

William Madden Turnbeaugh

William Madden Turnbeaugh was born 15 June 1847 in Pleasant Hill, Pike, Illinois.¹ He was the youngest of four children of John Cattel Turnbaugh and Ruth McLain. His mother died when he was five years old, and his father remarried and had another child. When his stepmother died a few years later, his father married a third time² and had two more children. William ran away from home, his father found him and brought him back. He ran away again and joined the Army, changing the spelling of his surname to include the “e” so his family couldn’t find him. After the war, he had to keep the spelling that was on his Army pension.³

William enlisted in March 1864 and served as a private in Company E, 18th Regiment of the Missouri Infantry, during the Civil War. He fought on the side of the Union⁴ [NOTE: Pike County, Illinois, is on the border of Pike County, Missouri]. His regiment joined the army of General Sherman and began the advance on the city of Atlanta. They pursued General Hood when his troops evacuated, then rejoined the main body of the army and participated in the famous march to the sea. Then they marched with Sherman across the Carolinas and on to Washington DC, where they took part in the grand review. Then they went by rail and river to Louisville, Kentucky, and St Louis.⁵ William was honorably discharged there in July 1865.⁶

William married Melissa Cherizade Averett in 1871 in Washington, Washington, Utah Territory. They were the parents of 23 children, including five sets of twins. Twelve of the children died as infants. William also raised Melissa’s two children by a previous marriage. Melissa was the first white child born in Manti, Utah Territory. One of her babies weighed fifteen pounds at birth.⁷

In 1880, William was a miner in Silver Reef, Washington, Utah Territory, living with his wife and eight children.⁸ They were the largest family in town (although there were several families with six children). William owed the mine called the “Silver Reef”.⁹ In 1890, William started receiving an Army pension of \$12 per month.¹⁰ This was the maximum amount by law, indicating that he was totally unable to earn a support by manual labor.

In 1895, William and a Mr. Beckman discovered the Turnbeaugh gold mine in Eureka District, Yavapai, Arizona.¹¹ They sold half-interest in the mine to J T Dougine, a millionaire mining and milling man,¹² for \$20,000. They also sold him the Mormon Elder claim for \$10,000. William wanted to purchase a ranch on the Verde¹³ (probably near the United Verde Mine in Jerome, Arizona Territory).

In 1900, William was living in Jerome Town, Yavapai, Arizona Territory, with his wife and ten children.¹⁴ Jerome Town was in the Black Hills in copper mine area, where the United Verde Mine is

¹ Utah Death Certificates, 1904-1964; United States Census, 1850.

² *Familysearch.org*

³ Utah’s “Dixie” Birthplace, 1996, p. 193; [Memorial Day brings family together](#), video from Fox News, 27 May 2013.

⁴ US Civil War Soldiers, 1861-1865.

⁵ The Union Army, Vol 4, p. 263.

⁶ Utah Veterans with Federal Service Buried in Utah, Territorial to 1966; Congressional Serial Set, Senate Reports, 1913, p. 19.

⁷ *St George News*, 26 May 2013.

⁸ United States Census, 1880.

⁹ Utah’s “Dixie” Birthplace, 1996, p. 193.

¹⁰ Congressional Serial Set, Senate Reports, 1913, p. 19.

¹¹ *Arizona Journal-Miner*, Mid-summer edition, 1895.

¹² *Los Angeles Herald*, 10 May 1909, p. 10.

¹³ *Weekly Journal-Miner* [Prescott, Arizona], 9 November 1898, p. 2; *Mohave County Miner* [Mineral Park, Arizona], 17 December 1898, p. 1; Mining and Scientific Press, 1898, Vols 77-78, p. 533.

¹⁴ United States Census, 1900.

located. Jerome was incorporated in 1899, and one reason was to require brick buildings after four disastrous fires.¹⁵ It had a population of 2,500 in 1900, with telephone service and electric lights. It was 78% male¹⁶, so William's family was quite an oddity. In 1903, the *New York Sun* proclaimed Jerome to be "the wickedest town in the West".¹⁷

In 1907, there was a bill in Congress to increase the Army pension of certain soldiers.¹⁸ That year, William had a medical examination that showed he was afflicted with rheumatism, heart disease, right inguinal hernia, and enlarged prostate. He also suffered chronic diarrhea, chronic Bright's disease, heart disease, bronchitis, rupture, and enlarged prostate. Neighbors testified that he could not do any work and was hardly able to get out of his house; that his wife is ages and invalid and requires much attention. He had no property except a small home that was heavily encumbered and he was compelled to receive charitable assistance from his neighbors.¹⁹

In 1910, William was a farmer living in Washington, Washington, Utah with wife and four sons.²⁰ Finally, in 1913, when he was living in Boise, Idaho, his Army pension was increased to \$30 per month.²¹ William died 13 June 1915 in Washington, Washington, Utah, of uremic poisoning due to chronic hypertrophy of prostate. He had not ever recovered from a recent surgery in St George Hospital.²²

William was the town marshal in the city of Washington, Utah, for many years. He was known as the "town bull" (meaning policeman) as well as "Uncle Bill". William's home was at 250 North 300 East in Washington, Utah.²³

There was a family reunion in May 2013 where descendants placed a new tombstone (the tallest in Washington City Cemetery) with all 25 children's names.²⁴ A news video can be found at <http://fox13now.com/2013/05/27/memorial-day-brings-family-together/>

¹⁵ [Legends of America](#).

¹⁶ *Wikipedia*: Jerome, Arizona.

¹⁷ Jerome: A Ghost Town That Never Gave Up the Ghost, in *Geotimes*, American Geological Institute.

¹⁸ US Veterans Administration Pension Payment Cards, 1907-1933.

¹⁹ Congressional Serial Set, Senate Reports, 1913, p. 19.

²⁰ United States Census, 1910.

²¹ The Statutes at Large of the US, Vol 35, Part 2, p. 1396.

²² Utah Death Certificates, 1904-1964.

²³ Utah's "Dixie" Birthplace, 1996, p. 193.

²⁴ *St George News*, 26 May 2013.



William Turnbeaugh & Malissa Turnbeaugh, location

(Image from *ancestry.com*)