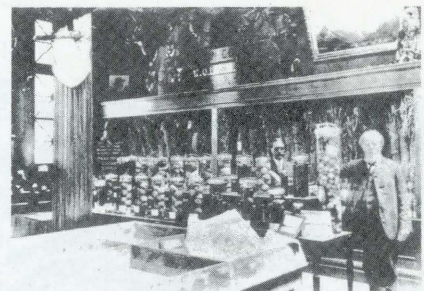


George Bush's family also prospered. His eldest son, William Owen Bush, surpassed his father's farming abilities to the extent that he exhibited his produce at the Philadelphia Exposition during the Centennial Celebration. William Owen was also elected to the first state Legislature after Washington became a state in 1889. His greatest accomplishment there was to help pass legislation establishing a college for the study of agricultural science. This college later became Washington State University at Pullman.



William Owen Bush and his produce exhibit at the Philadelphia Exposition during the Centennial Celebration.

During his lifetime, George Bush established a good life for himself and his family. But he never became an American citizen with full rights. He died in 1863, five years before passage of the 13th and 14th constitutional amendments, which gave black men full citizenship.

Born a slave in Virginia in 1817, another black pioneer to brave trials of the Oregon Trail was George Washington. Legend has it that Washington's mother was an English woman and his father a slave. Shortly after his birth,

Washington was adopted by a white couple, James and Anna Cochran.



*George Washington,
Founder of Centralia*

Washington did as well as a black man could in Missouri. He even was made a legal citizen of Missouri in 1843 by an act of the legislature. But Missouri citizenship did not help him prevail in the federal court system. Washington had a business in Missouri, where he gave people goods on credit. One of his customers, a white man, refused to pay his debt. Washington took the customer to court, where he found that he was unable to prosecute because he was not considered an American citizen. The injustice of this case was the final event that turned Washington's thoughts westward -- to land where he thought life would be filled with more opportunity.