

# IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## REFERENCE SERIES

WELDON BRINTON HEYBURN  
May 25, 1852-October 18, 1912

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A prominent mining attorney, Weldon B. Heyburn practiced law in his native Pennsylvania from 1876 to 1878, moved to Leadville, Colorado, and then joined the Coeur d'Alene gold rush in 1883. With two partners, he located an important lead-silver property, the Polaris, in 1884, and finally settled down to a law practice in Wallace. He held local Republican Party offices, and then served in Idaho's constitutional convention in 1889. A strong silver leader, Heyburn declined to become a Silver Republican in 1896; an unsuccessful McKinley Republican congressional candidate, he had to wait until 1903 before the Republican parties had reunited in order to get elected to the United States Senate. In the Senate, he fought Theodore Roosevelt's conservation and forest reserve programs; his campaign against forest fire protection succeeded almost completely until the disastrous North Idaho fire of 1910 burned all the way into his home town of Wallace. He served as senate sponsor for the Pure Food and Drug Act, but that marked the limit of his progressive efforts. He had a lot of western support, though, for his stand against conservation, and he represented Idaho's mining interests quite adequately.

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