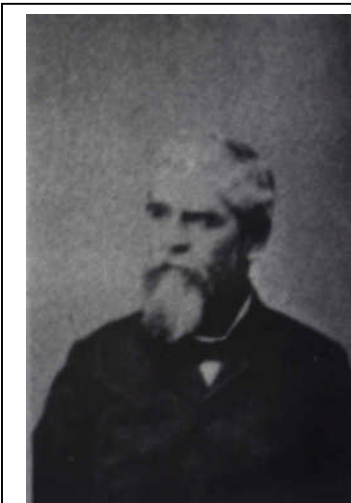


*It takes more than a good resume to get a government contract.*

## Sewall Truax (1830-1894)

**From: "Historic Sketches of Walla Walla, Whitman, Columbia and Garfield Counties, Washington Territory; and Umatilla County, Oregon"<sup>i</sup> 1882.**

*Sewall Truax was born in Missisquoi county, Canada, April 23, 1830. His parents were citizens of the United States, and have resided in Franklin County, Vermont, since 1831. He was educated at Norwich University, in Vermont, in the profession of civil engineer. At the age of twenty-one he started upon his rambles in the West, stopping a short time in Buffalo and Cleveland, and then spent the summer of 1852 in the survey of a railroad line from Marquette, Michigan, on the shore of Lake Superior to an iron mine twenty-five miles distant in the wilderness. In the fall he went to Dubuque, Iowa, and entered the law office of Mr. Bissell, since Governor of that State. Two weeks convinced him that he would make a better engineer than lawyer, and he resumed his old profession.*



**Figure 1. Sewall Truax from photos of 1883 Washington Territorial Senate,**

*In the spring of 1853, on his return from a surveying trip along the Missouri, between Big and Little Sioux rivers, he encountered a large number of emigrants at Council Bluffs, caught the Oregon fever, and the next day, May 4, 1853 was on his way to Oregon. He arrived at his destination in August. Until 1861 he was U. S. Deputy Surveyor in Southern Oregon, had a little experience with Indians in Rogue River valley in 1855-6, and in 1861 entered the United States volunteer service as Captain of Company D, First Oregon cavalry, of which regiment he subsequently became Major. In 1862 his regiment was ordered to Walla Walla and for a time in 1863*

*Major Truax was in command of that fort, but the greater portion of 1863-4 was in command at Fort Lapwai, Idaho Territory. For several years after the close of the war he was engaged in mercantile business at Lapwai.*

*In 1870 he returned to Walla Walla, which he has since made his residence, most of the time engaged in his profession of engineering. For two years he devoted his time and means to the construction of the W. W. & C. R. railroad from Wallula to Walla Walla, being the first Vice President and Superintendent of construction. In 1877 he was one of the first to locate upon the high bluffs of Snake River, which owes its early and successful development largely to that fact, and to the grain chute which he invented, for transporting the grain from the top of the bluffs to the river. Major Truax was married February 13, 1861, to Sarah E. Chandler, of Missisquoi County, Canada, born April 11, 1839. Their children are: Mary P., born June 3, 1862, married to B. D. Crocker in July, 1880, (Little son, Porter Truax Crocker, born September 27, 1881); Harmon C., born in 1864, died February 27, 1867; Edward Holden, born March 25, 1866; Elenor Hibbard, born January 12, 1868; Henry Chandler, born in 1870; Harlow Elias, born in 1874; Sewell, Jr., born in February, 1876.*




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<sup>i</sup> Gilbert, Frank T. "**Historic Sketches of Walla Walla, Whitman, Columbia and Garfield Counties, Washington Territory; and Umatilla County, Oregon.**" Portland, OR: Print & Lithographing House of A. G. Walling, 1882.