

CAPTAIN JONATHAN CARVER.

Our Frontispiece portrait of Carver is from the 3rd edition of his *Travels*, published in 1781 by John Coakley Lettson, who purchased that edition, and the plates.

Jonathan Carver was born in 1732, at Stillwater, in the province of Connecticut. He was a grandson of William Joseph Carver, of Wigan, in Lancashire, England. At the age of 18, he purchased an Ensigncy in Connecticut, obtaining afterward the command of a company. Under General Webb, he took part in the battle of Fort William Henry, where General Montcalm of the French and Indian army was victorious. In 1758 he served as second lieutenant of Captain Hawks' company, commanded by Colonel Oliver Partridge, in the invasion of Canada, and in 1760, he was made Captain of a company in Colonel Saltonstall's regiment. In 1762 he commanded a company of infantry in Colonel Saltonstall's regiment. In all of these positions he acquitted himself admirably, both as concerns integrity and courage. The year after accepting his commission under Colonel Saltonstall, came the Peace of Versailles, 1763, when Carver retired from the army. But he was not content to remain in the lines of civil industry, and struck out into the forests of the great American West and Northwest, as an explorer.

Of rounded experience and good education, he was excellently qualified for descriptive writing, his narratives being both interesting and instructive. Lake Pepin and its vicinity took much of his time, and "Carver's Travels" concern much of that part of America, as regards quadrupeds, birds, fish, descriptions of the natives, vegetation and insects. The portion reproduced in the accompanying Bulletin is that which concerns trees, shrubs, roots, herbs and flowers.

In addition to the work now known as "Carver's Travels," Carver issued a pamphlet of fifty-four pages, on the subject of tobacco, accompanying same by two engravings of the plant, and an account of its cultivation on the American continent. (See Dr. Lettson's edition of Carver's Travels.)

Captain Carver was rather above the middle stature, muscular in build, and of a florid complexion. He was sociable and affable with friends, but reserved when among strangers. In addition to his scientific descriptions, he touched the poetic, Dr. Lettson stating that his verses "afford proofs of his lively imagination, and the harmony of his versification."

Notwithstanding the fact that Carver was very religious, and was considered to be a very moral and upright man, he deserted his American wife and children, and went to England, where he again married, thus casting a blot upon his record.

After reaching England, 1769, and publishing his Travels, he became distressed in mind, body, and finances, and in 1779, in order to exist, he served as clerk in a lottery office. His vitality and strength were much reduced by depression of mind and body, as well as by the inroads of poverty, and on the 31st day of January, 1780, in the 48th year of his age, he died and was interred in Holywell-Mount burying ground, England.

A detailed biography of Carver may be found in the Dictionary of National Biography, by Leslie Stephens. Our brief notice is condensed, mostly, from Dr. Lettsom's Introduction to the 3rd Edition of the work. In this connection it may be stated that Dr. Lettsom's interest in Carver led him in the dark times of Carver's later life to devote both care and money in Carver's behalf, and to contribute much to the support of his English family, giving them the entire returns from the subscriptions to the third edition of the work, for which he, (Lettsom), had paid all expenses.

J. U. L.