
Rogue River Indian War: 1855 - 1856

Oregon Militia Oregon's provisional government passed the first militia law on July 5, 1843. A second military bill passed on March 9, 1844. It called for the organization of militia companies to combat hostile Indians. The situation did not change after 1846 which gave the United States territorial jurisdiction over Oregon. Bills passed by the Oregon legislature in 1854, 1855, and 1856 reorganized the militia. The state constitution passed in 1857 summarized the existing laws.¹

Special Role The militia had always filled a special role. The militia was normally defined as the "able-bodied portion of the population, aged 17 - 45," and could be used only for defense. Militia companies were composed of men from the same general area, who developed a sense of fellowship with one another by training together during times of peace. Militia units could be called into action during times of war, but unfortunately, were rarely called up as an intact unit. Militia men would be used to augment existing U. S. Army units.

Militia Volunteers were easy to find during times of strife, but being hastily gathered, they were much less well-trained and far less organized than the army regulars. As a consequence, they were held in a measure of contempt by their professional counterparts. Part of the problem stemmed from an "excess of democracy." Militia men elected and removed their officers at will.

Private Benson's 1861 Military Warrant

The **1853 Military Road** was located and surveyed by Major B. Alvord for its entire length, and constructed in two places: 1. 10 - 11 miles of the Canon, and 2. Grave Creek hills.² A portion of the military road map identified a "Rice's" in the Grave Creek hills section. In this location Rice Benson was assigned the 1861 Military Warrant #92568. This warrant for 160 acres was adjacent to the Niday donation land claim along the Applegate Trail (title page map).



Captain Miller's Company Oregon Militia: Rogue River War

Lt. John M. Miller's 1855 Company A On November 10, 1855 Captain Bruce was elected to major. His first lieutenant E. A. Rice was elected Captain of Company A. With them stood John S. Miller, first lieutenant, and J.F. Anderson, second lieutenant.¹ Private Rice Benson was a private in Captain Miller's Company Oregon Militia Rogue River War.

Private Rice Benson's 1861 Warrant "Military Bounty Land Act of March 3, 1855, Roseburg, Oregon. May 9, 1861 Military Warrant #92568 in the name of Rice Benson has this day been located by Anson Turner..." The warrant was signed by Abraham Lincoln for 160 acres in section 3, T. 35. S., R. 6 W., W.M.⁵ This track had good bottom land along the Applegate Trail.³⁻⁶

More information Contact an officer of the *Hugo Neighborhood* on how you can become involved in your community's land use, and/or history projects.

1. Victor, Frances Fuller. 1894. *Pacific Coast Indians, Wars with, 1847-1865*. 719 pages. The Early Indian Wars of Oregon: Compiled from the Oregon Archives.

2. Hugo Neighborhood. 2008. *Major B. Alvord's Military Road: 1853..* Hugo, OR.

3. Josephine County Abstract Co. 1946. *Abstract Of Title To NE ¼ Of NE ¼ Of Section 3, T.35S. R.6W. No. 3117, No. 20087, & No. 2558.* Grants Pass, OR; Hugo Neighborhood. 2002. *Dickerson's Corner: 1945 - 2002.* Brochure. Hugo, OR.

4. Hugo Neighborhood. 2007. *Trimbles: Military Warrant.* Hugo, OR.

5. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), General Land Office (GLO) Records. 2007. Official Federal Land Records Site (<http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov/>). Internet.

6. Hugo Neighborhood. 2007. *Hugo Pioneers.* Map Of Federal Land Transfer in Hugo, Oregon. Hugo, OR.

Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society's Mission

This information brochure is one of a series of documents published by the Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society (*Hugo Neighborhood*). It is designed to be shared with neighbors for the purpose of helping protect our rural quality of life by promoting an informed citizenry in decision-making. The *Hugo Neighborhood* is an informal nonprofit charitable and educational organization with a land use and history mission of promoting the social welfare of its neighbors.

Land Use & History

The *Hugo Neighborhood's* land use mission is to promote Oregon Statewide Goal 1 — Citizen Involvement, and by preserving, protecting, and enhancing the livability and economic viability of its farms, forests, and rural neighbors. It will act, as requested, as a technical resource assisting neighbors to represent themselves.

Its history mission is to educate, collect, preserve, interpret, and research its local history and to encourage public interest in the history of the Hugo area.

Volunteer membership dues are \$10.00 annually per family and normally used for paper, ink, envelopes, publications and mailings. Make checks to the *Hugo Neighborhood* and send them to our Treasurer.

Hugo Neighborhood Association

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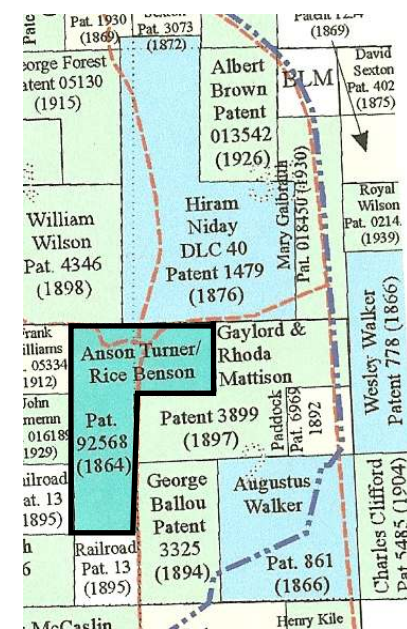
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PRIVATE RICE BENSON'S MILITARY WARRANT: 1861



Draft Brochure 18 in
Trapper's Trail Series



Benson's Military Warrant: 1861

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Hugo Emigrant Trails Committee

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