

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

Crawford, Peter W. (1822-1889)

From "History of Clarke County, Washington Territory, 1885":ⁱ

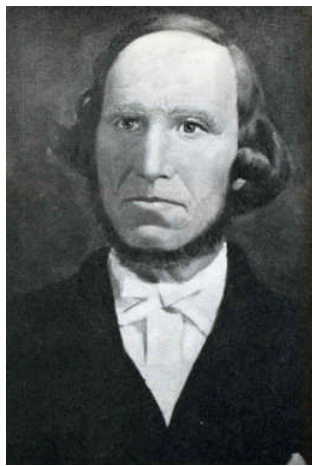


Figure 1. Peter W. Crawford from a portrait hanging on the wall of the Cowlitz County Museum.



Figure 2. Peter W. Crawford (from Rootsweb.com.)

The subject of this sketch was born on the banks of the river Tweed, in the parish of Sprouston, Roxburghshire, Scotland, in the latter part of the year 1822, but when young, removed to Edinburgh, where he received a good grounding in mathematics, under Professor Shairp, and the other branches of learning. He next proceeded to London for about three months and subsequently to Southampton, Hampshire, England where he completed his education. In 1843 he took passage from this place to Quebec in the ship Rainbow, Captain Arnold, commanding, but failing to obtain employment in that city, removed to Michigan to join his brother. Not finding him as he had anticipated he followed him to Indiana and after a short visit in that State took an appointment in Chicago. There he remained until the spring of 1847 when he started to cross the plains to Oregon, leaving Valparaiso, Indiana, in company with George Cline and family on the twelfth day of April of that year. He arrived at The Dalles after the usual adventures of the long and perilous journey, October 12, 1847, at Switzler's Landing, opposite Vancouver, November 26, 1847, and paid his first visit to the Hudson Bay Company's fort there on the following day. At this juncture Mr. Crawford was detailed to return to the Cascades to drive down the loose cattle, and having crossed these on the ferry of Thomas Carter to the mouth of the Sandy river, he traveled over the trail and through the woods to Portland, having bade farewell to his co-voyagers December 18, 1847.

Returning shortly afterwards to Vancouver he met James O. Rayner and E. West, the last of whom owned a skiff, and at his invitation, these two accompanied him in the boat in search of land whereon to locate. They proceeded to the Cowlitz River, that section having been recommended to Mr. Crawford by Rev. Dr. Marcus Whitman, December 12, 1847, and on the bank of that stream our subject and West located adjoining claims and duly recorded them in the office of Recorder McGruder in Oregon City, December 25, 1847. Mr. Crawford now made his home on Sauvie's Island with

James Logie, and from there came, at the invitation of Henry Williamson, and made the first survey for a town site at Vancouver, the whole proceedings of which are fully described on a previous page of this work. During the remainder of the summer of 1848 he traveled extensively through the Willamette valley with ox-teams, and that fall and the early spring of 1849 assisted in the management of the first bakery in Portland, his associate being a



Figure 3. Bronze bust of Peter W. Crawford in the Cowlitz County Museum.

London baker named Williams, while their principal manufacture was "sea-biscuit" for sale at the mines.

February 26, 1849, he came to Vancouver, obtained supplies from the store of the Hudson Bay Company, took passage in the ship Undine for California, anchored seventeen days in Baker's Bay, finally crossed the bar and made the passage thence to the Golden Gate in seventy-two hours. On arrival at San Francisco Mr. Crawford proceeded to the southern mines and engaged in mining operations till September 6, 1849, and on the twelfth, sailed in the Toulon, Richard Hoyt, Master, for the Columbia river, arriving, after a voyage of thirty-four days.

He now came to his claim on the Cowlitz, October, 1849, and resided there continuously until 1881 when he removed his faintly to Vancouver. Mr. Crawford made final and permanent settlement on his Cowlitz claim in the spring of 1850, planting an orchard of one hundred apple trees and making improvements generally. He erected a dwelling which

was destroyed by fire in 1851 and subsequently built another through the middle of which the line of the Northern Pacific Railroad was run. In 1850 he was engaged in laying out the town of Milwaukee, additions to Oregon City, platting the town of Milton, St. Helens, Monticello, and a town for Captain Drew at the Lower Cascades. Besides these he laid out all of the old Donation Claims on Sauvie's Island, and was employed by Surveyor General Gardiner of Oregon to make final survey of the same in the fall of 1854 and winter of 1855. Mr. Crawford was elected the first County Surveyor for Cowlitz county, and besides serving as Justice of the Peace and other subordinate offices, has held the position of United States Deputy Surveyor. In 1883 he was elected Surveyor of the city of Vancouver, and in 1884, County Surveyor of Clarke county. Married July 30, 1850, Zillah, daughter of the late Hon. Ira Patterson, and has a surviving family of four children, viz: William P., Martha Rosabelle, Edward G. and Orion J.

ⁱⁱ Alley, B. F. and Munro-Fraser, J. P.: "History of Clarke County, Washington Territory: compiled from the most authentic sources; also biographical sketches of its pioneers and prominent citizens." Portland, OR.: Washington Publishing Co., 1885.