

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

Augustus Bradley Cowles (1842-1908)

From: “An Illustrated History of the State of Washington,”ⁱ 1893.

A. B. Cowles, of Olympia, Washington, was born in Bellona, Yates County, New York, in December, 1842. His ancestry came from the north of England. John Cowles, the first representative of the family in America, emigrated to the New World about 1630, and settled in Connecticut. From him have descended men who attained prominence in the professions of law, medicine and the ministry.

The father of our subject, Zalmon J. Cowles, was born in born in Connecticut and learned the trade of cabinetmaker. He was married in Geneva, New York, to Miss Sarah Huber, a native of Pennsylvania and of German descent. They resided in Bellona till 1855, when they moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan. There Mr. Cowles purchased a sawmill and engaged in the manufacture of shingles and lumber. In 1857 he removed to Rochester, Minnesota, and established a furniture manufactory, which he continued to operate up to the time of his death in 1884.

A. B. Cowles was educated in the Grand Rapids high school and took a business course in Bryant & Stratton's commercial college at Chicago. With the breaking out of the war in 1861, He, with his father and brother, T. Z. Cowles, enlisted in the Second Minnesota Regiment, and all were assigned to the regimental band. The regiment served in the Western Department, under General George H. Thomas, their first battle being at Mill Springs, Kentucky. In April, 1862, after the battle of Pittsburg Landing, all regimental bands were mustered out by order of General Buell, and Mr. Cowles and sons returned home. The subject of our sketch was then appointed Deputy Postmaster at Rochester, and continued as such till the fall of 1863, when he went to Chattanooga and was in the Post Quartermaster's Department, being there during the battle of Mission Ridge. January 1, 1864, he went to Bowling Green, Kentucky, into an office of a similar department, and in December, 1864, he went to the field at Nashville, Tennessee to the headquarters of the First Division, Sixteenth Army Corps, General A. J. Smith in command. After the battle of Nashville the army went up the Tennessee River to Eastport, Mississippi, and in January, 1865, to New Orleans; thence to Mobile Bay, where he was stationed during the capture of Spanish Fort and Mobile. In April, 1865, the command moved to Selma, Alabama, and Mr. Cowles continued in the Commissary Department till January, 1866.

He was married at Selma, Alabama, May 5, 1866, to Miss Kate, daughter of James D. Monk, a prominent planter and wholesale grocer of that city. Mr. Cowles and wife returned to Rochester, Minnesota. He engaged in the furniture business with his father until December, 1869, when he went to Chicago and accepted the appointment of Deputy Recorder of Cook County. In June, 1873, he came to Olympia with Captain William McMicken, Surveyor General of Washington Territory, as chief clerk, and continued in that position up to the Cleveland administration, being with General McMicken, then serving under J. C. Breckinridge until 1887, when he resigned. He then filled the office of Deputy County Auditor till August, 1889, when he again entered the office of the Surveyor General under T. H. Cavanaugh, continuing with him and his successor, Amos F. Shaw, to the present date.

Mr. and Mrs. Cowles have four children: Annie, Harry D., Helen A. and J. Tod. Annie is the wife of Colonel Charles E. Claypool, a prominent attorney of Tacoma.

During the sessions of the last Territorial Legislature of Washington, Mr. Cowles was elected Clerk of the Council. He is a prominent Mason, is Past High Priest of Olympia Royal Arch Chapter, No. 7, and was a charter member of the Olympia Commandery, No. 7, Knights Templar, of which he was elected the first Recorder, and is still discharging the duties of that office. He is Past Post Commander of George H. Thomas Post, No. 5, G. A. R. In every sense he is a representative man of the city of Olympia.

From: "Obituary in the Washington Standard, February 14, 1908."

One of our older and most respected citizens, A. B. Cowles, died at his home on Washington Street, near Union, Sunday evening, after an illness of several years, of cancer of the throat. His sufferings the past year were so intense that he resigned his position as Chief Clerk in the Surveyor General's office, a place he had held since 1873, except for six years during the Cleveland administration. He is survived by a wife, his sons Harry and Todd, Mrs., C. E. Claypool and Miss Helen, all of whom were present at his death. Harry resides in Tacoma, and Todd and Mrs. Claypool at Dawson, Alaska.

Augustus B. Cowles was born in Bellona, Yates County, New York, in December, 1842. With his father and brother, he took an active part in the Civil War, from its commencement in 1861 to its finish in 1866. The funeral services were held Tuesday afternoon, at the family residence, Bishop Keator, of the Episcopal Church, officiating, assisted by the Masonic fraternity, of which deceased had been an honored member.

ⁱ Hines, H. K. (Harvey Kimball), 1828-1902, "**An Illustrated History of the State of Washington**": containing a history of the State of Washington from the earliest period of its discovery to the present time, together with glimpses of its auspicious future, illustrations and full page portraits of some of its eminent men and biographical mention of many of its pioneers and prominent citizens of today: Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co. 1893.