

CLARENCE BOOTH BAGLEY

He was recognized as an outstanding pioneer citizen of the Pacific Northwest, as one who had given many years to the writing and publishing of local history; and, while serving for thirty years as Secretary of the Seattle Board of Public Works, was so loved by his associates that he became generally known as "Pop" Bagley.

The whole community paused in sorrow when it was announced that he had died on Friday, February 26, 1932. His going was characteristic. The fatal pneumonia had developed from a cold contracted on a journey for history—a pilgrimage to Chief Seattle's grave with a large group of Boy Scouts. Mr. Rolland H. Denny was also with that party and the Boy Scouts kept us three pioneers busy all the way home writing autographs for their records. Mr. Bagley beamed a cordial farewell, saying: "I am delighted to have pleased so many boys and to have helped start them in a love of history."

He was born in Troy Grove, Illinois, on November 30, 1843. When he was only nine years old, 1852, he had crossed the plains with his father and mother and settled in Salem, Oregon. In 1860, the family reached Seattle. He frequently joked about that event as follows:

"Lots of men have run out of Seattle, but I'll bet I was the first and only one to run into town. It was a fifteen-day run, too, all the way from Salem, Oregon, holding onto the buggy, the first vehicle to reach Seattle on its own wheels."

The father, Rev. Daniel Bagley, who was one of the passengers in that buggy, soon became a leader in the community. Among other things, he became President of the Board of Commissioners of the new Territorial University of Washington. With remarkable industry he secured the land, erected the buildings and began instruction work. Clarence helped to clear the land, became one of the first students and for a time taught some of the classes. In later years he was often hailed at large alumni meetings as being one of the beginners of both student body and faculty. A great building was named in honor of the father.

Newspaper work and official duties caused Mr. Bagley to live for some years in Olympia, but the greater portion of his long life was spent in Seattle. Through practically all of those years he was a writer. At first all of his articles appeared in newspapers. When

historical quarterlies and other magazines made their appearance, he was a contributor invariably welcomed by the editors. Books were the latest vehicles for his writings.

One of the first and most durable of this last named class was his chapter, "In the Beginning," forming the concluding portion of Ezra Meeker's *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget and Tragedy of Leschi*, published in 1905. In this chapter, Mr. Bagley included portions of the unpublished diary of Dr. William Fraser Tolmie. That has been used by many historians since.

In 1911, he became the publisher of William I. Marshall's *Acquisition of Oregon* in two volumes. Mr. Marshall had devoted practically a lifetime to the accumulation of materials and had copyrighted his manuscript in 1905. After his death, the widow found it impossible to publish the manuscript. Mr. Bagley then stepped in. He wrote a brief "Foreword" and brought the work out through Lowman and Hanford Company of Seattle. It is a very important work on the famous Whitman controversy.

Later there were published Mr. Bagley's *History of Seattle*, three volumes in 1916 and his *History of King County*, three Volumes in 1929. Many of his more important magazine articles are well worth saving and some of them are likely to be gathered into permanent book form by members of his family who have inherited his manuscripts and his latest collection of Pacific Northwest Americana.

Those having the responsibility of editing and publishing the *Washington Historical Quarterly* have peculiar reasons for sorrow over the passing of Mr. Bagley. The first issue appeared in October, 1906. In it was published the officers and trustees of the Washington University State Historical Society as follows: Clarence B. Bagley, President; Judge John P. Hoyt, Vice-President; Judge Roger S. Greene, Treasurer; Professor Edmond S. Meany, Secretary; Judge Cornelius H. Hanford, Judge Thomas Burke and Samuel Hill. Through the quarter of a century that followed the list continued in diminishing form as death claimed one after another. The issue for January, 1932, found the list consisting of only the original President and Secretary. Now the President has gone and the Secretary has decided to omit the customary list rather than to flaunt the evidence that he remains the sole survivor of those associates who established a worth while enterprise.

EDMOND S. MEANY