lead mines near Dubuque and traveled about the Territory. The widespread panic of 1837 seriously affected western interests. McCarver began to fear that Burlington could not hold its own in the race with such cities as Pittsburg, Cincinnati, Louisville, St. Louis,

and New Orleans. The settlers of Iowa were spreading out into agricultural communities. He was hearing of a land of promise much farther to the westward. American missionaries had gone there and planted homes as well as missions. American settlers began to cross the plains for Oregon. It was highly desirable that settlers should go there. The joint occupancy treaty of 1827 was still in force between Great Britain and the United States. The British fur traders were in possession, and some retired employees of the Hudson's Bay Co. had taken up homes. Prior to the arrival of the missionaries there were no American homes in Oregon, and now there was beginning the race toward a settlement of the sovereignty of that region by actual occupation by either British subjects or American citizens. To encourage American effort in this race, Senator Linn, of Missouri, was passing through Congress a law granting 640 acres to each family and 160 additional acres to each minor child.

Here was a combination of conditions that presented an irresistible lure to the venturesome spirit of Gen. McCarver. It was with difficulty that he resisted the temptation to join the migration of 1842 consisting of 111 persons, headed by Dr. Elijah White, Medorem Crawford, L. W. Hastings, A. L. Lovejoy, and Columbia Lancaster. His ardor had no chance of being weakened during the succeeding 12 months, as there were agitations and public meetings in his neighborhood at which the Oregon question was discussed in all its phases. He joined the great Oregon caravan of 1843. There were nearly 1,000 persons in this migration. Peter H. Burnett, who later became the first governor of California, was made captain and McCarver was one of the council of nine. This migration was one of the crucial events in American history on the Pacific coast. It gave the Americans a real standing in that region, it solved the main portion of the problem of the joint occupancy treaty, many men of the party took active parts in the struggling provisional government, and from that time there was no more of doubt as to whether Oregon could or would be peopled by actual settlers.

McCarver had joined the party without cattle or household impedimenta. True to his town-building instinct, he formed, on the trail, an agreement with Burnett, and when they had crossed the Rocky Mountains, he pushed on ahead of the party and selected a place for a town on the Willamette River. In honor of Missouri's Senator and Oregon's friend, he called the place Linnton. By the time his partner Burnett and the other immigrants arrived he was ready to expand and build up his new city. In this he failed. Oregon City, at the falls of the Willamette, in addition to the adjacent water power, was nearer the farming lands, and between Oregon City and Linnton, Portland arose and overshadowed both. McCarver after-

wards claimed that the real reason for his failure at Linnton was a lack of nails. They did not have enough of these useful articles for the commonest needs, and a new town on rush orders could not be built without nails.

He had left his family in Iowa, but he promptly sent for them. His letter, going by way of Hawaii, England, and the Atlantic States to Iowa, took 10 months in passage. His family, therefore, did not arrive until 1845. Finding his town venture unpromising he secured a farm and began work there with his characteristic energy. Retaining, however, his faith in the future commercial and industrial growth of the region, he acquired property in the new towns and was keenly alive to all development. It is worth noting that while crossing the mountains to Oregon he wrote that it would be perfectly feasible to construct a railroad from the Mississippi to the Pacific, thus becoming one of the earliest prophets of a transcontinental railroad.

The first legislative committee chosen for the reorganized provisional government included the newly arrived McCarver, and, on assembling at Oregon City, on June 18, 1844, the committee elected him speaker. He must have felt much at home, for on July 5, 1843, the legislative committee's report had been approved by the people, adopting as the law of the land almost the entire body of laws enacted by the legislature of Iowa Territory in Burlington, at its first session in 1838-39. The McCarver committee enacted a number of wholesome measures, including a stringent prohibition law for the protection of the primitive settlement and a law prohibiting slavery. Ardent Kentuckian and Democrat as he was, McCarver gave earnest support to both these measures.

While apparently a plunger in business, McCarver was an honorable man. The panic of 1837 had left him with \$10,000 of debts in Iowa. These he paid with money acquired on the Pacific coast. He gave full credit to Dr. Marcus Whitman for that missionary's help in guiding the immigration of 1843. Though anxious to do all he could to strengthen the American claims to all of Oregon, he gave abundant praise to Dr. John McLoughlin and James Douglas, of the Hudson's Bay Co., for their many kindnesses to needy American immigrants. He was grievously disappointed when the treaty of 1846 gave the British part of old Oregon, but he at once became active toward securing congressional and executive action for the regular government of what was then American territory beyond further dispute.

While these questions were absorbing the attention of the pioneer legislators, there came the startling announcement that gold had been discovered in California. There was a stampede from Oregon, and McCarver was one of the first to go, hurrying, as was his invariable

custom, on horseback. He secured a claim on Feather River. Again he believed he could do better at town building. He entered into an agreement with the Sutters, father and son, to build a town on their land, and in the autumn of 1848 William H. Warner was hired to survey and plat the town, which they called Sacramento. All was going well when, to McCarver's great chagrin, he was supplanted by his old partner, Peter H. Burnett, in the management of the enterprise. He then bought some of the lots, became a landlord and merchant, and operated a schooner in trade with the bay. Sacramento, needing local government, elected 11 men to what was called a legislature. McCarver was one of these. When Gen. Riley, the military governor, called for a convention to devise a plan for a Territorial government or adopt a State constitution, a meeting was held in Sacramento, over which Gen. McCarver presided. Gen. Riley's call was approved, and later McCarver was elected one of the delegates to the convention, which met at Monterey on September 1, 1849. He was one of the men who worked effectively toward framing that famous document so that California would be admitted a "free" and not a "slave" State.

A flood at Sacramento discouraged McCarver. He sold his interests, speculated awhile in San Francisco, became interested in schooners plying between Hawaiian and Pacific coast points, and then settled down as a farmer near Oregon City. He became a model agriculturist, originating three new varieties of apples and obtaining a medal as a special prize for the best display of fruits in the Agricultural and Horticultural Fair in San Francisco in 1853.

When the Methodist missionaries began to close some of their stations, they transferred the one at The Dalles to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (known as the Whitman Missions in Oregon). McCarver negotiated to secure possession of the site, intending to build a town there, but finding the title entangled, he abandoned the plan.

He participated in three Indian wars in Oregon, most of the time in his familiar, though arduous, work as commissary general. When the Fraser River gold excitement broke out in 1857 he hastened to the scene, but contented himself with buying a few lots in Victoria, British Columbia, which he subsequently sold at a profit.

In 1862 he joined another stampede to the newly discovered gold fields of Idaho. He organized the firm of McCarver, Clark & Townsend and did a thriving business in Bannock City, since called Idaho City. Crime was rampant in Idaho then. Hasty justice was sometimes meted out by committees of vigilantes. While sojourning in Auburn, Idaho, Gen. McCarver was called on to preside over one of these popular tribunals. Not long after this he left his business to

the care of his two partners while he went to New York to sell stock in some quartz mines. The Civil War had just ended, business was disturbed, and he failed. While he was gone Idaho City was burned and McCarver returned to Portland.

His first wife had died in 1846, and in 1848 he had married Mrs. Julia A. Buckalew, a widow. Two children had survived their mother and to this second union had come five children. While always a generous provider, it would seem in all reason that he would now seek to give them a permanent home, but such was not to be. His family and friends were unable to restrain him when he became imbued with the idea that he could build a city on Puget Sound that would be all ready for the coming of the promised railroad.

Obtaining financial support from business friends in Portland, he saddled his horse and started alone for Puget Sound. This was late in March, 1868. He had studied all available maps, and by a singular foresight analyzed the problems of commerce by sea in contact with transportation by rail through adjacent mountain passes. He selected Commencement Bay, so named by the Wilkes expedition in 1841, and soon began to build there his last city. The place was at first known as Commencement City and sometimes as Puyallup, for a river of that name that flows into the bay. When McCarver heard that a book called "The Canoe and the Saddle," by Theodore Winthrop, contained the statement that the Indians had called the great snow-crowned mountain "Tacoma," he at once chose that as the name for his city. His letters of this period reveal a wonderful hope and energy. In platting the town he used the ideas obtained at Sacramento. He immediately urged and aided in the building of a saw-mill. He explored and exploited the adjacent and tributary agricultural lands. He was one of the first discoverers of coal in that vicinity and frequently sought aid in bringing that product to market through his loved town. While speculation was rife as to what point the Northern Pacific Railroad Co. would select for its western terminus, he was confident that Tacoma would be chosen. He finally realized this hope in 1873, and he felt content that he had achieved the founding of a great city.

He had selected a cemetery for the new city, and his was the first adult body laid away there in a grave of his own choosing. The whole community mourned the death of the "Old General," who departed this life on April 17, 1875.

In one aspect of the westward movement Morton Matthew McCarver was but a fleck of foam on the great human wave that swept irresistibly over the plains and mountains from the Mississippi to the sea, but it must be acknowledged that that fleck of foam was frequently on the crest of the surging wave and was often first to splash itself on the inundated wilderness. He was a many-sided leader

whose far-seeing plans have aided thousands of American citizens, who cherish his memory with affectionate regard.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

Gen. McCarver's daughter Virginia became the wife of Thomas W. Prosch, whose home has been in Seattle for many years. The material for this paper has been derived from conversations with Mrs. Prosch and her daughters, Edith and Beatrice, who have been members of my history classes; from family records in this home, and especially from the little book privately published in Seattle in 1906 by Mr. Prosch, entitled "McCarver and Tacoma."

