

It takes more than a good resume to get a government contract.

Freeman W. Brown (1832-1816+)

From "The History of Washington"ⁱ:

*F*REEMAN W. BROWN, a resident of Olympia and prominently connected with the surveys, of the Territory of Washington, was born in Washington County, Vermont, September 2, 1832, son of Leonard and Mary (Whitcomb) Brown, natives of that State, descended from the pioneer settlers of New England.

Mr. Brown was educated in the primary and high schools of Washington County, taking the advanced academic studies and paying particular attention to the higher mathematics in view of the profession of civil engineer. In the spring of 1850 he went to western New York and attended Randolph College, continuing his mathematical studies, and in the fall he engaged in engineering work in Iowa, performing work for the Government.

Deciding to visit the Pacific coast, he returned to New York city in the fall of 1851 and embarked by steamer, via the Panama route, landing at San Francisco in April, 1852. Following the tide of emigration, he then visited the mines on the American river, but after a few months, with no flattering success, he returned to San Francisco and embarked for Oregon to join his uncle, Lot Whitcomb, then residing at Milwaukee. While there he engaged with David P. Thompson in running the first standard parallel west from the Willamette meridian. Completing this work about January 1, 1854, he went to Shoal Water bay to look after the estate of his deceased brother, Joel L. Brown, a pioneer of 1849. After settling the affairs of the estate, Mr. Brown went to Cowlitz County and engaged with Henry Stearns in sectionizing several townships of that country and in running the fourth standard parallel west of the Willamette Meridian.

In the spring of 1855 Mr. Brown enlisted in Company B, Captain Gilmore Hayes of Second Battalion, commanded by Colonel B. F. Shaw. Their service began upon the Puyallup River and numbered the severe battles of Connell's prairie, White River, Green River, a continuous fight while crossing the Cascades, and the battles of Umatilla and Grand Ronde in eastern Oregon, besides a huge number of skirmishes. He continued in the service about twelve months.

Returning to Olympia, he engaged in Government work until 1857. Then he taught school three winters, first in Portland, afterward in Milwaukee and then in North Salem. The summer of 1859 he spent with an exploring and prospecting party through the Cascades, Blue and Rocky mountains. In the spring of 1860 he went to the mines of Salmon River and Mormon Basin, remaining till the spring of 1861.

Mr. Brown went to California in 1861 and enlisted in the First Regiment, California Volunteers, Colonel E. D. Baker. He was detailed to the Quartermaster Department and located at Benicia, and after six months was discharged, as his regiment had gone to the front. He then came to Oregon and enlisted in Company B, Oregon Volunteers, Captain C. P. Crandall, which was stationed at Steilacoom; was again detailed to the Quartermaster Department, and continued in that service until the close of the war, receiving his discharge in the fall of 1865.

In the spring of 1866 he took a contract under the Territorial government of Washington to make a topographical survey and map of the Skagit River and tributaries, the passes of the Cascade mountains, Lake Chelan, and the northern part of the territory east of the mountains. He made this survey, returning by the Wenatchee and Sauk Rivers to Puget Sound, and completed his work by fall. The following winter he taught school at French Prairie, Oregon, and in the spring of 1867 settled on his homestead, eight miles south of Olympia. He had married that spring, and to his home took his bride. Here his family resided until 1887, he meanwhile engaging in public and private surveys and during the intervals of service employing his time by grubbing stumps and ditching and draining marshes, thus reclaiming 130 acres of nature's wilds and making one of the finest farms in the county.

His more important work during this period was the sectionizing of five townships on the Kalama river in 1872, and surveying the preliminary line for the Northern Pacific Railroad between Olympia and the Cowlitz River. In 1875 he ran a preliminary railroad line from Olympia to the south side of Gray's Harbor, and about 1878 located the line for the Olympia and Gray's Harbor Railroad. During 1887 and 1888 he was engaged with the Pennsylvania Land Company and the Northern Pacific Railroad Company, in making geological and mineralogical surveys in the Cascade mountains. He has also made extensive topographical surveys of the Rocky mountains and the southern part of Alaska, passing through tribe after tribe of Indians who had never before looked upon the face of a white man. Mr. Brown by tact and diplomacy secured their friendship and retained their respect.

In 1887 he built his present cottage residence on land he had purchased in 1885, it being located on East Side street in East Olympia, and here he and his family have since resided. He sold his farm in 1889 for the handsome sum of \$8,500. Since coming to Olympia his time has been fully occupied in general survey work, and since the summer of 1892 he has been employed in tideland surveys for the State.

Mr. Brown's marriage in the spring of 1867 has already been alluded to. Mrs. Brown whose maiden name was Ellen E. Mathiot, is of French descent. Her father, John Mathiot, came to this coast in 1853. Following are the names of their four children: Frederick J., Edward M., Joel L. and Nellie P.

Mr. Brown is a member of the George H Thomas Post, G. A. R. He is a man of honesty and strict integrity, ever true to the responsibilities devolving upon him, and is highly respected by all with whom he is brought in contact, either socially or in a business connection.



ⁱ Snowden, Clinton A., **“History of Washington”**: the rise and progress of an American state/ by Clinton A. Snowden; advisory editors, Cornelius H. Hanford, Miles C. Moore, William D. Tyler, Stephen J. Chadwick: New York: Century History Co., 1909-1911.