



David Polson (1826-1900)

The city of Polson was named after this pioneer rancher.

- **1826-Birth.** David was born in 1826 in New Haven Connecticut. He was of Scottish descent.
- **1849:** David joined the Gold Rush and migrated to California. He worked his way west with a string of pack horses. He then moved on to Carson City Nevada.
- **1861:** He traveled by pack train to Walla Walla Washington before heading east into Orofino Idaho.
- **1861-Marriage.** David married Mary Kane in 1861. Mary was a Nez Perce Indian woman whom David met in his travels. They had one

daughter named Agnes.

- **1863:** David and his family crossed the Lolo Pass into the Bitter Root valley with a hunting party of the Nez Perce. He settled in the Bitter Root Valley.
- **1870:** He and Mary packed up and moved to the Flathead Indian Reservation and located on a ranch five miles east of Lambert's Landing. He raised stock and became very popular among the Flathead Indians. He was a renowned fiddler and was in demand at all the dances and pow wows.
- **Naming of the town.** The Salish Indians called the area Pied d'lai or "foot of the lake." Then in 1880 Harry Lambert settled at "the foot of the lake" and began operating a general merchandise store. At this time the area became known as Lambert's Landing. Another settler was Batiste Eneas who established a ferry business. The ferry boat was constructed of long cedar poles and worked the river north of the current day Polson Bridge. Towns on the reservation began to grow rapidly from 1890-1897. Post offices were established in each town. One such post office had been approved for this settlement on the lake but needed an official name. The area settlers elected Batiste Eneas and David Polson to name the town. After much discussion, David Polson suggested they name the town Eneas. Eneas was honored but hastily declined and recommended they name the town Polson as he thought it was a more fitting sounding name for a town. Hence: Polson Montana was named.
- **1900-Death.** David died on December 14, 1900.

