

GEORGE BUSH

Pioneer Businessman of the State

In recording the wonderful business strides that the State of Washington has made since 1852, the historians acknowledge that George Bush, a man of our group, laid the nucleus which gave it commercial birth. The following is what is said by those who chronicled the events of the past:

“A bit of mystery surrounds Washington’s first captain of industry and its financier. His name was George Bush, then a man without a country; because the laws of the United States denied the rights of citizenship to members of our group. Bush met Michael T. Simmons, a white man, while they were working together at Ft. Vancouver. A friendship developed and they decided to visit the much talked of Puget Sound country. Bush had the money while Simmons was so illiterate that he could not even sign his own name, but had unusual talent. How Bush happened to be free and how he came in possession of the few hundred dollars are a matter of speculation. The most interesting part of the story is how he managed to safely transport this capital across the country. The coins were spread out in a single layer on the top of the bottom of his wagon box and over them he then laid another false bottom and thus arrived safely.

Water power alone furnished the only energy in those days for turning the wheels of industry for those early pioneers; so they took advantage of it and established a primitive mill which furnished material needed to construct the dwellings. It was not until 1853 that the echoes of the first steam whistle was heard against the timber-covered hills over which Seattle is now spread, and Bush and Simmons were the owners.

MR. GEORGE H. BLACKWELL

(Continued from page 87)

In business he was ever straightforward and reliable, enjoying the full confidence of those with whom he was associated, and manifested those qualities which stand for honorable and desirable citizenship. He passed out of the picture of life “as one who wraps the drapery of his couch about him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.” Surviving him is a wife and six children, who reside at 605 23rd Avenue, Seattle, Washington.