



PASS IN REVIEW

“Shedding Light On Idaho’s Military History”

3rd Quarter

September 2004

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND ELECTIONS

The Board has scheduled the annual membership meeting for **13 October**. This year we are going to do something different. We are combining the summer picnic with our membership meeting and will be hosting a **Tail Gate party in the Museum parking lot!**

The menu will be **BBQ Pork Ribs**. Serving time will be 6:00 pm. Everybody is welcome to bring a side dish or dessert. **We need to know how many of you will be able to attend** so we can plan accordingly. Please **RSVP** via e-mail to Gayle at gayle.alvarez@idbois.ang.af.mil or call the Museum at 422-4841 **by 8 October**.

The Election - At this meeting, elections will be held for three members of the Board of Directors to serve a three-year term.

Two members of the Board will be seeking re-election; they are **Ken Swanson** and **Gayle Alvarez**. There is an opening for an additional Board member. If you are interested, please contact a member of the Board.

In addition, the nomination process will be open and nominations will be accepted at the meeting.

If you are interested in helping lead a growing, dynamic organization and taking an active roll in directly supporting the preservation of Idaho Military History for future generations, then we would like to hear from you.

Please mark your calendar and join us on **13 October at 6:00 PM.** ☆

CURATOR’S CORNER

Since our busy month of May, things have been a little quieter at the Museum but the volunteer staff has been very busy with lots going on.

We had the first ever Vietnam and Cold War open house on 17 July with some great participation and tabletop displays of period gear, uniforms and weapons. Since that time, we’ve been busy getting artifacts cataloged and working with school groups.



Part of the Special Forces tabletop display on 17 July

The volunteers have been busy with a variety of projects, here is a partial list: Shelving and storage - **BMC West** donated wood to build shelving in our artifact storage room. **Gary Donnelly** and **Steve Bonde** are doing the carpentry. This will allow us to stack our textile boxes and better utilize storage space here in the Museum. The goal ultimately is better preservation of artifacts and this is a great start. Thanks

to Steve and Gary for their hard work! New volunteers - Please join me in welcoming **Chris Griswold** and **Don McNarie** to our staff. Chris will be working with artifacts and Don is our newest docent.

Additionally, **Steve Bonde**, **Bill Miller** and I have been working on some grant applications for our operations budget. We’re looking at purchasing supplies for artifact preservation. The Museum has a lot of wonderful artifacts in its collection and we need to take the steps to make sure they last for future generations.

Be sure to check out our upcoming events. We’ve got a Veteran’s Day Open House planned as well as a Pearl Harbor Open House.

A **special thank you** also to the following organizations for their donations to the Museum’s operations:

- BMC West** - lumber for shelving.
- Albertson’s Stores** (Broadway, Vista, Overland/Hillcrest, Overland and Five Mile) - gift certificates for volunteer support (soda, water, and snacks).
- Fleet Reserve Association Branch 382** - \$1200 donation.
- United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., Boise Base** - \$100 donation for artifact collections. - *Gary Keith*

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VOLUNTEER(S) OF THE QUARTER

This time we are doing something a little different. There are **two volunteers** this quarter since both of the individuals have gone *above and beyond* here at the Museum this past year. They both deserve a tremendous amount of recognition and appreciation for their contributions to the Museum. I'm naming them in the order they began volunteering.

**Please meet Heath Robison**

Heath Robison is originally from eastern Idaho but now lives in Boise with his wife. A skilled photographer, Heath combines that hobby with graphics arts. Completely self-taught, you would think Heath has a degree in graphic design!

Heath has been volunteering at the Museum for a year now and has brought a wealth of experience and abilities along with his interest in the military and graphic arts. You can see Heath's handiwork all around the Museum. Heath did the map and images of decorations for the Korean War exhibit as well as some of the photos. His map and scoreboard for the *USS Boise* CL-47 exhibit stand out as a major part of the Navy exhibit area.

Since then, Heath has done a large map of Vietnam with many of the units represented in their areas of operations, a 'mini wall' with the names of Idahoans killed in action during the Vietnam War and lots of other graphics. His creativity and interest in design have made the Museum much more interactive and provide a strong method of interpretation.

In addition to his graphic design, Heath has been docenting too. In particular, Heath has been present for most if not all of our school groups visits and has done some interpretive living history,

which has added greatly to the students' Museum experience.

What Heath has done has made the Idaho Military History Museum even more professional in its presentation and appearance. If you have not seen any of his work, it is more than worth the trip to the Museum. We are most fortunate to have him volunteering here.

**Please meet Jim Doering**

Jim Doering retired from the US Navy as a Senior Chief Petty Officer after having spent time in submarines, surface vessels and two years in the Idaho National Guard's 116th Engineers. He moved to Boise a few years ago and runs a business with his wife, J & J Creations. For those of you who have seen the new volunteer nametags, it was Jim who generously provided these to us at cost. He donated a substantial amount of items from his service in the Navy, several of which are on exhibit and have provided a good means of interpretation of that service.

Jim originally signed up to be a docent for one day a week. That has turned into much more. He assisted greatly with planning and execution of the *USS Boise* reunion as well as the US Navy exhibits here in the Museum. Jim's sense of professionalism and attention to detail combined with his motivation to see the Museum improve has led to a better Museum overall. Jim has done various improvements from painting windows to block sunlight to building a small stage for use here in the Museum.

Please join me in thanking both of these outstanding volunteers. Their countless hours and hard work have made the Idaho Military History Museum a better Museum for our community. - *Gary Keith*

Thank you Heath and Jim, all your efforts have definitely enhanced the Museum and its exhibits. You are our Volunteers of the Quarter!

☆☆☆☆

NEW MEMBERS**Special Welcome to:**

- ★ **Robert D. Barclay**
 - ★ **Ladies Auxiliary Fleet Reserve (Gold Membership!)**
 - ★ **Alice Hayes**
 - ★ **Earl Hayes**
 - ★ **Bill Heath**
 - ★ **Jerre Kauffman (Welcome Back!)**
 - ★ **Denine V. (Moyer) Miller**
 - ★ **Eva-Marie Wolf**
- ☆☆☆☆

NEW VOLUNTEERS**Please give a warm welcome to:**

- Dean Jackson
 - Jack Enterkine
 - Chris Griswold
 - Don McNarie
- ☆☆☆☆

HOW DO YOU LIKE YOUR NEWSLETTERS?

Many of you have requested your newsletter be delivered electronically instead of through the mail. This will definitely get the newsletter to you faster than before and it will also allow you to receive it in color. (and yes, it will save the Society postage costs too.)

The newsletter will be in .pdf format. This reduces the size of the document by at least 2/3. If you do not have the Adobe Acrobat Reader, you can download it quickly and easily at <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>. The viewer is free and easy to install. There is also a link to it on the Museum webpage.

If you would prefer to have your newsletter e-mailed to you, please contact **Gayle** at gayle.alvarez@idbois.ang.af.mil and she will sign you up.

All e-mail addresses and other membership information is kept confidential, we do not provide or sell it to other organizations or individuals. ★

RECENT DONATIONS

Angie Okamoto - At our Vietnam Open House, Angie donated two of her highly prized color prints of Idaho Air National Guard Aircraft. One of a C-130 and the other of an A-10. We are working with Angie to have copies available for purchase through the gift shop.



Pictured left to right, Gary Keith, Bill Miller, Angie Okamoto, Walt Okamoto

Ken Gustafson - Photo of Company 781-43, Regiment 4, Battalion 14, US Naval Training Station, Farragut, Idaho.

Charles P. McDowell, Foxfall Medals - Army Silver Star Awards for WWII, 3 volumes.

BMC West - Lumber for shelving in our artifact storage room.

Richard R. Plunkett - Crew photo of USS Boise CL 47 (1943-1945)



Col Bill Miller - A new US Flag to replace our old one which was *really, really shoddy!*

COL Donald McGough - a copy of our elusive 4th Quarter 1997 newsletter.

Thank you everybody, it is through donations such as yours that our collections can grow and our exhibits expand. ★

ENDOWMENT UPDATE



Well, we finally did it! We broke through the seemingly impenetrable barrier!

Our Endowment balance is now **\$30,148.85**. We are still a long way from our goal of \$500,000 but this is a milestone to say the least!

Recent Endowment Donors include:

ING Retiree Fund

Stan Herzinger

(In memory of Charles L. Hartgrave)

Leroy & Susan Hartgrave

(In memory of Charles L. Hartgrave)

Ron Galloway

(In memory of Elsie Inez Wilson)

Don't forget, you can also make a credit card donation on *on-line*. Look for this link on the Museum's webpage:



The plan is to create a financial base which will ensure the preservation of Idaho's military heritage for future generations.

Thank you for supporting The Idaho Military History Museum. ★

UPCOMING EVENTS

Here are some of the events we currently have scheduled; more details will be posted on the webpage as invitations are confirmed and more information becomes available.

13 October - Annual Membership Meeting. See page 1 for all the details.

11 November - Larry Gebert from Channel 7 will be doing his morning show LIVE at the Museum! Be sure and tune in!

13 November - Veterans Day Open House. 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Please join us as we celebrate and honor Veterans.

4 December - Pearl Harbor Open House. 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Pearl Harbor survivors will be joining us for

part of the day! Please join us as we pay tribute to those who were there on that *Day of Infamy*.

8-11 September 2005 - The Annual Reunion for the 148th FA WWII Veterans will be held in Boise, Idaho. Our own Bill Heath will be one of the chairmen and the **Museum will be part of the event**. To learn more, contact Bill at wahboi@rmci.net. ★

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL REMINDER

As a reminder, last October at the Annual meeting, the membership voted to **change the membership renewal date FOR EVERYBODY to January**. Don't remember when your membership is due? Check the date on your newsletters mailing label, it will tell you.

In addition, as the year begins drawing to a close, many people contemplate their charitable contributions for the year.

The Idaho Military Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) organization and donations are tax deductible. Please remember the Museum as you plan your donations for the year.

Annual renewals are:

- General Membership:** \$25
- Senior (60+):** \$15
- Associate (Spouse):** \$10
- Student:** \$10

Of course if you'd like to become a Lifetime Member and forgo the annual reminder, **Lifetime Membership is \$375**. Payment may be spread out over a one-year period.

Thank you for your support of the Museum. There a number of programs and events ongoing at the Museum and your membership dollars help support these programs.

Don't forget, the Museum is a great place to bring your visiting houseguests too! ★

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

“**Bob Auth** is our resident famous artist! He was born in Bloomington, Ill., in 1926. At 17, he left school to join the USN where he served aboard destroyers during WWII. He was awarded 3 medals, a combat action award and a cold war service award. After receiving an honorable discharge, Bob continued on with his education. He attended Illinois State Normal University from 1949-51 and earned his BA from Illinois Wesleyan Univ. in 1953, MS from Washington State Univ. in 1963.

He also attended print making and paper making from Atelier Royce in Santa Monica, Calif., in 1977 and also the Univ. of Idaho in Moscow 1977. From 1986-89 Bob attended four international Calligraphy conferences at four different American Universities. He was an art teacher at Burley HS 1960-61, East Jr. High 1961-67 and Boise High 1967-81. He was also a Supervisor of Art in the Boise school system from 1981-87. He has tons of awards and honors that would fill this entire newsletter but one of the most prestigious is having several art pieces in the Smithsonian Postal Museum Exhibit.

He has numerous hobbies including shooting black powder. He's a member of the Ee-Da-How long rifle club in Boise, collects stamps, continues his artwork and calligraphy and most of all, enjoys his three lovely daughters, Chris, Connie and Cindy who also have places in and near YP. Bob has been coming to Yellow Pine since the 1960's, and now has a beautiful home, on the river, just NE of town. He has many wonderful stories about his life's adventures and has done the artwork on the YP harmonica flyers for the past several years. A man of many talents!” – *Yellow Pine Backcountry News, Vol 1, Issue 6*{July 2004}

Three of Bob's prints are available in the Museum gift shop; here is a picture of one of them.



"Raid On Gerbini" B-17F "Yankee Doodle" and wingman over Mt. Etna, Italy enroute to bombing run on Gerbini, Sicily.

The *Yankee Doodle* was piloted by our own **Art Cozine!** ★

THE COTTONWOOD SKIRMISHES

After the disaster at White Bird on June 17, 1877, (See *Pass In Review, The Battle of White Bird Cañon, 3rd Quarter 2001 & 4th Quarter 2001*) General O.O. Howard planned his next move.

“Howard had busily mobilized reinforcements from throughout his department and the Department of California. Besides four companies of cavalry and three of infantry already available at Fort Lapwai and Lewiston, Howard could expect auxiliaries in the form of six companies of cavalry, five batteries of artillery (intended to function as infantry), and three companies of infantry, for a total of about 960 men. In addition, he directed that Major John Green's (See *Pass In Review, 4th Quarter 1999*) troops at Fort Boise march north to watch the area of the Weiser Valley and keep tribesmen from that region from joining the Nez Perces. And with divisional approval, Howard arranged for troops to be sent from the East Coast.”¹

By June 22/23rd, when Howard departed, personally leading the campaign, his command “consisted of 227 regular soldiers of Companies E and L, First Cavalry; Companies B, D, E, I, and H, Twenty-first Infantry; and Battery E, Fourth Artillery, out fitted as infantrymen, plus a unit of volunteers from Walla Walla under Captain Thomas Paige.”¹

Meanwhile, Chief Joseph's scouts were keeping him apprised of General Howard's movements and he knew that Howard would follow him. Joseph then moved down the river, crossed it at Horseshoe Bend, and took a strong position in the mountains on the other side. By doing this, Joseph now had strategic command of the countryside and in order to reach him; Howard would have to cross the Salmon.

When Howard reached Norton's ranch at Cottonwood he discovered that the house had been ransacked by the Indians and was in shambles. Howard laid over at the ranch for a day while awaiting his scout's reports and reinforcements from Lewiston and on the 25th, Howard proceeded to the Johnson ranch about four miles from the head of White Bird Canyon. Howard himself led the cavalry to Grangeville and joined up with the remnants of Perry's defeated command. Then on the 26th, they made a reconnaissance into the scene of the battle and began burying their dead comrades, which although stripped of their clothing, were not mutilated, contrary to some reports.

During the burials, Capt. Paige and twenty of his volunteers scouted the crest of a ridge to get a view of the country. They spotted the Indians in force and rushed back to report their discovery.

Howard ordered an immediate pursuit. On the afternoon of the 28th, his force now numbering 400, came under attack by Indian snipers. As it turned out, the snipers were a distraction and Joseph and his group recrossed the Salmon river unobserved by Howard. This put Joseph behind Howard and isolated Howard from Lapwai. Unaware, Howard attempted to cross as well on June 30th but the river was swift and they lost a great deal of time in the attempt.

First Sergeant Michael McCarthy, Troop H, 1st US Cavalry (See *The Battle of White Bird Cañon, Part I. 3rd Quarter 2001*) went into detail about their situation in his journal and included the following: “If the Indians

were near at hand during that days march they could have cut us up...for we were badly strung out and broken up. The Command was badly strung out, all the way from base to summit of divide.”²

Shortly after the outbreak of the Nez Perce war, Edward McConville raised a company from the Lewiston region, Company A, of the First Regiment of Idaho Volunteers and commanded those Idaho Volunteers. McCarthy noted in his journal on June 30, 1877, “McConville and his Lewiston Vols. arrived late last evening about 20 in number.”²

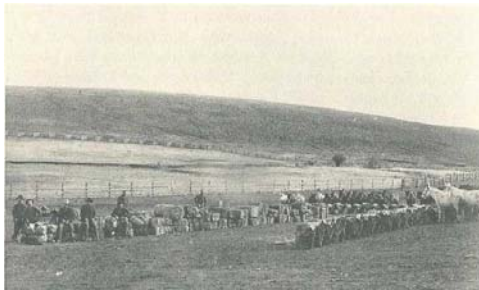
General Howard promptly made use of them. “Capt. E. McConville, with his company, ‘A’, Lewiston Volunteers, eighteen (18) men, having reported this day for duty at these headquarters, is hereby ordered to report to Capt. J.G. Trimble, at Slate Creek, I.T., without delay. By command of Brigadier-General Howard. - M.C. Wilkinson, Aide-de-camp.”³

Howard learned that some members of Looking Glass’ Camp (a band of Nez Perce) had joined Joseph and Howard feared the whole band might join in as well. Howard dispatched Capt. Whipple to capture the chief and “‘all that belonged to him,’ and to ‘turn all prisoners over, for safe keeping, to the volunteer organization at Mount Idaho.’”⁴

On July 1st, Whipple arrived at the camp. Negotiations began and reports on their ambiance vary but one thing is certain, someone, probably a volunteer, fired a shot into the Indian camp. Negotiations abruptly ended and fighting began. This had the unfortunate effect of driving Looking Glass to Joseph’s side. Reports of the number of casualties vary; all were Indians. Whipple’s command also captured a large number of Nez Perce horses.

Howard and Joseph both learned that an ammunition re-supply train, commanded by Perry, was headed to the Cottonwood Ranch. Howard sent

Whipple to Cottonwood with the hope that he would arrive before Joseph had a chance to recross the river and join with Looking Glass. Joseph meanwhile moved his group to the north of the ranch, placing his force between the commands of Perry and Whipple.



Packtrain Encamped At Cottonwood During 1877 War⁵

Whipple reached the ranch on July 2nd and waited for Perry. On July 3rd, Whipple sent two citizen scouts out to determine the number and location of the Indians. Only one scout returned. He had been fired at and the Indians were roughly 12 miles away, the other scout was presumed dead.

Whipple realized Perry was in danger and directed Lieut. Rains and 10 of his men “to proceed at once toward the point where the Indians had been seen, for the purpose of ascertaining the strength of the enemy.”⁴ Whipple soon followed Rains. Joseph anticipated an attack and placed his warriors on both sides of the road north of Cottonwood. When Rains detachment entered a shallow ravine, the Indians attacked. Whipple heard the sounds and rushed forward but they were too late. Rains and all of his men were dead.

Whipple continued on a short distance and located a defensible position. He deployed his men and waited. The combatants, one thousand yards apart, continued to menace each other for two hours until dusk, when the Indians withdrew and Whipple encamped for the night. In the morning (July 4) he started out again to meet Perry. Perry was unaware of the danger until he arrived at Cottonwood.

McConville’s company had become involved in scouting duty. They located

the Indians trail and bivouacked nearby. About an hour later they learned of the Rains massacre. McConville and two other groups of volunteers set out to reinforce Whipple. While riding along Rocky Canyon, McConville, becoming suspicious of several Indians who ran away as they advanced into the canyon, ordered his men to take a different trail. Later, they learned that the Indians were indeed attempting to lure them into a trap.

Whipple and Perry set out to meet each other and after doing so returned to Cottonwood, Perry as the senior officer assumed command of the 113 men. “The soldiers spent the remainder of the morning digging rifle pits, building a barricade of fence rails, and generally strengthening their positions. At noon the warriors attacked.”⁶

Capt. Whipple recorded, “For hours they made the most frantic efforts to dislodge us. Every man of the command was kept on the lines.”⁴ At sundown, the Indians withdrew. General Howard later described that day as follows: “There were doubtless plenty of flags flying; plenty of firing from carbines and gatlings, to make the old Craig Mountain ring; add the Indian yellings and shootings and the day we celebrate was here properly honored.”¹

The Indians returned again on July 5th, signaling their readiness for battle with three smoke signals. The attack came at mid-day but was eventually repulsed by the troops until the main body of Indians withdrew but sporadic firing continued for some time.

Also on July 5th, word reached Mount Idaho of the attack on Whipple and Perry’s commands. Darius B. Randall, most often referred to as D.B. Randall, who had attempted to assist Whipple in negotiations with Looking Glass decided to join the effort. He formed a detail of 16 and headed to Cottonwood. When they got to within 2 miles of the soldiers positions, they were attacked by a group of Indians, estimated to be between 125-132 in number.



Captain Darius Bullock Randall, Idaho Volunteer ¹

The action was seen by Perry and his command but he did not go to their rescue. He believed that it was a “ruse on the part of the Indians to draw us out.”¹

He also had over-estimated the size of the band attacking Randall; he believed their numbers closer to 300 and he feared that a divided force could not resist attack and that his ammunition would fall into hostile hands. Whipple pleaded with Perry but to no avail. “Unable to restrain themselves, about twenty-five volunteers dashed from their safe position to join the battle...Their daring act at last caused Perry to move and he sent to the rescue a cavalry detachment under Captain Whipple.”⁴

McConville’s volunteers also arrived on the scene but they were not in time. Randall and 2 of his “Brave Seventeen”⁶ were killed. (One died during the battle, another died shortly thereafter from his wounds.) This incident further escalated the growing tension between the military and the volunteers.

Adding insult to injury, Nez Perce sources later reported that “by that time, the Nez Perces were principally concerned about moving their large village across the prairie, and most of them did not become involved in the fighting near Cottonwood on July 5.”¹

The next day, Perry’s soldiers buried the dead enlisted men from Rains’ detachment and the volunteers set out across Camas Prairie for Mount Idaho. Then on July {one source said July 6th another said July 8th}, the “volunteers from Mount Idaho, Lewiston, and Dayton hastily reorganized into a single battalion under McConville, then

pressed north seeking the trail of the Nez Perces.”¹ This event is considered by most authorities to mark the beginning of the Idaho National Guard. The following day, Governor Brayman promoted McConville to Colonel of the Field, commanding all militia units in Idaho Territory.”⁷



“The Cottonwood Skirmishes Site is interpreted at a 1-acre highway rest stop that is about 2

miles south of Cottonwood, Idaho, on the east side of U.S. Highway 95...The skirmish sites associated with the Nez Perce War of 1877 are on private lands, mostly in agricultural use, near the community of Cottonwood.”⁸

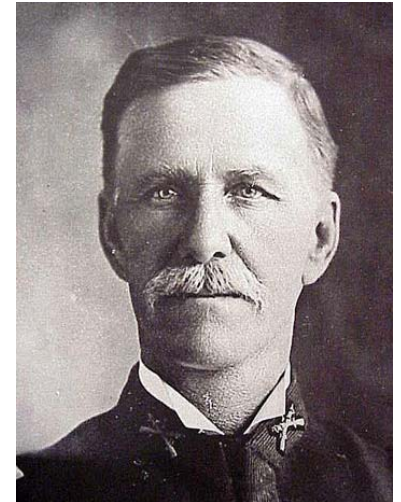


Sign marking the area of the Cottonwood Skirmishes. Sign reads:

“A gatling gun firing from the top of a low hill a mile northwest of here beat off a Nez Perce attack, July 4, 1877.

Next day, Indians just east of here surrounded 17 Mount Idaho Volunteers: 2 were killed and 3 wounded before cavalrymen from Cottonwood came out to rescue them. Meanwhile, Chief Joseph’s people, screened by this well-planned diversionary skirmish, crossed the prairie to join their allies on the Clearwater...” ☆

IDAHO FILE INTO HISTORY



**EDWARD McCONVILLE
COMMANDER, COMPANY A, OF THE
FIRST REGIMENT OF IDAHO VOLUNTEERS**

Edward McConville was born on a farm in Cape Vincent, Jefferson County, in northern New York, on June 25, 1846. McConville was reared on his father’s farm, and received an academic education in the University of Syracuse. He was within a month of reaching his fifteenth birthday when the Civil War began, but the spirit of patriotism, a dominant element in his family, soon surfaced, and he offered his services.

He enlisted “as a private of Company I, Twelfth New York Volunteer Infantry.”⁹ Several sources also reported that he served as the Twelfth New York Volunteers drummer boy. “He was enrolled April 30, 1861, at Syracuse, New York, and was mustered into service on the 13th of May, for two years.

He was appointed corporal of his company, October 27, 1862, and continued at the front until honorably discharged, May 17, 1863. Just eight days later, on the 25th of May, he re-enlisted, at New York City, and was mustered in July 18, 1863, as a private of Company C, Thirteenth New York Cavalry, to serve three years. He was appointed corporal September 11, 1863, and sergeant February 4, 1864, and on the 7th of October of the latter year he

was assigned to duty with the pioneer corps.

On August 17, 1864, upon the consolidation of his regiment, he was transferred to Company H, Third New York Provisional Cavalry, with which command he remained until honorably discharged, September 21, 1865.”⁹ He concluded the war as a second lieutenant in the Thirteenth New York Cavalry.¹⁰ He participated in a number of battles, including the engagements at Blackburn Ford, both Bull Run’s, Yorktown, and Antietam.

“During his four years service he was never on the sick list a single day. He was twice wounded but only slightly and stopped just long enough to have the bullet extracted and the wound dressed.”⁹ “A peculiarity was his great horror of the hospital and of losing a limb.”¹¹

“In 1866 General McConville enlisted again in Company G, Twenty-first United States Infantry, and served seven years in the regular army. In the year 1870 he was sent with an expedition against the Apache Indians in Arizona, and in the battle of Chifeto he was distinguished for his gallant conduct. He served in New Mexico, Arizona and on the coast until he was mustered out and honorably discharged, at Ft. Lapwai, in 1873.”⁹

After leaving the service, McConville, now in his late twenties, spent the next few years working at various jobs in the growing area of Lewiston. At the outbreak of the Nez Perce war in June 1877, McConville raised a company from the Lewiston region. This company became Company A, of the First Regiment of Idaho Volunteers with McConville as their commander. McConville and his volunteers first saw action in what came to be called the ‘Cottonwood Skirmishes’. McConville’s service and actions at Cottonwood were commended:

“For the soldierly qualities and the singularly faithful conduct of Capt. E. McConville and his company of Lewiston Volunteers, during the past

few days of incessant duty in the face of wily and dangerous foes, the commanding general of the department hereby expresses his appreciation and sincere thanks. By command of Brigadier-General Howard. - M.C. Wilkinson, Aide-de-camp Field Orders No. 23, July 4, 1877.”³

Immediately following the Cottonwood skirmishes, “Grangeville, Mt. Idaho, Lewiston, and Dayton, Washington, Volunteers reorganized into a single regiment, with Colonel McConville as their new commander, **an event considered by most authorities to mark the beginning of the Idaho National Guard.** The following day, Governor Brayman promoted McConville to Colonel of the Field, commanding all militia units in Idaho Territory.”⁷

“On the evening of July 8, while Howard was struggling toward Grangeville, ‘Colonel’ Ed McConville and some seventy-five citizen volunteers, ... ‘disgusted with the slowness of the regulars’-discovered the Nez Perce camp on the Clearwater. Wisely determining that his force was out numbered, McConville sent a courier requesting assistance, telling Howard that ‘I would keep as quiet as I could’ until the troops arrived. The following day, however, one of his scouts accidentally discharged his rifle. Alerted, the warriors immediately attacked, forcing the volunteers to the top of a hill several miles away.”⁶

“Colonel McConville ordered his men to take a position upon the summit of a hill, afterwards designated as ‘Mount Misery,’ and to begin digging rifle pits at once, using their knives and tin cups for the purpose. With such implements, it was slow work, but by nightfall the hill top was fairly well fortified.”¹² The Nez Perce surrounded and isolated them, began taunting them which escalated into unearthly yells and screeches. Then at 1:00 am, they opened a ‘strong fire’ keeping it up until dawn. Attempts to request assistance from Gen Howard were in vain, the messengers were unable to get through.

On July 11th, the warriors seemed distracted and the Volunteers being low on supplies withdrew from Misery Hill. Unaware the troops were only a few miles across the river; the men began walking back to Mount Idaho. There they learned Howard’s whereabouts, but it would be days before they would catch up.

“On July 27 McConville and his men reached Kamiah, where General Howard gave Colonel McConville the choice of crossing the Bitterroots in pursuit of the Nez Perce or reporting for scouting duty. Colonel McConville informed Governor Brayman that ‘owing to the condition of [his] horses and the men not wishing to go into Montana,’ he was going into camp.

Between July 28 and August 22 Colonel McConville and the Lewiston Scouts performed reconnaissance for General Howard. Shortly thereafter, McConville reported that his men were sick with the fever, and on August 27, informed the governor that the entire company had set out for Lewiston where he planned to disband it, ‘there not being the least sign of an Indian.’

On August 28 the company reached Lewiston and turned in their arms and ammunition. Although decommissioned by McConville, the unit was later recalled when it was discovered that he had exceeded his authority. Only the governor can officially disband a militia unit.”⁷

During and after the Cottonwood skirmishes, tensions between the regulars and volunteers had grown intense but McCarthy’s journal reported: “A Co. of Vols. roused in Lewiston, Comded by Capt. McConville, an old regular was an exception and conducted themselves like regulars.”² His journal also noted: “The Lewiston Vols. however went thru the campaign and were with us on our last reconnaissance July 17 – toward Weippe and they did good service on the prairie after the Rains massacre.”²

Following the Nez Perce war, McConville “joined the Bannock War

in 1878.”¹³ He then returned to Lewiston and “On the 1st of October, 1878, in Lewiston, he had married Miss Viola C. Arant, a native of Kansas, and a daughter of Samuel W. Arant, a representative of an old American family.”⁹

“Although ‘Mac’ had ‘fought the Indians with all his might, [he] became interested in them, and ended by becoming their fast friend’. He admired the courage of their resistance and recognized the justice of many of the Nez Perce claims. Thus it was that Mr. and Mrs. McConville were brought to Kamiah to head the Government School. ...Using to great advantage his own knowledge of the Nez Perce people gained from his war experiences and the years in Lewiston, Edward McConville was soon an active partisan on behalf of his Indian charges. He worked conscientiously to raise the standards of the feeble educational system and became involved in the ever present struggle to secure help for the Nez Percés under his jurisdiction.”¹³



Fort Lapwai, circa late 1800s¹⁴

In the mid 1880’s, the McConville’s were transferred to Lapwai, “where the former army man accustomed to shouting commands to rough men found himself in charge of the Girls School. After a brief stint in Lapwai, the McConvilles were transferred to Forest Grove, Oregon.”¹³ Early in the spring of 1890, they were transferred back to Lapwai.

His charges were appreciative of him. “A firm and consistent disciplinarian, the Superintendent said ‘the children were very easy to manage.’ A visitor describes her observations: ‘The room was packed full of eager children, bright as weasels. When recess time came, they clung about Mr. McConville so closely that he could hardly move. Three little girls took hold of his hands, a boy climbed on a chair to stroke his

face and three others looked as if they were going to climb on his back.”¹³ The referenced articles in *Idaho Yesterdays* and *Illustrated History of The State of Idaho*, go into great length about the McConville’s time and accomplishments at the School.

Then came the clouds of war! In January 1898, the *USS Maine* was sent to Havana “to protect American interests during the long-standing revolt of the Cubans against the Spanish government. In the evening of 15 February 1898, *Maine* sank when her forward gunpowder magazines exploded. Nearly three-quarters of the battleship’s crew died as a result of the explosion.”¹⁵ Sabotage by Spain was suspected.

“On the 22nd of August, 1898, President McKinley, by proclamation, called for one hundred and twenty-five thousand volunteers, and the governor of Idaho also issued a similar proclamation. Every company of the Idaho National Guard responded to the call, and from May 7 to May 14, 1898, the companies were mustered into the service of the United States as Companies A, B, C, D, E, F, G and H, First Idaho Volunteers.”⁹

“The day the Spanish-American War was declared Superintendent McConville resigned at Lapwai.”¹³ “General McConville was appointed by the governor to the rank of major of the second battalion, and the troops left Boise May 18th.”⁹



Idaho Volunteers Depart From The Boise Train Station¹⁴

They sailed from San Francisco on the *Morgan City* for the Philippine islands, June 27, 1898. Accompanying McConville was “his son Harry, a youth of seventeen years, who enlisted in

Company B, and with his father went to Manila as color-bearer of the regiment.”⁹



SS Morgan City

The *Morgan City* was an “old passenger ship [from] the Alaska service with no apparatus for distilling water.”¹³ “During the five weeks in the mid-summer heat of the Pacific, the water supply ran alarmingly low before the troops reached Manila Bay the last day of July.”¹³

The books *Official History Of The Operations Of The First Idaho Infantry, U.S.V. In The Campaign In The Philippine Islands* and *The History Of The Idaho National Guard* go into detail about the actions of the volunteers during the next seven months.

Then dawned February 5, 1899. “Poor, brave McConville. He had fought all through the great war, served long years afterward in the regulars, and took his last order from my lips that smiling Sunday morning – took it too literally, for I did not tell him he must lead his men to the redoubt. Only his way of doing things, he must be far in the lead, he was-and he got his death-blow in taking the enemy’s works.”¹⁶

“The Filipinos held a line stretching from the top of a small fortified knoll to an old brick kiln, containing two modern, rapid-firing Krupp guns. The Second Battalion’s objectives were clear. McConville ordered Company B to capture the kiln and silence the guns, Company G to take the knoll, and Company C to crush the center of the enemy’s line. Showing bravery typical of the Idaho officers, McConville, himself, led the charge. The Idaho men captured the knoll quickly and after heavy fighting, the kiln fell as well. The defenders fled, driven into the Pasig River...His men reported that

McConville leapt to the front, rallying his staggering line in the face of withering fire. Although shot through the chest and knocked to his knees, he continued to crawl forward until convinced that his assault had successfully broken the enemy's line. He died a few hours later.”⁷

“On February 7, 1899, the *Lewiston Teller* announced the first Idaho casualty of the Spanish-American War: Major Edward McConville, killed two days before at the Battle of Santa Ana. It was two months before his body, accompanied by his son Harry, was returned to Portland, brought on the train to Riparia, and arrived at the Lewiston dock on April 13 on the steamer *Spokane*, all flags at half mast.”¹³ (Governor Steunenberg sent a letter to Senator George L. Shoup requesting that McConville's son Harry be discharged so he could accompany his fathers body home and comfort his mother.)

Originally scheduled for Friday with full military honors, the service was postponed for two days to allow the state dignitaries to travel from Boise to Lewiston on the nearly impassible roads. An estimated six thousand people attended the service, which was held at the Masonic Temple. “The ceremony was followed by a ‘most elegant oration’ of two hours. In a bitter wind lashed with rain the funeral procession was drummed up Main Street by cadets and fraternity men from the University.”¹³ Attendees included “Governor Steunenberg, State Auditor, all members of the Supreme Court, 2 companies of the University cadets, large delegation of fraternity men and old friends of the deceased.”¹¹ It was also reported that a representative from Washington State was in attendance as well.

“The front page of the next day’s paper headlined ‘The Hero Laid to Rest’ – this ‘vigilant, untiring friend and faithful officer...– Major Edward McConville.”¹³

Postscript: “He was elected mayor of the Lewiston Regiment Uniform Rank

in 1893 and elected colonel of the regiment on January 21st, 1895. At the time of his death he was aide-de-camp on the staff of Major General James R. Carnahan, with the rank of colonel.”¹¹ Several unofficial sources report that before he died, McConville was brevetted brigadier general, “in recognition of his great bravery and gallant service.”⁹ The various obituaries referred to McConville as General throughout. Edward McConville is buried in Normal Hill cemetery, in Lewiston Idaho. He was survived by his wife Viola and four children, Harry, Alta, Ermeth and Hugh.★

MOST WANTED



- 116th Engineer related items from Vietnam
- 133rd Combat Engineer Battalion items from WWII

➤ 183rd/951st Field Artillery items from WWII

➤ Desert Storm field gear

➤ **YOU!** One of the reasons for the cancellation of our September Open House was a lack of volunteers. We just didn’t have the people power to put it together. If you have just a couple of hours a day or week that you can share with us, we would greatly appreciate it. Stop by for a visit and see how your interests can help preserve Idaho’s proud military history!

IDAHO VETERANS CEMETERY DEDICATION

Idaho formally dedicated its Veterans Cemetery on Saturday, July 31, 2004.

A number of distinguished guests and dignitaries attended, as did hundreds of on-lookers. Governor Kempthorne, The Honorable John W. Nicholson, Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, Mr. Bernard Fisher, Vietnam Medal of Honor Recipient, were some of the guest speakers. In addition, Vice President Cheney sent a letter which was read to those in attendance.



Partial overview of the raising of the US Flag. Photographer unknown.

The cemetery is located just north of Hill Road and east of Horseshoe Bend Road (Old St. 55) adjacent to the Dry Creek Cemetery. ★

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Footnotes:

- ¹ *Nez Perce Summer, The U.S. Army and the Ne-Me-Poo Crisis*, Jerome A. Greene, Montana Historical Society, 2000
- ² McCarthy Journal, Extract of Journal courtesy of National Park Service, Spaulding Idaho
- ³ Nez Perce And Bannock Indian Wars, Field Orders No. 21 & 23, Idaho State Library & Archives
- ⁴ *War Chief Joseph*, Helen A. Howard, Dan L. McGrath, Caxton Printers, Ltd., Caldwell, ID 1946
- ⁵ *Nez Perce Summer*, pg 104, Idaho State Library & Archives
- ⁶ *Children of Grace: The Nez Perce War of 1877*, Bruce Hampton, Henry Holt and Co., Inc, New York, New York, 1994,
- ⁷ *History of the Idaho National Guard*, Orlan J. Svingen Editor, Idaho National Guard, 1995
- ⁸ <http://www.nps.gov/nepe/site10.htm>
- ⁹ *An Illustrated History of the State of Idaho*, The Lewis Publishing Co, Chicago, 1899
- ¹⁰ *Idaho Daily Statesman*, Boise, Idaho, February 7 & 8, 1899
- ¹¹ *The Morning Tribune*, Lewiston, Idaho, Tuesday, April 16 & 18, 1899
- ¹² *Yellow Wolf: His Own Story*, Lucullus Virgil McWhorter, Caxton Printers, Ltd., Caldwell, ID, 1983, pg 79 Footnote
- ¹³ *Idaho Yesterdays*, Spring Issue, 1969, Volume 13, Number 1
- ¹⁴ Idaho State Library & Archives
- ¹⁵ <http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/events/spanam/events/maineskg.htm>
- ¹⁶ *Official History Of The Operations Of The First Idaho Infantry, U.S.V. In The Campaign In The Philippine Islands* ★

