
Primary Resource Comprehension: Historic Signatures at Ben Lomond



Reporting Category: Reading and Comprehension

Topic: Demonstrating Comprehension

Primary SOLs: 6.4; 6.6; 6.7; 6.8; 6.9; 7.4; 7.6; 7.7; 7.8; 7.9; 8.4; 8.6; 8.7; 8.8; 8.9

Materials: Interactive Video; Context and Primary Source Document; Comprehension Worksheet.

Directions:

- Students will watch an educational video that includes:
 - o The story of William Wallace Cranston, a Medal of Honor recipient from the Civil War who signed his name on Ben Lomond's walls.
- Read the "Context" section below.
- Complete the corresponding worksheet.

Context:

William Wallace Cranston was from Ohio. He marched and fought in Virginia during the Civil War as a Union soldier. When he visited Ben Lomond, Cranston wrote his name on the upstairs wall. This is how it looks today:



In 1863, William Wallace Cranston performed an act on the battlefield that won him the Congressional Medal of Honor. Here is what he said about the act:

PRINCE WILLIAM

Historic Preservation

"In [the enemy's] retreat they left a Confederate soldier on the road. The poor fellow's piteous cries for help attracted the attention of the commanding general, who was passing along the lines. He asked for volunteers to go out and bring him in. 'The roads are full of rebels,' said he, 'but if you go boldly down unarmed, they will know that you are after a wounded man and will surely not be so inhuman as to fire on you who are bringing relief to one of their own men.'

"With three of my companions, I volunteered for the service. We laid off our accoutrements, and, with two army blankets for stretchers, marched to where the man lay, in plain view of the enemy. We succeeded in bringing him back alive, and took him to the Chancellor House, which was then being used as a field hospital."

Worksheet

1. Why do you think Cranston signed his name on Ben Lomond's walls?
2. Who told Cranston and his companions to walk beyond their lines and bring in the enemy officer? Why do you think it was important for Cranston and the others to bring this enemy officer back to their own lines?
3. Why did Cranston and his companions remove their military accoutrements before venturing out in between the opposing lines?
4. Cranston's actions required bravery. If faced with the same decision as him—to safely stay in your friendly lines or travel out between the lines to capture a wounded enemy soldier—what choice would you make? Write one to two paragraphs describing your decision.