

HENRY C. PORTER. Closely allied with the pioneer touch that has shaped the current of events in Oregon is Henry C. Porter, whose father gave no little of a worthy life to the development of the natural resources of this great state, linking with these the influences of a citizenship of intelligence and high integrity. The family traces its lineage back to the state of Virginia the grandfather, David Porter, having been born in that state March 8, 1780, and emigrating from there to Tennessee. He was married at the time of his emigration from his native state, and was accompanied upon the trip by his wife and three children, Mary Rebecca, Alexander and Robert. In 1812 he took his family into Missouri, locating at Licking, having passed the preceding three years in Kennedy Fort, to which he had been driven by the depredations of the Indians.

William Porter, the father of Henry C. was born in Missouri. December 14, 1812, one of a family of ten children. He passed the years of childhood on the paternal farm. Feeling that he could not be satisfied with the education obtainable in the district schools of his native state he left home at the age of eighteen years, and going to Jacksonville, Ill., entered the college at that place, where he remained four years. His first intention had been to study medicine, but abandoning the idea he entered upon the more congenial life of teaching, the scene of his early labors being Pike county, Ill., where he remained until 1846, a decade of his life being passed among these surroundings. In 1840 he married Miss Sarah Coffey, a native of Pike county, and with a wife no less courageous than himself, he ventured in the spring of 1848 to set out on the journey with the great northwest for its termination. After six months of travel with ox-teams Oregon was reached by the emigrants. In the spring of 1849 they left Aumsville, Marion county, where they had passed the preceding winter, and Mr. Porter took up a donation claim of six hundred and forty acres located two and one-half miles southeast of Aumsville. Upon this farm a little log cabin was erected to shelter the pioneer family, and nothing daunted by the years of toil and hardships which he knew must lie between this humble beginning and the success which he hoped to win, he gave the strength of his manhood to the task of cultivating the broad acres. And not only in his personal plans has Mr. Porter met with success, but in the public affairs of his adopted state he was ever found ready to lend his best efforts toward any movement that had for its end the upbuilding of the common welfare, being actively interested in the early days of his community in the laying out of roads and the organization of schools, serving as teacher in the latter for many years. In the first legislative body of Oregon, the date of assembling being July, 1849, 't was the distinction of Mr. Porter to serve as chief clerk, later being elected to the state legislature, where he remained one term. For four years he served as assessor of Marion county, and as county commissioner for one term. His political offices were held through the influences of the Republican party, of which he was a stanch adherent. Religiously, Mr. Porter was a member of the Christian Church. His death, which occurred March 30, 1899, was a source of regret to the entire community.

Mr. Porter had been twice married, his first wife having died of mountain fever soon after their arrival in Oregon. In 1849 he married her sister, Martha Coffey. The children of the first marriage are as follows : William G., who served three years in Company B, of the First Oregon Cavalry, the first stationed on the frontier, and whose death occurred in January, 1880, on his farm, one and one-half miles east of Turner; Nancy E., the wife of C. K. Reed, now located on the old homestead ; John H., a farmer at the state penitentiary ; and Sydney R., of Kent, Sherman county. Three children were born of the second union, of whom Henry C. is the subject of this sketch ; Sarah L died in 1892; and Mary J. is the wife of Henry C. Von Behren, living near Aumsville. Mrs. Martha C Porter died May 17, 1903, in her ninetieth year.

Upon the donation claim linked to the Porter name through long years of association Henry C. Porter was born November 24, 1850, and there he grew to manhood, receiving his early education in the district school in the vicinity of his home. Upon attaining manhood he married Miss Minnie F. Welch, a

native of Ontario, Canada, born in 1858, who came to Oregon with her grandfather, J. T. Welch, in 1869. In 1880 Mr. Porter built the house which he now occupies, part of his farm being formerly owned by T. C. Coffey, who took up a donation claim in 1852. The father of the Coffey family was born in North Carolina, in 1790, and with his family of eight children came to Oregon at the same time that Mr. Porter's father made the trip, and took up land in this vicinity. Mr. Porter now owns three hundred and twenty acres, upon which he is engaged in general farming and stock-raising, being principally interested in Hereford cattle. The location is two miles from Aumsville. Mr. and Mrs. Porter have one child.