

# Mother of Oregon

Tabitha Moffat Brown was born May 1, 1780 in Brimfield, Massachusetts. She was married to Reverend Clark Brown on December 1, 1799. They had 3 boys and 1 girl. They raised there family in Charles County, Maryland, soon after that Reverend died. Then the family moved to Missouri to follow her brother-in-law Captain John Brown, a sea captain. She then started teaching to support her family.

In 1843, her son Orus went to Oregon, then two years later he came back to retrieve his family, his sisters family and his elderly mom and uncle. The trip began April 1846, to Oregon. All of the family except Orus chose to take the Applegate trail. They were told it was a shortcut. The guide left later after being paid, this added to the journey and delayed the arrival at Willamette Valley. As winter set in, the family had still not reached the valley. They sent her daughters husband Mr. Pringal to seek help from the settlers of the valley. On his way to Oregon City, he ran into Orus who was on his way to the village with supplies. The two then returned and brought the rest of the family to the settlements on December 25, 1846.

Once in Oregon, she traveled between Oregon City and her daughter's home in Salem, and eventually settled in Forest Grove. In Oregon, her first job was making gloves to sell. Later she helped found an orphanage with Harvey L. Clark. Then with Clark and Rev. Gorge H. Atkinson they founded the Tualatin academy that would grow to become Pacific University Forest Grove.

Tabitha Brown died in Salem living with her daughter. She is buried at the Pioneer cemetery. There is a tree dedicated in her memory at Champoeg State Park. She was honored by the 1987 legislature as Mother of Oregon.

Trenedee Wilcox