



# LATAH LEGACY



What are those WOW tombstones?  
History of Hospice of the Palouse  
Quilting blossoms on the Palouse:  
Founding of the Palouse Patchers, 1976  
"Wild Davie" and William F. Drannan: Men Of Mystery

Latah County  
Historical Society



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This WOW logo features a log, axe, wedge and mallet and a dove (representing innocence, purity, gentleness and affection) with an olive branch (peace).

# What are those WOW tombstones?

*by Earl H. Bennett*

Found among the silent sentinels of granite and marble in many Idaho cemeteries is an odd marker or two that literally stands out like a lone tree in a desert. In fact these tombstones look like a tree stump, or sometimes a traditional square or rectangular stone is graced with what appears to be a 2-3 foot log sitting on top of it. These “tree stones” often bear the inscription “Here rests a Woodman of the World” and a motto “Dum Tacet Clamet,” meaning “Though silent, he speaks.”

Many probably pass by these odd stones assuming that the deceased belonged to some timber industry fraternal order. This is understandable as we Idahoans have considered

logging a mainstay of our economy since territorial days, but nothing could be further from the truth.

The unique stones honor members of the Woodmen of the World (WOW) founded in Omaha, NE, in 1890 by Joseph Cullen Root. WOW became the Woodmen of the World Life Insurance Society with the brand identity, since 2015, of WoodmenLife. Another group (Assured Life Association) in Denver, CO, split off from WOW in 1916 and has no affiliation with WoodmenLife.

Root’s goal was to help members in times of need by providing them with affordable life insurance. The name was inspired by a sermon Root heard about pioneer woodsmen

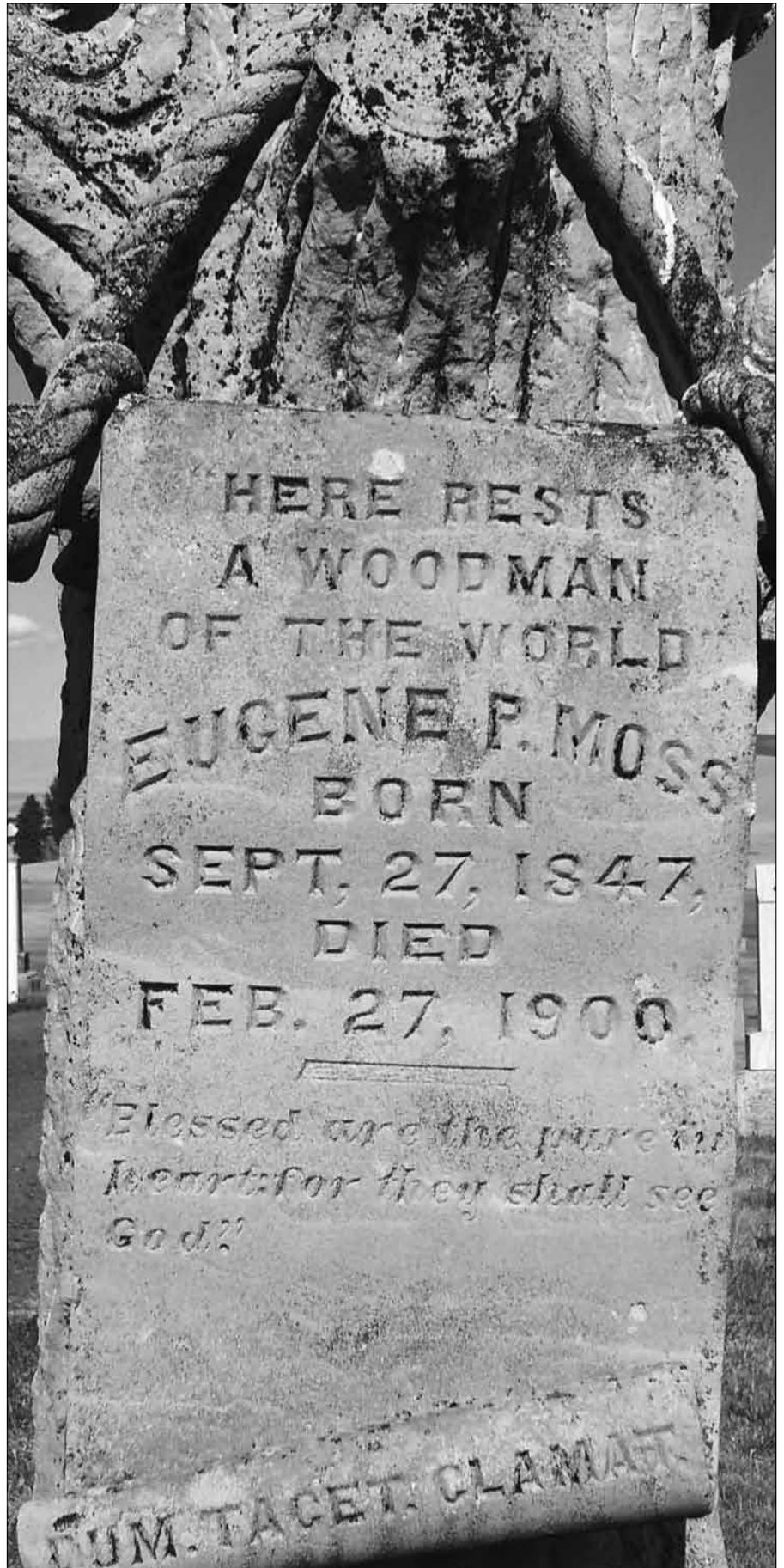
clearing the forest for their families, though membership in WOW was not dependent on occupation. Originally it was a secretive society, much like the Knights of Pythias or the Masons, with an initiation, passwords, and symbols including a maul and wedge, an axe, and a dove with an olive branch.

WoodmenLife is a not-for-profit, open-membership fraternal benefit society that runs an insurance/investment/service company for its members. Headquarters are in the 30-story WoodmenLife Tower built in 1969 in Omaha, the second tallest building in the city. The corporation is run by a board of directors. Individual regions make up a "Jurisdiction" and local community groups are called "Chapters."

Though originally restricted to men, women participated from the beginning via auxiliaries called "Woodmen Circles." Even children had a place in WOW. The "Boys of Woodcraft" was founded in 1903 followed later by the "Girls of Woodcraft." These groups became the Woodmen Rangers and Rangerettes in 1979.

In 1922 WOW started its own radio station broadcasting coast to coast. Due to conflicts over its nonprofit status, the station was leased to an independent organization in 1943. In 1949 the radio station branched into television with a young man named Johnny Carson among its first stars, doing a show similar to his well-known and later "Tonight Show." The station was sold in 1958 and today is an NBC affiliate, WOWT.

WoodmenLife currently provides financial services to approximately 700,000 members in some 2,000 chapters nationwide. Services include life insurance and annuities, investment strategies, college savings plans, a credit union, and other financial services. Members are also eligible to receive numerous fraternal benefits including participation in the company's youth programs and disaster relief assistance. Patriotism and community involvement are hallmarks; local chapters have provided over 2.5 million American flags to many organizations, hold a special memorial annually for victims and fallen first responders of 9/11, and volunteer for numerous community outreach projects. The corporation also supports more than 300 qualified nonprofit organizations.



A WOW tree stone marks the grave of Eugene P. Moss in the Genesee Community Cemetery. Note that the inscription is on a "Scroll of Life." This stone was installed in 1901.

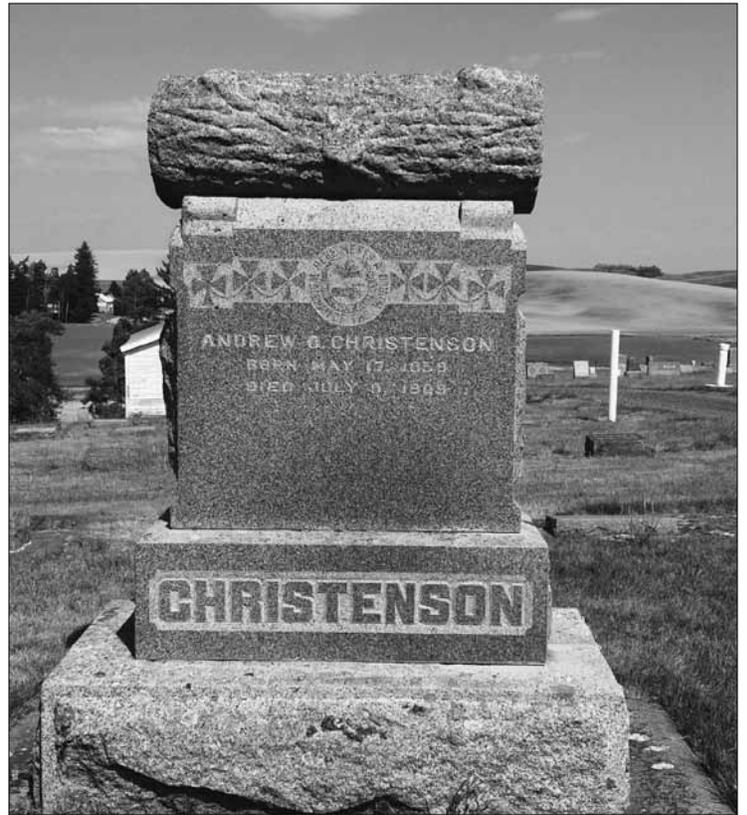


The fraternal order's banner is one part of a small, but significant display of WOW artifacts at the Bicentennial Historic Museum in Grangeville, ID.

Distinctive tombstones were another benefit of WOW membership until the program became too costly in the late 1920s. The current company motto is "WoodmenLife, Standing Strong for Generations."

Presently there are no chapters of WoodmenLife in Idaho, but there are individual members. An excellent historical display of the WOW Grangeville Camp No. 206 organized in 1895 is on exhibit at the Bicentennial Historical Museum in Grangeville, ID.

You can find out more about this fraternal benefit society at: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woodmen\\_of\\_the\\_World](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woodmen_of_the_World)



Another version of a WOW stone in the Genesee Cemetery. Genesee had a chapter of the Woodsmen (Grenadier Lodge, 249) from 1896 until the 1950s.



Two WOW stones mark the driveway at the Genesee City Cemetery. The tree stones at one time could be purchased from the Sears and Roebuck catalog.

<http://www.woodmen.org/about/history.cfm>

<https://www.woodmen.org/insurance/>

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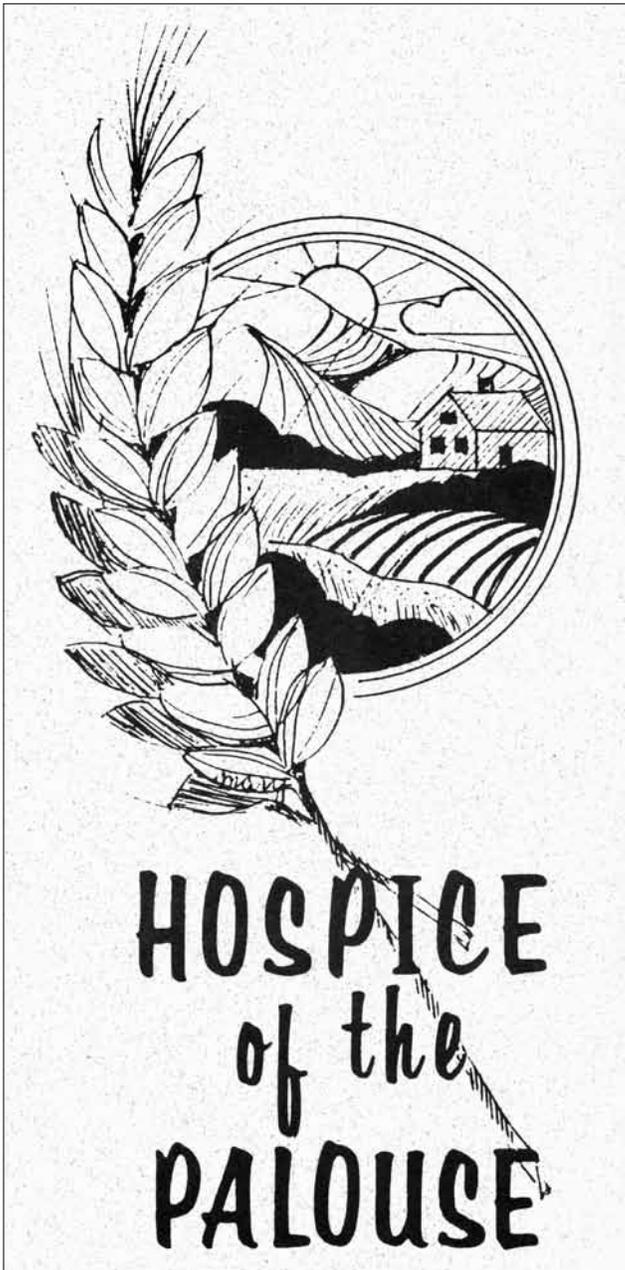
All pictures are by the author.

# History of Hospice of the Palouse

by Glenda Hawley



Hospice of the Palouse Director Connie Simonsmeier LCHS SC 2015 02.02



Societies throughout history have developed methods of caring for their dying members. Records show that ancient China offered places of refuge for the destitute and/or dying. The first records of hospice care in Europe and the Middle East, beginning about 300 AD, show the Christian Church sponsoring guest houses for pilgrims and travelers to the Holy Land. Some of these later evolved into asylums for the poor, the orphaned and those needing medical treatment. These places then became forerunners of modern hospitals. In Medieval Europe hospice was synonymous with shelter and temporary respite for the weary traveler. While this included care for the dying, hospice care did not become a separate institution in Europe until 1879 when the Irish Sisters of Charity opened Our Lady's Hospice for the Dying in Dublin. This same Order founded St. Joseph's Hospice in East London in 1905 devoted to care for the destitute, sick and dying.

The modern concept of hospice care is attributed to Dame Cicely Saunders, MD, who previously trained as a nurse and then as a social worker. She worked and studied pain control in advanced cancer patients at London's St. Joseph's Hospice and pioneered the use of opium-based medications which she advocated giving on a regular basis instead of waiting for pain to return. Dame Saunders was instrumental in the founding in 1967 of St. Christopher's Hospice in London, which was recognized as the first modern hospice institution. It emphasized a multidisciplinary approach to patient care that recognized the physical, emotional, spiritual, and social needs of patients and their families. This program was the basis for the hospice programs that developed across Europe and North America in the early 1970s. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross amplified that approach in her work and teachings.

In 1982 Congress created the Medicare Hospice Benefit which served patients whose doctors certified them as having a terminal condition with a six-month prognosis. In addition to Medicare, over 80% of managed care plans and most private insurance plans offer hospice services in the patient's own home for little or no cost to the family. Here in Moscow Good Samaritan Society had a previous hospice service in its facility which was strictly for its own residents, but recognizing a community-wide need, it opened its program to terminally ill patients in 1981.

Hospice of the Palouse had its inception when a group of concerned citizens in Latah County perceived a need for options for end-of-life care for patients and their families. A committee was formed in 1983 and Lois Charbonneau was hired as administrator. Jeanne Anderson, RN, was hired to coordinate and supervise the care program for the terminally ill patients as well as supervise the part-time certified nursing assistant (CNA) and social worker/spiritual counselor. The following year Pat Matthews, social worker, and Rev. Michael Burr started a bereavement support group that was open to the community. Hospice of the Palouse and Good Samaritan shared a common pool of volunteers who provided companionship for a patient for a short time in order to allow the family caregiver time away for business or relief from caregiving responsibility. Volunteers were required to attend five-week training sessions that were facilitated by the staff. A local physician, Dennis Peterson, MD, advised the team as consultant for medication and other treatment needs. As patient caseload and patient needs expanded, the staff was increased to include skilled nurses, CNAs, social workers, volunteers, a volunteer coordinator, physical therapist, occupational therapist, speech therapist, and nutritional therapist. Hospice of the Palouse was the first certified hospice program in Idaho to receive Medicare funding. A grant of \$25,000 was received from the Idaho Cancer Coordinating Committee for operations. Hospice of the Palouse became a nonprofit organization when it obtained its 501 (c) (3) status. The first patient was admitted in 1983 and sixteen more entered the following year. According to the by-laws, the purpose of Hospice of the Palouse, Inc. "is to enhance the quality of life of the terminally ill and their families by providing professional guidance and warm, loving, supportive help within their homes, while keeping intact the dignity, integrity, and personal choice of the dying person."

Gritman Hospital (now Gritman Medical Center or GMC) supplied space for the first office on the third floor in a small patient room, although Hospice of the Palouse was not affiliated with the Hospital at that time. Even though the office was in Gritman Hospital, the patient's care was in the patient's home, the Good Samaritan care center or other nursing facilities. Hospice of the Palouse soon outgrew this small office space as the staff and caseload increased.



Hospice of the Palouse staff, 1991 LCHS SC 2015 02.02



Hospice of the Palouse Food Booth at the Latah County Fair LCHS SC 2015 02.02

Vern Davidson, owner of Marketime Drug, offered a large room in the back of his store in 1985 which provided the needed space. The community supported this move with donations of money, as well as office furniture and patient care equipment. Fundraiser events included an annual Tree of Life (a Christmas tree decorated with ornaments labeled with deceased loved ones' names, purchased by the surviving family), Latah County Fair food booth, Christmas gift wrapping, and a food booth at the Renaissance Fair in addition to donated memorial gifts.

In 1984 Connie Simonsmeier took the director position vacated by Lois Charbonneau. A year later Glenda Hawley, ABS, PhD, acquired the social worker position when Pat Matthews moved from the area. About 1989, due to increased needs for additional staff and longer work hours,

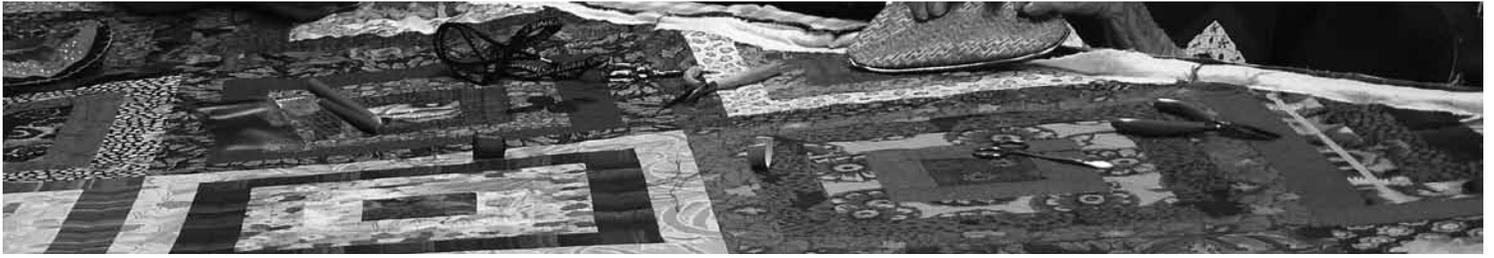


Hospice staff does yard work for Suzie Twigg as she recovers from surgery. LCHS SC 2015 02.03

Simonsmeier along with the Hospice Board of Directors negotiated a joint venture agreement with Gritman Medical Center. Under Gritman's umbrella the staff was provided with the same benefits as Gritman employees and thereby Hospice was put on a more secure financial basis. The Home Health program and nurses were added to the staff about this same time. This program differed from Hospice in that the focus was on in-home monitoring of patients who were expected to recover rather than hospice patients with a short life expectancy. Simonsmeier also wrote a Certificate of Need for expansion of the hospice program into Whitman County. This was accepted by the State of Washington since there was no hospice program in that county at that time. However, shortly after that acceptance, Whitman County started its own hospice service. In March 1995 Hospice moved its offices to GMC (3rd floor, north wing) while still retaining its separate nonprofit status. At that time its board of directors voted to dissolve itself and the Executive Board of Gritman's Board of Directors assumed responsibility. Although Gritman administered Hospice finances, monies accumulated through fundraising and donations were maintained in a separate investment account for the benefit of the hospice program. In 1999 Hospice of the Palouse was dissolved as a nonprofit organization and became a department of GMC while retaining its name and logo. This

reorganization took place after much deliberation by its governing body, its staff and Gritman administration. The change served to streamline paperwork, save administrative costs, and simplify daily operations. Hospice investments were still held separately and used exclusively for hospice purposes. Hospice became one of the 27% of hospices nationwide that are departments of hospitals.

When Whitman Home Health and Hospice sold in 2006 to Family Home Care, a for-profit company based in Spokane, WA, Hospice of the Palouse became the only agency known to provide a full range of services to the rural areas of Troy, Potlatch, Harvard, Princeton, Deary, Bovill, Elk River, and Tensed. Later Gritman's CEO Jeff Martin and the Gritman Board of Directors sold Hospice of the Palouse to the same for-profit company. Thus ended the first locally owned and operated nonprofit hospice in the State. The remaining funds that were donated through the years to Hospice of the Palouse continue to this day to be kept separate under the Gritman Foundation jurisdiction. This account was used to augment the needs of hospice patients not met by Family Home Care and is currently available to Gentiva Hospice and Home Care patients after Family Home Care sold to that agency.



# Quilting blossoms on the Palouse

## Founding of the Palouse Patchers, 1976

By Malcolm Furniss<sup>1</sup>

As though the undulating Palouse Hills were bulging from within, a quiet movement was born in the fall of 1976 when several Moscow women discovered their mutual interest in quilting. Virginia Dye had seen others' quilts entered in the Latah County Fair and asked their makers if they would like to form a quilting club. Those women, Virginia, Alice Maki, Elna Barton, Irene Furniss, Karen Schoepflin Hagen, and Phyllis LeTourneau, soon invited others to join what became the Palouse Patchers club.

During the ensuing years, the membership has grown to well over one hundred as quilting has become increasingly popular and has taken on an art form. What has remained constant, however, is the friendship and social experiences provided by participation in the club—a term favored by the members over “guild,” and which conveys its friendly informality. Indeed, there are no dues; one becomes a member by simply signing up at one of the monthly meetings and by bringing a batch of homemade cookies and helping at the club's annual quilt show in April.

As an onlooker since the founding of Palouse Patchers, I have seen much of its history unveil, especially through the involvement of my wife, Irene, in club activities and the making of her many quilting projects. Because of that, and the passing of many of those early quilters, I have chosen to preserve here some of that history. A more complete account of the club is left to others, insight into which is available on the Palouse Patchers website <http://www.palousepatchers.org/contact-us/>. Likewise, I have not included a primer on quilting and its various terms and kinds. The surge in quilting popularity has led to many books and other references on those subjects that may be sought out in the library and on the Internet. However, most of the quilting done by those whom I mention involved

“quilts” of three kinds: wall hangings, baby quilts and bed-size quilts. They consist of three basic components often of cotton fabric: a face, a thicker middle layer (batting), and a backing. They are joined together (quilted) by sewing through the layers with a needle and thread with short stitches that leave the intervening spaces raised, giving its “quilted” appearance. The face is the only intricate part and may be composed of blocks of various color fabric and/or artistic patterns attached by “appliquéing.” Some such quilts, mostly with appliquéd faces, are shown here.

### Quilters' traits: Some biographies

As noted, this account focuses mainly on the activities and members with whom I am most familiar. They were founders or early members of the club and they formed the Tea and Talk group whereby they met frequently to work on projects including raffle quilts for the club's annual quilt shows. Their brief biographies show common threads that led to their forming a club, much like blocks and appliquéd shapes are formed into a quilt.

Before **Irene Furniss** took up quilting, my notion of a quilt was that of a blanket composed of a patchwork of squares made from pastel colored material often from worn-out clothing. The maker would be a farm wife with a big family of children. I had no idea that a quilt could be an artistic outlet or involve a social group. Irene's involvement with the Palouse Patchers changed all of that for me.

Irene's background mirrored that of others of the club with whom I have talked. Most were seamstresses in their own right, often having learned sewing from their mother. For example, by coincidence, both Irene and Elna had lived in San Francisco where their mothers were seamstresses

<sup>1</sup>The author was husband of Irene Furniss (1924-2013) who was a founder of Palouse Patchers. This article is dedicated to her.

for I. Magnin, a high-end department store. Quilting came along fortuitously. Here is what Irene wrote to a friend in 1989: *“It all started for me about 1974 when a friend and I attended a folk life festival at the World’s Fair in Spokane. There were two frames set up for anyone to sit and quilt. I knew that I wanted to quilt but figured that I would never finish such a big project. Before then, if I couldn’t finish something in a week... too bad. Well, I found a pattern for an appliqué quilt in the Simplicity pattern book and just carried those squares around until I got them done, sent for a quilt frame from Sears, and sat down to quilt. After that, I was hooked—always thinking of what project to do next.”*

**Elna Barton** moved to Bovill, then to Moscow where she married Elbert Barton who was employed at the University of Idaho. He, in turn, worked with Claude Dye, whose wife Virginia was already into quilting. Through that association Elna took up quilting when she retired in 1975. Her first quilt was a Dresden pattern, made from a kit that she ordered. For many years, she made her basement room available for members of Palouse Patchers to come afternoons to work on the quilts to be raffled at the annual quilt shows. Elna’s favorite is a Broken Star quilt, which was the most difficult to make of her 90 or so quilts. Some components such as the flower stems were paper pieced, requiring many hours of work. After she finished it, she resolved never to do one like it again. Her sister, Gloria, in California took the pattern and when done, she said the same thing. Like my Alaska moose hunts that took three years to get over, after awhile Elna thought maybe it hadn’t been that bad, so she did it again.

Interviews with other early quilters indicated that grandmothers were influential in their getting into quilting. **MayBelle Carson** recalled: *“I had two grandmothers and a great-grandmother, all of whom were quilters. One grandmother lived in Nampa and the other lived with us in Boise, being cared for in our house by my mother. We lived in a 4-room house. I had two sisters and a brother, so to provide sleeping room we screened the porch, which was unheated. We used grandmother’s quilts for blankets. In those days, living on farms in winter, quilting gave women something to do. Their quilts were made of heavy wool or denim (work pants material). Most quilts were made for use on the bed or used otherwise for warmth. The houses had no central heat, just a potbelly stove in the living room where quilting was done by hand; there were no quilt frames.”* When she was about ten, MayBelle made a small blanket for her doll. She was in 4-H in school and majored in Home Ec in college. She had quilted while living in Kellogg and, after moving to Moscow, she was invited to join a group of quilters at the Presbyterian Church making quilts to raise funds. She joined Palouse Patchers after learning of it from these quilters.

**Judy Sunderland Ferguson** joined Palouse Patchers through her friendship with Irene in late 1978. She had sewn since high school, making clothing just to save money, and didn’t really enjoy that. She became frustrated with her first attempts to quilt when her sewing thread tangled. Irene patiently explained that the difficulty lay in the kind of thread and encouraged her to keep at it. Judy soon found quilting to be relaxing, and the meetings and workshops and demonstrations provided new ideas and quilting techniques. As a child, she remembers her grandmother having a revered quilt that had been made by her great-grandmother of fabric made before the Civil War. Her grandmother tied quilts, called comforters; she also made quilt tops but had others quilt them. She had a treadle sewing machine. In her childhood Judy would sit under it, fascinated by the movement of the foot treadle. Once, when Grandma lifted her foot off, Judy moved the treadle back and forth by hand, evoking a shout not to do that—or Grandma was going to get her hand stitched! Judy learned to sew from her grandmother on that old black and gold Singer sewing machine. Once introduced to quilting, it became an addiction. Judy likes to just look at fabric and could not resist buying fabric when she visited the Snip-and-Whip shop in Moscow or a Spokane shop. As a result, she has a great stash of material—*“enough for three life times!”* The affliction appears to be common; quilters have a saying that, *“She who dies with the most fabric wins.”* Judy’s favorite reference is *Lap Quilting with Georgia Bonesteel*. The technique doesn’t require a stationary quilt frame; instead, a portable take-down frame allows taking it off premises or using it in convenient home locations.

**Lana Tout** recalled: *“I think I have always been interested in quilting because my grandmother made many ‘crazy patch’ quilts when I was a little girl. They were heavy and warm and sometimes I wondered if I could even get out of bed. There was a long hiatus while I attended college and later while raising my kids, but when they were little my interest was sparked again and I began making baby and kids’ quilts, besides sewing a lot of clothes. In 1978 I took a class at the Snip-and-Whip quilt store in the Moscow Mall. I haven’t stopped since. I wasn’t able to join Palouse Patchers until 2001 because of a scheduling conflict. The entire group was so friendly and welcoming that I was hooked. In 2006 Tea and Talk was the featured quilt group at the Walla Walla quilt guild show which I happened to attend. I had a book, Quilts of Henry Ford, that I thought they would enjoy seeing, so they invited me to their next meeting. I thought that would be the end of that but they all encouraged me to join their group. It has been a privilege to join this incredible group of ladies.”*

**Donna DeWitt** came to quilting in her teens through visits with her aunt, Elsie, who had taught her how to sew when she was a girl. It happened that Elsie had bought two quilts in the 1930s from a woman who sewed to make ends

meet. One of these quilts with a “Flying Geese” pattern was on the bed where Donna slept. She copied that quilt, using a treadle sewing machine, to take home a quilt of her own with pink stripes and green and yellow geese. Years later, she made a replica with one remaining block from the old top. Her first quilted quilt was a “Roman Stripe” with a blanket used for batting and made at a time when her husband worked at night. She had a lot of time alone after her boys were in bed and she filled time with quilting. She has kept a list of her quilts which now number something over one hundred. Donna was an early member of the club. In a 1991 interview found in a club scrapbook, she was asked what she planned for the future. She had a list of quilts to make and noted that the list kept growing. She said that she would have to live to 110 to complete them all and hoped to use up all of her fabric before dying. When I visited her, the rooms of her house indicated that she had pretty much accomplished the first objective. But, when asked about the fabric, she just rolled her eyes. A likely winner.

**Karen Hagen** grew up on a dairy farm in nearby Viola. She got interested in quilting in 1975 while looking for a bottle cutter to make little greenhouses for individual garden plants. Some quilters in the Viola Community Club were showing their quilts in the building where the cutter was. She subsequently made an “Hourglass” quilt that was entered in the 1976 Latah County Fair and she was invited to the initial meeting of the club founders. Karen has kept this first quilt and all of her many others for display only, feeling that selling one *“would be like giving a vital organ while still alive.”* In spite of having achieved wide recognition for her artistic quilts, she never judges others’ quilts, believing that each maker does up to the best of her ability at the time a quilt is made just as she did with her first one that doesn’t meet at the edges and has other faults.

When asked what is her favorite quilt, she answered, *“My favorite quilt is yet to be made.”* She has an intricate design held in her mind, hoping to live long enough to complete it. It will be accordion-like (as a window blind): on one side is a boy on a rocking horse and a Teddy Bear. Viewed on the other side will be an old man in a rocking chair. A subtly placed worn-out Teddy Bear completes the connection. As for her completed quilts, she *“hates to pick a favorite since it is like choosing a favorite child out of your family—just not fair to the others.”* However, my persistence brought to mind a large quilt (98 x 84 inches) named “Face of Flowers” in memory of her mother who regretfully passed without seeing any of Karen’s handiwork. And after further reflection, *“the Mt. Shuksan is probably my favorite quilt—it shows my frayed fabric foliage so well.”*

Karen retains all of her many quilts, all hanging on 8-ft racks; none are stored folded or put on beds. They are shown by invitation in many cities throughout the West. Her

involvement with quilting is prominent on the web, and a selection of her quilts, including Mt. Shuksan, is in a booklet “Inspiration, Imagination, Interpretation, Quilting—Artistry of Karen Schoepflin Hagen,” Western Printing (1999).

### Annual quilt shows

The club’s annual quilt shows are held in the 4-H exhibition building at the Latah County Fairgrounds in Moscow, scheduled in April to coincide with Mothers’ Weekend at the University of Idaho. It attracts several thousand people who come to see the 200 quilted entries consisting of items ranging from clothing and small items with appliquéd designs to wallhangings and full-size bed quilts. A special attraction is a raffle quilt, made by club members, for which 3,000 one-dollar tickets are printed. Judy Sunderland Ferguson noted that after each quilt show there is an influx of new members.

At the first show in 1981, when membership was still in the dozens, quilted items were attached for display on walls of the room. Soon, the growing number of entries required a better method of displaying them. Allan Carson, husband of MayBelle, recalled that JoAnn Thompson’s husband, Eugene, designed and built frames that could stand on their own and which were bolted together so that they could be dismantled for storage. Their clever design made them adaptable into different configurations. One configuration is a center frame and two wings, providing room to hold six large quilts, two back-to-back at center and on the wings. The quilts are suspended by skirt hangers, each having two spring clamps. These first frames were made of mahogany and some are still in service. Sometime later the job of making more frames and storing them passed on to Allan’s family, who switched to making them of pine. About 15 years ago, Allan turned this job over to others. Each year a work party erects the frames and attaches the quilts for display, then dismantles them at the end.

### Tea and Talk friendship group

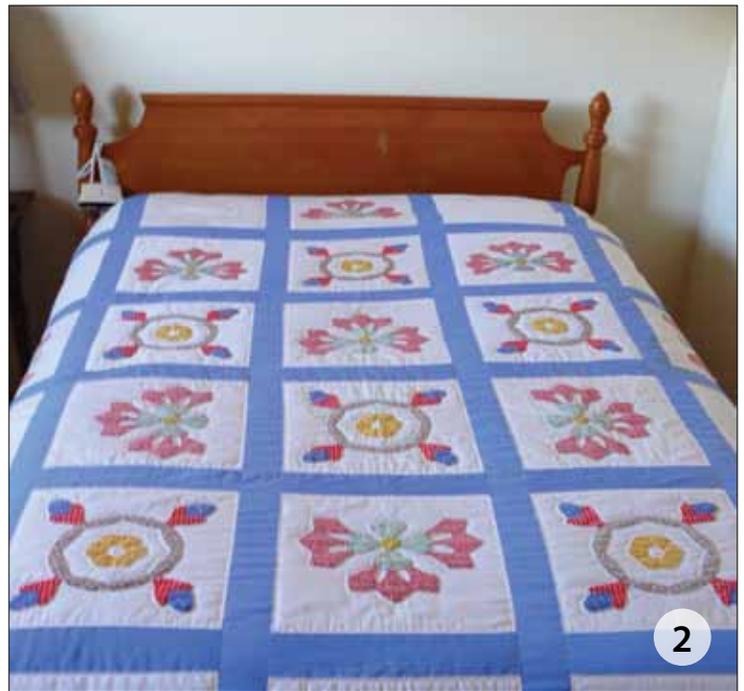
Within the Palouse Patchers quilt club there are now several Friendship Groups. These small groups of 5-12 members meet in individuals’ homes to work on their projects, exchange ideas, and share new quilting techniques. Their names suggest a sociable lot. Tea and Talk is one of these groups; others have taken names such as Undercover Ladies of the Night, Thimble Therapy and Sanity Seekers.

### Tradition regarding unfinished quilts

Just as Judy Ferguson noted that departed quilters leave a stash of quilting fabric, some of their quilts often remain unfinished. The Tea and Talk ladies, because of their ages, have lost many from their ranks. Accordingly, it has become their tradition for one member to finish another’s



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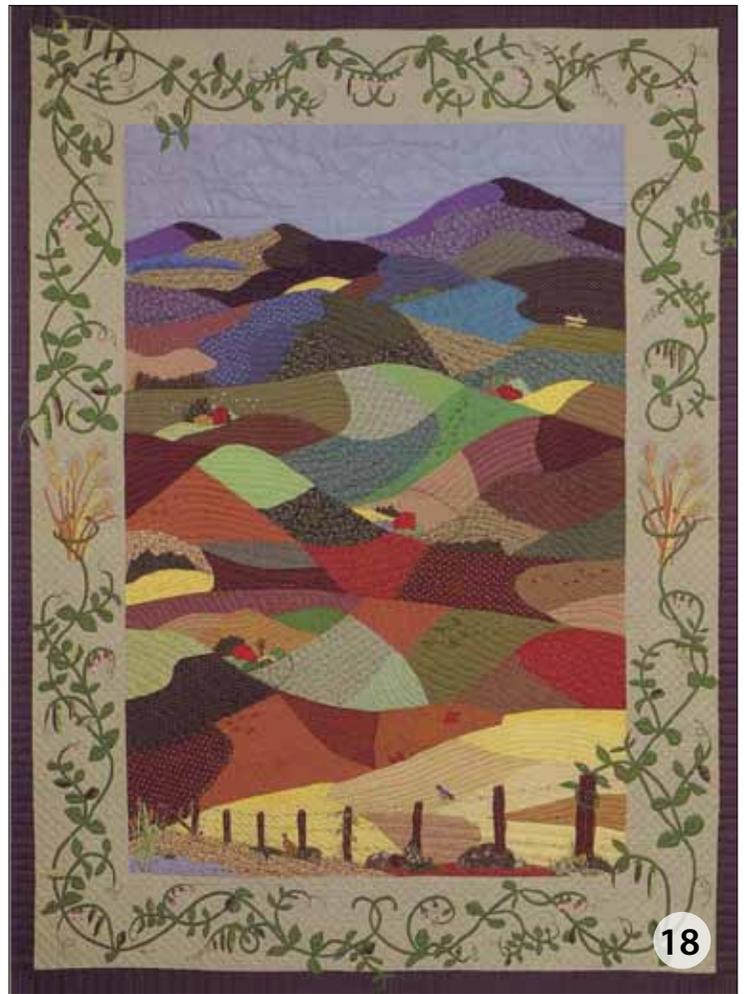
1. Irene showing her first quilt during Show and Tell at a Palouse Patchers meeting.
2. The quilt on a bed at home. The pattern involved the appliqué technique, an advanced level of quilting. Irene had remarkable quilting talent having made this quilt on her own, without having had any other instruction.
3. This Friendship quilt was entered in the first Palouse Patchers annual quilt show in 1981. The budding club had 25 members; fourteen members contributed blocks for the quilt.
4. In 2007, this Dizzy Geese quilt was the last bed-size quilt that Irene entered in the annual shows. Thereafter, through 2013, she worked with the Tea and Talk group on raffle quilts and two unfinished quilts of deceased members.
5. Baltimore Beauties: a medium size wall hanging ... Irene's favorite. In September 2001, Irene had a stress fracture of her pelvis. To pass time, she kept busy creating this wall hanging quilt. At Fair time in September 2002, her effort brought unexpected rewards. This quilt walked away with Special Award, Superior Senior Award, Gold Award, and Best of Show. She considered this to be her best quilt and displayed it in the entry to our residence for the pleasure of others.



6. Rick and Sandy Kegley of Coeur d'Alene area with quilts made by Irene for their boys, Dustin and Gabe.
7. Irene had a special love of children and made many baby quilts for our grandchildren and for babies of younger friends and acquaintances. Here she is quilting one in 2008 for Clem Binninger, the newborn son of Jon and Hannah Binninger of Troy.
8. Clem holding his quilt with Hannah and his sister, Flora, in 2014.
9. Elna Barton, one of the founders of Palouse Patchers, with her favorite Broken Star quilt. The intricate pattern required much paper piecing and was the hardest to make among her many quilts. She resolved (twice) never to make another!
10. When the membership grew and the quilt entries increased at the annual quilt shows, Eugene Thompson, husband of member JoAnn Thompson, devised and constructed a collapsible set of wood frames to display them. Here a volunteer dismantles one at the end of the 20th show in 2005.



11. Tea and Talk quilters group in the home of Barbara Stellmon. At the time, each member was contributing a block to each other for their quilt, such as the unfinished one shown. Front, from left: Ann Jensen, Barbara Stellmon, Elna Barton, Donna De Witt; back: JoAnn Thompson, MayBelle Carson, Lillian Green, Pat Hungerford, Phyllis LeTourneau, Irene Furniss, Julie Rowland. Photo by Bill Stellmon.
12. Elna Barton (left) and Carolyn Brockway with "Snowman" quilted wall hanging. This quilt by Irene Furniss (Carolyn's mother) was unfinished at the time of Irene's death. Continuing a club tradition, Elna volunteered to finish this one and presented it to Carolyn at Irene's memorial in June 2014.
13. Irene also had an unfinished quilted wall hanging of a Canada theme meant for her grandson, Jamie Furniss, a native of Whitehorse, Canada. It was completed by Lana Tout who presented it to him on behalf of Irene while he was attending Irene's memorial.
14. Tea and Talk members of Palouse Patchers quilting the Bella Toscana raffle quilt for the club's 2008 quilt show. From left, JoAnn Thompson, Elna Barton, MayBelle Carson, Olinda Britton and Irene Furniss. Photo by Bill Stellmon



15. Lana Tout (left) and Irene Furniss working on the 2011 raffle quilt, "Pineapple Sherbet." This was the last of many raffle quilts hand stitched by the Tea and Talk friendship group.
16. Tea and Talk ladies at Elna Barton's in January 2012 completing an unfinished quilt started by recently deceased member JoAnn Thompson. From left: Marian Bentz, Elna, Irene Furniss and MayBelle Carson. The quilt was given to the Latah County Historical Society and sold to a visitor for \$1500 to benefit their programs.
17. Tea and Talk members at Irene's house on March 25, 2013. From left: Lana Tout, Elna Barton, Irene, and Pat Hungerford.
18. The "Palouse Hills" quilt began as a raffle quilt but was kept by the club and is on display at the McConnell Mansion. It depicts the rolling hills of the Palouse region and represents the transition of quilting to an art form.
19. Some of the Palouse Patchers Tea and Talk friendship group quilting "Palouse Hills" in Elna Barton's basement in 1986. From left: Olinda Britton, Judy Ferguson, Elna, Donna DeWitt and Irene Furniss.

quilt. In the case of Irene, two wall hangings remained partially done. One with a Christmas theme was finished by her fellow club founder Elna Barton and presented to our daughter Carolyn Brockway at Irene's memorial gathering at our house in June 2014. Another, entitled "O'Canada," was completed by her friend Lana Tout and presented to our grandson Jamie Furniss, who came to the memorial from Edinburgh, Scotland. Jamie was raised in Whitehorse, Canada. I also remember photographing Irene and others finishing quilts left by departed members Barbara Stellmon and JoAnn Thompson. There is no better measure of the bond existent among these quilters.

## Raffle Quilts

Beginning with the second quilt show in 1981, raffle quilts were finished (hand quilted) by the Tea and Talk group and other club members in Elna Barton's basement, each one requiring several months to complete. This tradition ended in 2012 with the "Glorious Color" quilt. Thereafter, they were machine quilted with long arm sewing machines.

I wondered just what goes into such endeavors from the beginning. Sandy Berg, the club historian, cast some light. *"Nowadays, the raffle quilts are done by volunteers. Sometimes it's one of the other small groups, sometimes it's one or more individuals who feel like they want to take on the responsibility for one. I volunteered to take responsibility for the 2015 quilt, so that meant I got to choose the pattern and pick the fabrics for it—a fun thing. Often, as I did with this quilt, pieces are cut for the pattern and taken up to quilt camp [held annually at Coeur d'Alene Lake] where everybody there has the opportunity to help put together pieces. And then it is up to the responsible person to determine how it will be quilted."*

## The "Palouse Hills" Quilt

In 1986 the club's proposed raffle quilt "Palouse Hills" ended up as a legend instead. As the quilt was being worked on, the members decided that it was too special to raffle and made a second quilt "Goose in the Pond" that was raffled in its place. "Palouse Hills" was given to the Latah County Historical Society (LCHS) on permanent loan and is displayed in the Society's McConnell Mansion in Moscow. The quilt has become the signature quilt for Palouse Patchers and may be seen on the club's webpage at <http://www.palousepatchers.org/storage/images/PHills-web.jpg>

Shirley Nilsson designed the center panel (depicting the Palouse hills); Vicki Perviance designed the border with the pea vines. A color pencil drawing from which the quilt was made is in the LCHS archives. The face was hand appliquéd by members. The total top was then assembled by Monica MacFarland and readied for quilting. The hand quilting was done on a quilt frame at Elna Barton's home by many members. Work on the quilt that began in September 1985

and was completed in February 1986 required 700 hours, half of which was for the hand quilting. The quilt measures 72 by 96 inches.

"Palouse Hills" has been loaned upon request for showing at numerous quilt shows in Idaho, Washington and California. In 1987, it appeared in *American Quilter* magazine, after which the American Quilter's Society requested that it be entered in the society's annual quilt show in Paducah, Kentucky, where it was awarded third place in Group Quilt. It also is pictured in Shirley Nilsson's book *Stitching Free*, which she published after moving to Canada. Her biography is seen at <http://www.okanaganarts.com/spring08/mamo.php>.

This quilt reflects the evolution of quilting to an art form, depicting as it does in soft colors the sensuous rolling hills of the surrounding Palouse region. The quilt is featured in the book *Quilting Together* by Paula Nadelstern and Lynnell Hancock with the following description: *"Idaho's forested mountains and rolling crops of wheat and peas appear in lush earth tones in this sensational pictorial. Sophisticated touches such as the receding fence, and the use of warm colors on the bottom that gradually blend into cool colors at the top, help provide perspective that is relatively rare in pictorial quilts. The flowing pea-vine border, sprouting with flower buds and little leaves, gives an unusual classic touch to the otherwise abstract scenery. By placing a pair of wheat tufts at either side, the designers give us the impression that their border vine is symmetrical all over, without having gone to the painstaking trouble of making it equal. The vine's stem is made from thirty yards of continuous bias stitched in half lengthwise; its raw edges were pressed under."* Viewing of the quilt itself shows additional detail: farmhouses, a crop dusting airplane, and a pheasant and meadow lark under and on the fence. Younger eyes may find yet more.

## Acknowledgments

I am grateful for the memories of Irene quilting in her back room for so many years and her experiences with Palouse Patchers and the Tea and Talk group. Her many quilts continue to bring pleasure to relatives and friends as well as to me in our home where they are in view in every room. Thanks to founder Elna Barton for photos and her recollections and explanations of quilting techniques. Other quilters who provided helpful information are MayBelle Carson, Judy Sunderland Ferguson, Donna DeWitt, Karen Hagen, and Lana Tout. Sandy Berg of Lewiston, currently the club historian, provided scrapbooks containing photos and relevant material; she also provided information on the "Palouse Hills" quilt and raffle quilts. Bill Stellmon provided two photos as noted in their captions. The manuscript was reviewed by Elna, MayBelle, Judy, Karen, Lana, and Sandy.

# “WILD DAVIE” AND WILLIAM F. DRANNAN: Men of Mystery

by David Wahl

According to a short article in the Winter 1985 issue of *Latah Legacy* written by Mary Reed, then Director of LCHS, “a local Moscow character known as Wild Davey\*” lived in and around the Moscow area for several years around 1900. Much mystery surrounded the man and varying sources have since identified him as David C. Coventry or Captain William F. Drannan. A memorandum received by Lola Clyde in 1965 that requested information about Captain Drannan and his time spent in Moscow has resulted in the following collection of information and an attempt to answer the question, “Was Wild Daveie really William F. Drannan?”

On December 12, 1965, a gentleman named Clement A. Streifus sent a letter to Lola Clyde, my aunt, regarding William F. Drannan. Quoting from this letter: “According to notes by Clarence Talbot [sic], one time “Wild Davie,” as the townspeople sometimes called Drannan, and Walter Wheeler were playing around and suddenly both pulled out their six-shooters and aimed at each other through the large wheels of the dynamo. Apparently shots were not fired as they continued to be friends.”

The purpose of Mr. Streifus’ letter was to get more biographical information about Drannan, particularly about the time he spent in Moscow, Idaho. Drannan was the author of two very popular books: Thirty-One Years on the Plains and in the Mountains (1900) and Chief of Scouts, Piloting Emigrants Across the Plains of 50 Years Ago (1910). On page 583 of the first book he asserts that he is writing the book in Moscow, Idaho. Wild Davie lived in and near Moscow from the late 1890s until about 1910. Research revealed no mention of William F. Drannan by anyone around Moscow during that time.

Mr. Streifus’ letter also states: “For some years Drannan plied his way regularly between this cabin and

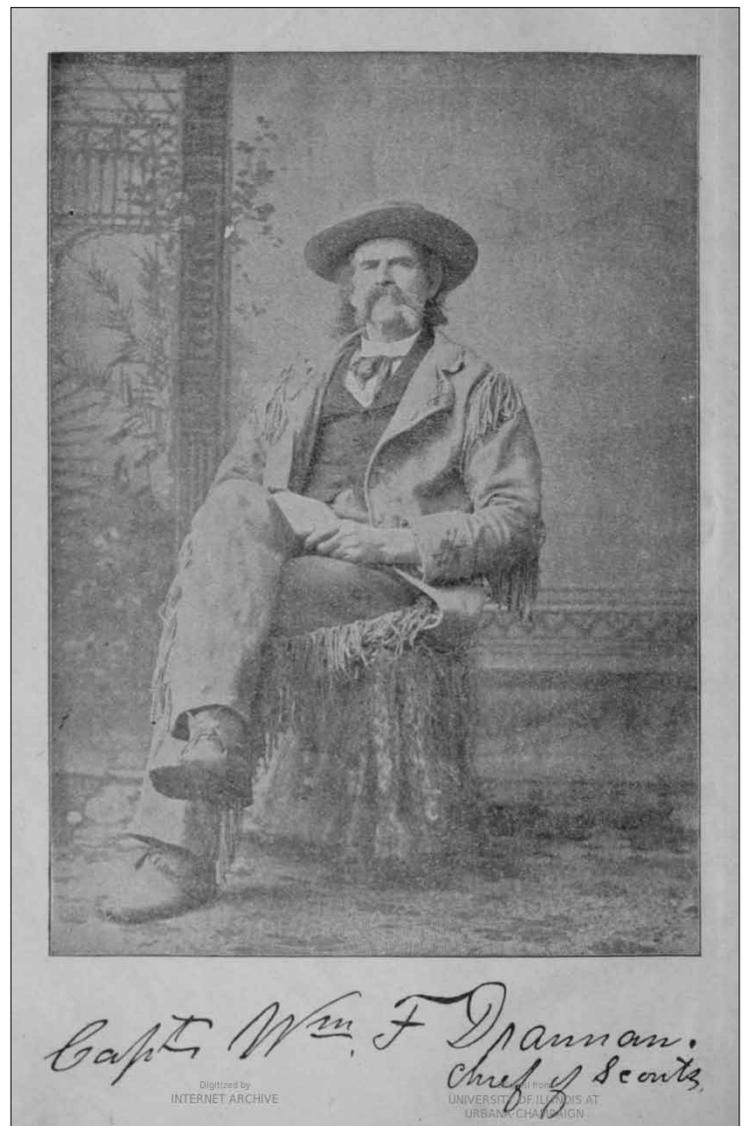


Figure 1. William F. Drannan as shown on the frontispiece of his first book Thirty-One Years.... Note his signature and title “Chief of Scouts”. Image courtesy of University of Illinois

\*According to several recollections in the LCHS archives, the name is “Wild Davey”, but a photograph and note attributed to the man himself are signed “Wild Davie”.

the University of Idaho Administration Building where he met with Miss Aurelia Henry, a language and elocution teacher, who assisted him in writing the two books (later she married and became Mrs. Reinhardt and served as president of Mills College for women in California).” [“This cabin” refers to a small cabin on South Lynn Street.]

The Streifus letter prompted Tom and Elizabeth Wahl, my parents, to seek out and purchase copies of each of Drannan’s books. They also contacted as many people as they could who remembered Wild Davie.

### Recollections of Wild Davie

In February 1966 Elizabeth Wahl sent a letter to Enos Cornwall in which she enclosed a photograph of William F. Drannan taken from the frontispiece of his book Thirty-One Years on the Plains and in the Mountains (Figure 1). Enos Cornwall then wrote her a letter in reply. The following is a transcript of his handwritten original, dealing with Wild Davie’s literacy, as well as his appearance and conduct:

*“Tuesday the 15th day of Feb. 1966*

*“My dear friends:*

*“Your letter was forwarded to me. It, together with two other important letters, was carried in my pocket half a day before opening them because I have so many things to do, I actually forgot them all. Will I ever get caught up?”*

*“On opening it, the picture dropped out. I picked it up and said, “Wild Davey”, right out loud. You see I’ve been alone so much, I catch myself talking out loud sometimes, and am glad no one hears me. I feel confident he is your man. Then I read your letter. Will save his picture. Advise me what you learn to go with it.*

*“He was a little man, wearing a mustasche [sic], and long hair to his shoulders, and always with a pack of mongrel dogs. It was common talk (among kids) that he ate his dogs. Of course I didn’t believe it, but I guess I did my share in getting other kids to believe it.*

*“For awhile he lived in the woodshed of a large vacant house which later became mine. Like many others, I stopped and looked back at him and his dogs after they had passed. It was a unique sight certainly. That house was on Polk St. in that long block right south of Harry Sampson’s and directly across the street from the old Humphrey house which Bert Russell bought.*

*“You didn’t say whether or not you got in touch with Homer David. If you did, get in touch with him again and ask him about Wild Davey. He can tell you lots about him—LOTS!*

*“It does seem possible, even probable, that it was said that he wrote books, and that that information came from sources that I could not doubt, but did marvel at it. There was something*

*about such an unseemingly circumstance that made me wonder and marvel. He was strange. I don’t recall it right now about such a name as Capt. Drannan, but I may have forgotten that part.*

*“If Bill Hunter is alive, get in touch with him. He will be able to tell you oodles too. Then too, here is another possibility, and way back. August Held had a butcher shop in a building of ours on Third St. two doors west of 3rd and Washington Sts. His son-in-law worked with him. I am not sure I remember his full name, but the last year I was in Moscow, I met his son in law (partner, I guess) on the street several times, so finally I stopped him and asked him if he weren’t the man who was with August Held in the early days. He was, and we whipped up quite a conversation. After that when I’d meet him, we’d stop and visit. His name was Sieverson, (I think Ed—no I don’t recollect). He told me he was just taking it easy and would live with one of his boys’ family awhile, then another’s. He was a big, fine looking fellow, but he may be dead now. He could tell you lots about Wild Davey.*

*“Let me say, you may be able to locate this Sieverson by inquiring at the “cold storage boxes” for meat between Main & Washington Sts. I met him near there several times. I don’t recollect what those “Cold Storage Boxes” for meat was called officially. And it seems that he was living out near the Cornwall District, one-half mile east of Joel, Ida. I might be mistaken.*

*“Wild Davey always lived in shacks, woodsheds, and (beneath old houses, for all I know). Most of the time he was around Moscow.*

*“Follow these leads and you may get your information if they are not all dead. Gosh, you make me feel old, and I’m only a little past 80. I’ll be waiting to hear from you. My address is NOW: 240 East Ave., #14, Napa, Calif. 94558.*

*“As always, Enos*

*“PS. I don’t recollect anyone at the U of I by the name of Reinhardt, but Homer David certainly would.*

*“Please roll over [to other side]*

*“You haven’t told me why you are so anxious to get this information regarding Capt. Wm. F. Drannan. Do you mind? And, by the way, Tom is some photographer. I suppose he took the picture out of a book, as you say it was gotten.*

*“Enos*

*“One more thing: Never have I seen anyone talking with him. Kids never hooted at him and his dogs. He and his dogs always went along undisturbed. Everyone seemed satisfied to just look at him (then).*



Figure 2. Wild Davie shown before a studio backdrop, contemporary with Figure 3. *LCHS Coventry.D.01*

*“Another thing if I may. He wasn’t a stooped old man, but alert and very sprightly, holding his head up majestically wild, walking steadily on. No window-shopping for him either. His dogs stayed right with him. They did not run around yip-yapping at other dogs, nor at a passing wagon and horses on the street but stayed right with him in a well-trained cluster. E.”*

In February 1966 Elizabeth Wahl also sent a letter to Edna (Wahl) Ketchum, my father’s aunt. The part of her hand-written reply which contains information about Aurelia Henry is transcribed below:

*“Feb. 15 – Wed. [1966] Dear kids–*

*“...I didn’t get down to my regular crystal ball–half awake–half asleep séances–last nite so any additional facts on your Scout Wild Davey or Drannan did not materialize–maybe just lacking the right clue. However in 1898 I finished first-yr prep. and in spring of ‘99 I finished prep for good. I have a picture of that class showing Auriel Henery (Rhinehart came later after she left U to go to Mills College in Oakland as Pres. I think) and all prep. instructors were in that picture–so you can well see a little country girl would not have a wide acquaintance so soon. So at present I can’t add a clue–But I knew a Clarence Talbott who was closely related to an Ella Talbott and there was Eunice \_\_\_\_\_? who I think was his wife. Married couples then were scarce, as you know, whose teeth...*

*“Love and Best wishes from all my family. Edna.”*

In Some Recollections of Homer David 1890 to 1910, page 19, Mr. David writes:

*“There was a character in the early days called Wild Davie. He lived in a hut in South Moscow. He always had several dogs following him. His hair grew down over his shoulders, and he had few friends. In later years, it developed that he wrote two books which were published, “Chief of Scouts Piloting Emigrants Across the Plains Fifty Years Ago” and “Thirty One Years on the Plains and in the Mountains”. It seems he had been an Indian scout with Kit Carson, had fought in the Indian War and skirmishes, and that his real name was Captain William F. Drannan. He lived here quietly, never bothering anyone, and no one knew how he secured his food, as he never worked. He must have had some aptitude for writing, and it is told that he took his notes to Miss Aurelia Henry (later Mrs. Reinhardt), who was at that time on the faculty of the University. (She later became President of Mills College, Oakland, California). Miss Henry helped him get his book ready for the publishers. Wild Davie was a friend of Clarence Talbott, who worked at the Shields Electric Light Plant. Wild Davie would stop there, en route to the University, to get warm on winter days, near the steam boiler.”*

An oral history project was underway in the 1970s and it included voice recordings of my uncles Bert and Gus Gamble. The recordings have recently become available

online, and the words of Uncle Gus telling what he remembered of Wild Davie are transcribed below. Bert was born in January of 1887, Gus in January of 1891. Gus was speaking of the last time he saw Wild Davie, in 1903. Bert was with him when they encountered Wild Davie near the present location of the Elk’s Golf Course. Bert would have been 16 years old; Gus would have been 12.

*“Gus: He had a shack somewhere between Troy and Deary. There was no Deary then. There was no door. He crawled in through a window. Some people believed him (but) kids knew he was a ‘windjammer’. He showed Kit Carson how to do some things. Bert got him some haywire from a fence and wrapped it around the wheel (a repair to get his conveyance going again). He wore buckskin.”*

Homer David’s recollections about Wild Davie (written in 1966) include mention of Captain Drannan’s books and the role of Aurelia Henry in their preparation, although it appears he became aware of these bits of information much later than 1910. Edna Ketchum remembers Aurelia Henry as an instructor at the University of Idaho in 1898-99. Both David and Ketchum mention Clarence Talbott in connection with Wild Davie. Also note Gus Gamble’s reference to Wild Davie as a ‘windjammer.’

### **The issue of literacy**

Several local sources have described both Wild Davie and Captain William F. Drannan, as well as David C. Coventry, as illiterate. How, then, could Drannan have written two books?

In Thirty-One Years on the Plains and in the Mountains (p. 103) Drannan tells of a fur trapping camp on the Cache Le Poudre River that began in late October, 1849, and ended early in January, 1850. Johnny West, William F. Drannan and some others were the occupants of that camp. The following excerpt describes how Drannan learned to read English. He was already able to speak and understand English and a little French, which was his father’s language. He soon picked up Chinook jargon, and probably some Spanish as well.

*“After we got everything nicely fixed up in our new quarters, Johnny West one evening got down his satchel, took out a book and sat and read till bedtime. The following evening when he took the book up again I asked him what he was reading, and he said, “Robin [sic] Crusoe”. I asked him why he did not read aloud so that the rest of us could hear, and he did read aloud until bedtime. I told him I would give anything if I could read as he did. So he said if I would try to learn, he would teach me to read that winter as good as he could. I assured him there would be nothing lacking on my part, so the next night I took my first lesson. At that time I did not know all the letters, but I was determined to learn to read. In a very short time I*

## WILD DAVIE

*A man once lived in our town  
When the century was new.  
His tales of furs and wagon trains,  
Perhaps they could be true!*

*He was known as "David Coventry"  
But "Wild Davie" fit him best.  
He knew every guide and trapper  
Who opened up the West.*

*His clothes were made of buckskin  
With fringes all about.  
Locks of hair down to his shoulders,  
He looked the part of scout.*

*Some scholars doubt his exploits.  
Some say he's not the one.  
Some claim exaggeration:  
That's how a yarn is spun.*

*He profusely names all of the guides  
All of the scouts as well.  
Geographic details that only  
One who knows can tell.*

*Kit Carson and Jim Beckwith,  
When they were in their prime,  
Quaint spelling very much in use  
In their place and time.*

*His memories and his stories  
Had waited all the while  
For someone to assist him  
And write them out in style!*

*A memoir of his fulfilled duties  
Piloting wagon trains:  
"Thirty-One Years..." declares the title,  
"William Drannan" was his name.*

*Where he chose to write his memoirs  
Now that the West was tamed:  
Our little town of Moscow  
Was the one Will Drannan named.*

*The time has come to ask:  
"What is in a name?"  
And what it is a person seeks:  
Anonymity or fame?*

*I have pondered notes and letters  
And to this conclusion came:  
"Wild Davie" and "Will Drannan"  
Were one and the same!*

*-D. Wahl April 24, 2011*

*had learned all my letters, and being possessed of a great memory, I learned very fast, and Johnny, seeing I was so determined in the matter, spared no pains in teaching me, and by the next spring I could read Robinson Crusoe myself. Having a start, I could learn of my own accord, and to Johnny West I am greatly indebted for the limited education I now possess; and were he now living I could not express to him my gratitude for his labors as my tutor in that lonely wilderness, hundreds of miles from any white man's habitation. And, although my education is quite limited, yet what little I do possess has been of great value to me through life."*

But could Captain Drannan write? Drannan's book tells of him going to the Puget Sound country in the spring of 1887, Seattle in particular. He claims to have bought a hotel there, but Frontier Legend: Texas Finale of Captain William F. Drannan, Pseudo Frontier Comrade of Kit Carson, a well-researched book by W. N. Bate published in 1954, shows evidence that what he had was an undivided one-half interest in the "River Side Restaurant" which was located in the basement of "The Minnesota House", a hotel at that location. [The space was probably rented from the hotel.] This operation was burned in the great Seattle fire of June 6, 1889. Drannan remained in Seattle for about nine months. Frontier Legend... cites a King county record of a Bill of Sale. Mr. Bate found that the King County, Washington, auditor had recorded a bill of sale describing "An undivided half interest to the River Side Restaurant situated in the basement of the Minnesota House on the Southwest corner of South Second and Washington streets in the city of Seattle, King County, Washington Territory..." The sale was to Mrs. Hattie E. Zook and was settled on May 3, 1890; it was signed as follows:

*"Wm. F Drannan, "X" his mark and his wife, Anna Drannan."*

Was Wm. F. Drannan actually present to sign this bill of sale? Was Anna (or Annie) Drannan left to clean up the debts of the Seattle restaurant which burned up most of Seattle in 1889, and the Drannans' restaurant along with it?

Bert Gamble was another source of information on Wild Davie. Bert would have been 13 years old in 1900. He asserted that Wild Davie was illiterate and would not have been able to write a book. However, this seems to be an erroneous conclusion since we have recently found, among the collection at White Springs Ranch Museum, a photograph of Wild Davie with his writing on the back (see Figures 5 and 6). This shows that he could indeed read and write, but he likely would have needed and sought out someone, or perhaps more than one person of greater literary skill, to help him write the books. This would account for the fact that three different people are said to have helped to write his books: Miss Aurelia Henry, Clyde C. Fleener, and William Drannan's last wife, Belle. Several sources say that Miss Aurelia Henry wrote the first book, based upon the recollections told to her by Wild Davie. The second book was promoted as a sequel, but was really more of an abridged version of the first book. It may very well be that one or both of the other writers was involved in the second book.

Jeanette Talbott has furnished information regarding Clyde Fleener's story about the writing of the books. Not only was Jeanette's maiden name Fleener, but she was married to John Talbott, who was the son of Clarence Talbott, Wild Davie's friend at the power plant. Clarence Talbott was born

in 1875, and so would have been 24 years old in 1899. Jeanette must have heard the story from both families. We do know, from the Edna (Wahl) Ketchum letter, that Aurelia Henry was at the University of Idaho at the right time to write the first book (1899). Clyde Fleener was born in 1892. He would have been seven years old at the time of the writing of the first book and eighteen at the time of the writing of the second book, *Chief of Scouts...*, in 1910. It seems that, by that time, Drannan was having difficulty selling *Thirty-One Years...* and perhaps hoped that a shorter version would sell better. According to W. N. Bate's in *Frontier Legend...*, Drannan was hard pressed for money then, so it would have been difficult for him to pay a writer to help him.

### Issues of accuracy and truthfulness

Besides the local doubts about Drannan's literary abilities, critics of his books have questioned the credibility of Drannan's life story as told in his books.

In *Frontier Legend...* by W. N. Bate, as in many other books, Drannan is accused of exaggeration and overstatement of his heroic role on the frontier. The book also recognizes that much is often done to make a better story or, in this case, to make a more marketable book. The incentive for marketability was strong on the part of Drannan's publisher and especially for Drannan who, by the late 1890s, was broke and no longer so robust. The trapping of beaver was finished, the Indian Wars were pretty much over, and the railroads had supplanted the wagon trains. His marketable assets were his recollections of pioneer days in the west. This author finds, however, that Drannan seemed to know subtleties surrounding historical events that could very well place Drannan on location despite lack of evidence that his role was so heroic. For example, at the end of the Modoc War Drannan tells of a race to bring the news from the Lava Beds to Ashland, OR. This was known locally at the time but is not to be found in general histories.

Another reviewer is brutally critical of Drannan, citing the lack of evidence among Kit Carson's papers that he ever knew Drannan. It is especially interesting that a rock has been found just east of Prescott, Arizona, with the name "Willie Drannan" inscribed on it and dated in accordance with the John Fremont expedition of 1849, whose guide and scout was none other than Kit Carson. The following excerpt from "Murder He Wrote: A rock art story" by Edward and Diane Stasack relates that discovery.

*"Liar or Legend? No one has said that Captain William F. Drannan (1832-1913), Chief of Scouts, was a fictional character, just that he was a liar. So suggests Harvey L. Carter, author of one of the most authoritative books on Kit Carson. In his book Dear Old Kit, Carter asserts, 'what was narrated as fact by (this man) was actually a tissue of lies'.*

*"Maybe not. A message engraved on stone (KILLED INDIANS HERE 1849 WILLIE DRANNAN), recently found east of Prescott amidst some ancient petroglyphs, may belie the claim that Drannan was a total fraud. It seems to push back the date of the appearance of the earliest White visitors (other than the Spanish) in Yavapai County. The exact location is being withheld until the site is scientifically recorded.*

*"Who was Willie Drannan? According to Drannan himself, he became a companion to Kit Carson in 1847 when Carson befriended the youngster, traveled with the famous explorer Colonel John C. Fremont and, in time, became an accomplished scout. According to Carter and other historians he was a self-serving opportunistic scoundrel who invented his associations with Carson and Fremont, never was where he said he was, and never did what he said he did. Much of the criticism is based on inconsistent events and dates. The rock inscription suggests otherwise.*

*"Fremont states he was with Carson in Taos in 1849, the same year his forth [sic] expedition reached the Gila River. Was Willie with any of these men? There is no independent documentation that Drannan was with either except for his own word, but the Fremont roster is incomplete. No matter what his critics say, Willie's epitaph to "KILLED INDIANS" lies on a flat rock an easy ride from the route to the Gila River. It is unimaginable that anyone would fake this message from an obscure person in a totally remote gulch where it might never be seen."*

### Accurate descriptions of areas and events

Some of the treks that Drannan describes go from Taos, New Mexico, then along the Purgatoire River (called the "Picket Wire River" in common parlance of that time) on up to Bent's Fort on the Arkansas River. Other treks go



Figure 3. "Soda Spring", one of the Manitou Springs, probably the source of the name Fontaine Qui Bouille, translated "boiling fountain", and source of Fountain Creek. [commons.wikimedia.org](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:William_Henry_Jackson_1870_Soda_Spring.jpg), William Henry Jackson, 1870

farther north to Pueblo (established by Jim Beckwith and others) and on up to the source of the Arkansas River near Leadville.

The route he most often described was northward from Taos to Pueblo where he crossed the Arkansas River. He then entered the Fountain Creek drainage and followed it up to its source, the “Fontaine qui Bouille” (Figure 3). Drannan described his first embarrassing misadventure with the soda-water from the: “Fontaine Qui Bouille” (roughly translated to be “the boiling fountain”), one of the Manitou Springs and very near the first capital of the Colorado Territory. Drannan also wrote about “Old Colorado City”, which is farther north than the present city of the same name. It was five miles west of Colorado Springs, but probably lies within the city now. Established in 1859, it had already fallen into disuse by 1899. Drannan also mentions going up “Jimmie Creek”, a name that is hard to search out now, but a search for “Jimmy Camp Creek” yields the information that it proceeds northward and slightly eastward from the “Fontaine”. It was well known to the trappers and mountain men of Drannan’s time.

Drannan continued northward along the Middle Fork of the South Platte River crossing the divide through a pass near to the source of the Blue River. The source of the Middle Fork of the South Platte River and the source of the Arkansas River are within four miles of each other near Leadville. A single ridge divides the two rivers. This would probably explain why Drannan would get the two rivers confused some 50 years after being there, and relying only on his memories of the lay of the land when he was in that area. Drannan did know that, in either case, he would be in the “South Park Basin,” and there was a good pass through the Rocky Mountains at the headwaters of the Blue River. The Blue River emptied into the Colorado, which was a pioneer highway for many miles into the west and southwest.

Tom Wahl put together a handwritten time-line of Drannan's travels as derived from the two books and decided that Drannan knew where he was: South Park, concluding that “Drannan was all right here.” The sidebar on page 24 gives detailed excerpts from Thirty-One Years... describing the route of Drannan, Fremont and Carson in 1849. [This author’s notes are added in brackets.]

According to a National Geographic map showing the locations of Indian tribes in the Southwest, the “Western Apache” and the “Yuman” tribes were adjacent in the area just east of Prescott, Arizona. This is the very area where the inscribed stone was found saying: “KILLED INDIANS HERE 1849 WILLIE DRANNAN”.

A note of interest is Drannan’s reference to his friend “Jim Beckwith,” who more recently has been identified

as “James P. Beckwourth,” a name attached to the man’s discovery—the lowest pass across the Sierra Nevadas. Pioneers of that time called him “Beckwith.” It is also interesting that some critics quarrel with Drannan's trips across Beckwith Pass and commencing on to “Hangtown.” Hangtown is a relic within Placerville, California. Mountain roads have become state highways 70, 89, and 49. The designation “49” is not a coincidence; it refers to the “49ers” and their mines which were so prolific at the time. My wife and I have enjoyed that drive which is so laden with history. Present day Echo Summit has an elevation of 7,377 feet. Its predecessor, Carson Pass, has an elevation of 8,573 feet; Donner Pass has an elevation of 7,088 feet. Beckwith (Beckwourth) Pass has an elevation of only 5,218 feet. When the weather is mild and the snow is gone the most direct route from Hangtown to Reno is Echo Summit, but when the winter snows have come, a trip around to take advantage of 5,218 foot Beckwith Pass would be well worth the detour, a fact attested to by the experience of the Donner Party. The route Drannan describes, departing from Hangtown, seems most similar to that over Carson Pass and arriving at the Carson River, just east of the crest of the Sierras.

#### Life after the plains and mountains

According to information from the findagrave.com website, William F. Drannan was most likely married five times. His first wife was Sarah Margaret Davis Brotherton (1831-1882) whom he married on April 4, 1874. The 1880

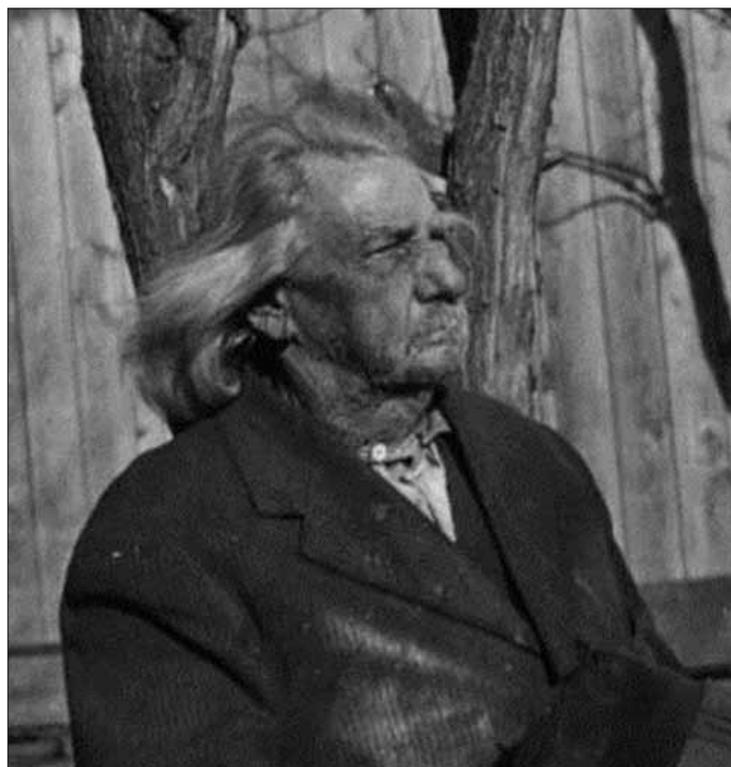


Figure 4. William F. Drannan shown later in his life. [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com), May Ashby Royer

United States Census for Carlton, Yamhill County, Oregon, lists a household including W. F. Drannan, farm laborer, age 47; Annie Drannan, wife, age 42; and Nellie Harrison, other, age 8 (presumed to be Annie Drannan's daughter). Though no marriage record for Drannan and an "Annie" or "Anna" was found in Oregon, Nevada or California, W. N. Bate in Frontier Legend... reported a Seattle Bill of Sale from 1890 that included the signature of "his wife, Anna Drannan". A third marriage was to Mary E. Street Hayes on May 24, 1893, in Bozeman, Montana. The fourth marriage, to Harriet Lovilla Cooper in Chicago on December 16, 1899, was annulled in 1900. Harriet stated Drannan had deceived her by saying he had a ranch in Utah; she later found he was destitute. (This marriage date was confirmed by Illinois State Archives: License Number: 302349, Cook County). The fifth and last marriage was to a lady named Belle H.

Drannan's book tells of his going to the Puget Sound country in the spring of 1887, Seattle in particular. He claims to have bought a hotel there, but, as mentioned previously, Bate's book Frontier Legend... reports the sale of an undivided half interest in a restaurant there by Wm. F. and Anna Drannan in 1890. Next Drannan writes: "Since that time I have wandered around from pillar to post, catching a little job here and then, and at this writing I am temporarily located at Moscow, Idaho, which is located in the famous Palouse country, one of the greatest countries on the globe for the growing of wheat, oats, barley, flax and vegetables of all kinds." The preface to Thirty-One Years on the Plains and in the Mountains is dated "Chicago, August 1st, 1899".

According to Bate's Frontier Legend..., William F. Drannan's last wife up to the time of his death was Belle H. Drannan. She claimed to have written his books and also to have sewn his buckskin clothes with the fringes. Bate's book also includes material from interviews with many people in the vicinity of Mineral Wells, Texas, who remembered William Drannan and his last wife, Belle. They also spoke of her traveling with him as he sold his books and demonstrated his marksmanship. After Drannan's death she married a man named Brown. The validity of her claim to have written the books would depend on when she married Drannan. It appears that Belle's marriage would be after his marriage to Harriet Lovilla Cooper in Chicago on December 16, 1899, too late for Belle to be involved in the writing of Thirty-One Years... and too late for Belle to have made the fringed buckskin suit pictured on the frontispiece. Frontier Legend... infers that Drannan had a complete manuscript of the book in hand when he approached his publisher in Chicago in 1899. At that time he was marrying Harriet Lovilla Cooper in December, and the marriage was annulled in 1900. Again, the date of the book's preface was August 1, 1899; the year of publication was 1900. It is apparent that he was not married to Belle at so early a time.

## Drannan's Description of the Route He Took with Fremont and Carson in 1849

*(Excerpts from Thirty-One Years on the Plains and in the Mountains, pages 66 to 77)*

"In the camp with Col. Fremont that evening Uncle Kit and he made their bargain. Carson was to furnish all the horses and was to have the right to take as many extra men and horses as he liked, also the right to trade for furs and send his men and their horses back whenever he desired to do so. . . All arrangements having been made, Uncle Kit agreeing to meet Col. Fremont at Bent's Fort in three weeks, they separated and we pushed forward to Taos."

"It was about the middle of May, 1848, that we left Bent's Fort to hunt a new route to the golden shores of California."

"The first night we camped at Fountain Qui Bouille." [There is Fountain Creek and a town named Fountain in this vicinity.]

"We traveled up the Arkansas River nearly a hundred miles, and as we neared the snow-line the deer and elk were more plentiful and we never went hungry for meat. At Jimmy's Fork we turned to the left and followed that stream to its head, then crossed over to the Blue River, which is a tributary of the Colorado. Now we were in Ute country. . ."

"On the third day after crossing the divide, we met Tawson, chief of the Apache tribes. . . Uncle Kit being able to speak Spanish, as were all the Indians in that country, he had quite a talk with the old chief, and in the meantime he had bought all the furs the Indians had to sell..."

"The third day after leaving the Apache village we reached the Colorado River and we had a hard time finding a suitable place to cross. . . . As soon as we crossed the river we began to see signs of the Ute Indians. . . ." [They had a battle with the Utes.]

"The second day from this little brush we struck a village of Goshoot Indians, and there Uncle Kit bought enough furs to make out his cargo." [This tribe (Goshute) resides on a reservation now lying on each side of the Utah/Nevada border south of the present town of Wendover, Utah. Their range was far greater prior to their confinement to the reservation.]

"The following morning Johnnie West, Juan and I loaded up and started for Santa Fe, and Uncle Kit went on to Los Angeles with Col. Fremont, as guide."

From a later trip, p. 163, referring back to the trip of 1849:

"We crossed the Gila River where Colville now stands. . . . Tribe of Indians.... They were known as the Yuma's. . . . the reader will remember that I had traveled over this same country in the year 1849 in company with Kit Carson and Col. Fremont, when on our trip to California." [Drannan did not go all the way to California on that trip. He returned to Taos.]

William F. Drannan was buried in Mineral Wells, Texas. He was born at sea on January 30, 1832. He died in Mineral Wells, Texas, on April 23, 1913. (According to the 1880 U.S. Census, he gave his birth year as 1833 and his birthplace as Tennessee, not “at sea” as written in his first book.)

### Wild Davie and Captain William F. Drannan in pictures

An exciting discovery during this research was a photograph of Wild Davie among the vast collection of materials at White Springs Ranch Museum near Genesee. The photo is reproduced here as Figure 5. White Springs Ranch was the home of the Lorang family, and Wild Davie often came to visit the Lorangs. The back of this photo (Figure 6) reveals a message written by Wild Davie, transcribed as follows:

*“Presented to Peter J. Lorang, as a Prize (sic) in finding out the hidden words [iehdlttevdwasfieaiwvil] “Guide, Hunter & Trappist”, January 23rd 1900.”*

*“With compliments of “Wild Davie,” N. B. L. M., B., Happe Valle (sic), Idaho.”*

A handwritten note from Henry Lorang accompanied the photograph of Wild Davie. This note is transcribed as follows:

*“Wild Davie as he called himself was a Scotchman & his real name was David Coventry. He just roamed around with his dogs & hunted & fished. Would stop at various friends as he always did (when in this area) at our place & we would feed his dogs & him but he’d never sleep in the house but would roll up in a few blankets in the barn or wood-shed. The hidden words were ‘The last view of Wild Davie’. We all worked at it & I had it to the last wive of Wild Davie when my brother Peter got ‘view’ by transposition & won this picture. Henry Lorang Oct 9, 1966”*

The reader can compare the likeness of Wild Davie (Figures 2 and 5) to that of William F. Drannan (Figures 1 and 4). Moreover, the handwriting of Wild Davie can be compared to that of William F. Drannan. In Figure 5 Wild Davie is standing outdoors in the snow with dogs on a chain, a gun in his hand, a sheathed knife at his waist, and a watch chain visible on his coat. Figure 2, which was taken about the same time, shows Wild Davie again, with his dogs on chain leashes, but standing before a photographer’s studio backdrop. He has his pistol and gunbelt, his rifle, and a prominent “gold?” watch chain. He wears moccasins in both pictures.

Note that moccasins are visible in Figures 1, 2, and 5: The moccasins worn by Drannan and Davie are most interesting to this author as I own a pair of moccasins of that type. They come up well above the ankle, and the laces continue up the front. A Nez Perce lady, a maker of moccasins, called them “Winter Moccasins”, and they were suitable for such use.

The following comments about moccasins are from Thirty-One Years..., page 80:

*“In those days hunters never wore boots or shoes, but moccasins from the tanned hides of elk. This winter we made enough gloves and moccasins to last us for two years, and each made himself a buckskin suit, out and out.”*



Figure 5. Wild Davie. courtesy of White Springs Ranch Museum

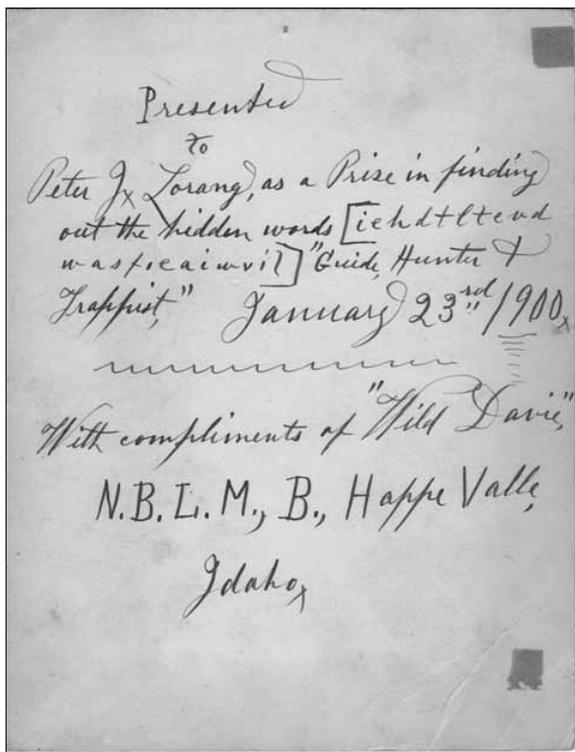


Figure 6. The back of the Wild Davie photograph containing his writing and the scrambled-letter puzzle. courtesy of White Springs Ranch Museum

Four different buckskin suits have been mentioned in the course of this research. The first was the one Drannan made for himself (at the time when he made the moccasins). The second was one he claimed that Kit Carson had someone make for him (beaded and decorated with quills). The third was the one that he wore for the frontispiece of the book (Figure 1). If Wild Davie and Drannan were the same man, then Wild Davie's buckskins, as described by Gus Gamble, would have been the same outfit. Drannan's last wife, Belle, claims to have made a fringed buckskin suit (this would have been the fourth suit) for him when they went out to sell his books. It is apparent that he already had a fringed buckskin suit when the photograph (Figure 1) was taken for the frontispiece of Thirty-One Years..., most likely in 1899, perhaps 1900. I believe that Belle was not yet his wife at that time.

It is very interesting that Wild Davie chose the message "The last view of Wild Davie" for his letter scramble puzzle. It is as if the persona of "Wild Davie" were about to disappear. It is also interesting that the only instance found of the presence of "Wild Davie" or of "David Coventry" in the United States is in and around Moscow, Idaho, from 1899 to 1910. There are plenty of instances of "William F. Drannan" both before and after that period. There are accounts in Moscow of Wild Davie traveling quite a bit to visit old friends, including going to Texas and New Mexico. There are later accounts (see Frontier Legend...) of William Drannan being in Mineral Wells, Texas, and of his reunion with "Buffalo Bill" Cody in Deming, New Mexico. It may be that once his book was published, it was no longer necessary or easy to maintain the persona of "Wild Davie." Wild Davie's inscription on the back of his picture describes himself as "Guide, Hunter and Trappist." Would that not also describe Drannan?

As for myself, I believe that Drannan was in nearly every place that he claimed to be and that, by being there, he must have met all of the people that he claimed to know. Frontier Legend... confirms Drannan's close friendship with Buffalo Bill, describing their renewed friendship when they met again in Deming, New Mexico, in 1912.

Readers may draw their own conclusions as to whether Wild Davie and William F. Drannan were the same man after studying the timelines, the photographs, the moccasins, the hair, the mustache, the shape of the nose, the eyes and brows, and whatever else comes to mind. Readers can also compare the handwriting. I happen to believe that the two men were one and the same.

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The "Prise" photograph of "Wild Davie" first came to my attention when it showed up at a presentation on History of Genesee by Earl Bennett. I later went to "White Springs Ranch Museum" to see if I could obtain a copy. I give special thanks to Diane Conroy, who found the copy in the album almost immediately. Soon afterward she provided me with excellent scans of the front and back of the picture, along with the notes by Henry Lorang which were so informative.

Studio photograph of "Wild Davie" contemporary with "The Prise" searched out by Amy Thompson, Library Specialist, Special Collections and Archives, University of Idaho Library, Moscow, Idaho



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