

DROPPING THE "H" FROM PORT TOWNSEND

The Seattle Chamber of Commerce on August 13, 1932, conducted one of their enjoyable excursions to the beautiful home of Seattle's former mayor, Robert Moran at Rosario, San Juan County. Among the passengers was Mr. Worrall Wilson, President of the Seattle Trust Company. During conversations enroute it was mentioned that Americans had dropped the "h" out of the name of the well known city of Port Townsend.

Mr. Wilson instantly recalled an episode in his recent experience at the thirty-fifth reunion of his class at Yale. One of his classmates lives in New Haven and retains the "h" in his family name—Henry H. Townshend. Over the mantel in his interesting home is a portrait of Marquis Townshend of Raynham, painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds. The Marquis was an ancestor but Mr. Wilson added that his classmate also had some manuscript material about an early-date voyage to Port Townsend by his father, Captain Charles Hervey Townshend. Reference to the present *Who's Who in America* shows that Townsend is not a rare family name but it is likely that Captain Townshend did not suspect that the Port had been named for his distinguished ancestor.

It was therefore an interesting development to convince the Yale graduate, Class of 1897, that he had a real family tie in the geography of the State of Washington. The correspondence was cordial and useful for the annals of our history. Mr. Townshend had that Sir Joshua Reynolds portrait photographed by the Gallery of Fine Arts, Yale University, and sent a print for comparison with a later portrait of the Marquis by the same artist, reproduced in my *Vancouver's Discovery of Puget Sound* (1907), page 94.

At least twenty-seven years had passed between the two paintings. The date of the one in Mr. Townshend's New Haven home is established by the catalogue of pictures at Raynham Hall published by a Mr. Durham, who had married Lady Audrey Townshend. In that catalogue is the entry: "George, first Marquis, painted in 1759 by Sir Joshua Reynolds, 35½x27. He has a red coat and a steel cuirass, with lace cuffs and a white collar." The use of the title Marquis in that description is an error. He did not succeed to his father's title of Viscount Townshend until March 12, 1864, and the date of the title of Marquis Townshend of Raynham was October 31, 1786.

The reason for the first portrait is easily found. George Townshend was a Brigadier-General at the conquest of Quebec. When General Wolfe was the national hero and Brigadier-General Townshend was disabled in the same action and the command of the troops fell to Townshend who finished the battle. Always a vain man, he took abundant credit to himself for that battle, but General Wolfe was the national hero and Brigadier-General Townshend sought to make more secure his own fame by having his portrait painted by the great artist.

His vanity was a big enough handicap but he also possessed considerable skill as a cartoonist which he used politically, breeding enemies. They became vocal and there also appeared a bitter pamphlet entitled *Art of Political Lying*. Nevertheless, he continued his military service, becoming a Major-General in 1763. He was appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland on August 12, 1767. Five years of stormy experiences caused Historian Lecky to write: "Lord Townshend is one of the very small number of Irish viceroys who have been personally disliked, . . . his abilities were superior to those of many of his predecessors and successors; but he was utterly destitute of tact and judgment." He was recalled in 1772. Ten years later he was promoted to the rank of General and in 1786 the dignified title of Marquis was conferred upon him after which Sir Joshua Reynolds painted the second portrait.

These ranks and titles impressed Captain George Vancouver as he sailed away from England in 1791 on his great voyage of discovery and exploration. He named Port Discovery after one of his two vessels and anchored there while he explored that vicinity in small-boat parties. On May 8, 1792, he found a large bay and wrote in his journal: "To this port I gave the name of Port Townshend, in honor of the noble Marquis of that name."

That was definitely the christening of the interesting geographical feature where the Strait of Juan de Fuca contacts Admiralty Inlet, a part of Puget Sound. The "h" was dropped from the name by the United States (or Wilkes) Exploring Expedition in 1841. Six years later, an Englishman, Captain Henry Kellett, restored the "h" while preparing his map which became known as British Admiralty Chart No. 1911. The first settlers, A. A. Plummer, Charles C. Bachelder, L. B. Hastings and W. F. Pettygrove, and their families, were Americans. They landed there in 1851 and promptly named their settlement Port Townsend "after the bay on which it is situated." That is the way in which the "h" was

permanently dropped by the settlers and all subsequent American writers and map-makers.

In his correspondence Mr. Henry H. Townshend comments on the changed spelling as follows: "You will note that we use the 'h.' This is because father insisted it was correct. None of the rest of the family ever put it in but he said he would not go on spelling it wrong. If the others wanted to, they could."

He speaks of his father's and his own interest in the subject: "We have for two generations kept in rather close touch with the English Townshends. My father, after he gave up going to sea, was much interested in genealogy of the family and published a book on it. He spent much time in England on the family estate at Raynham, Norfolk, and because of this we were able to get the picture I have, directly through the family."

Mr. Henry H. Townshend was surprised to learn that Port Townsend was really named for his ancestor instead of for one of Captain Vancouver's crew. His father probably shared that opinion and his unhappy experiences at Port Townsend dissuaded him from searching out the origin of its name.

Those unhappy experiences are deemed to comprise about the only items of value in the manuscript material referred to above. Captain Charles Hervey Townshend, in the ship *Germania*, belonging to William Whitlock & Sons of New York, took a cargo of coal to San Francisco in 1864. Finding it impossible to secure a return cargo or one for China, it was decided that he carry a load of lumber from Puget Sound to London. With this in view he sailed from San Francisco to Port Ludlow near Port Townsend.

Soon after his arrival at the sawmill town his entire crew deserted, presumably to seek gold in the British Columbia mines. The manuscripts consist of two letters telling about his troubles. He was left alone on the ship and could not leave her. To get the load aboard he had to pay three dollars a day each to Indians and such few white men as would work. The son says his father in those letters "speaks of Port Ludlow and Port Townsend as being beautiful ports, but that the people, who were mostly Yankees, the worst to deal with he had ever met. That all they cared for was money, and that their word could not be trusted. He says that a Yankee outside of his country is a very mean creature. He speaks of the ports being rum hells, and that this was the cause of all his troubles. He says he persuaded a number of other captains there to join with him in taking a temperance pledge for six months. He finally got a crew of eight men and four greenhorns at Van-

couver [Island], and got to London with them and his cargo in about one hundred and eighty days.”

The present citizens of Ports Ludlow and Townsend will not relish that Captain's report of 1864, but it should be frankly admitted that the old settlers told many whiskey stories about the pioneer days of the lumber business.

EDMOND S. MEANY.