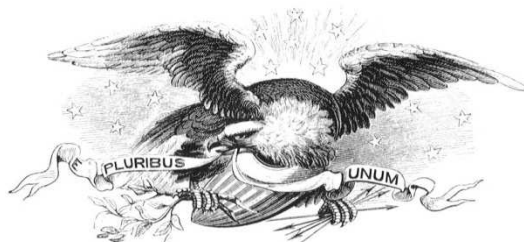




**LIEUTENANT**  
**WESLEY C. HOWE**



**2<sup>nd</sup> Massachusetts Cavalry**  
**Company M & Company A**



## WESLEY C. HOWE

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Massachusetts Cavalry

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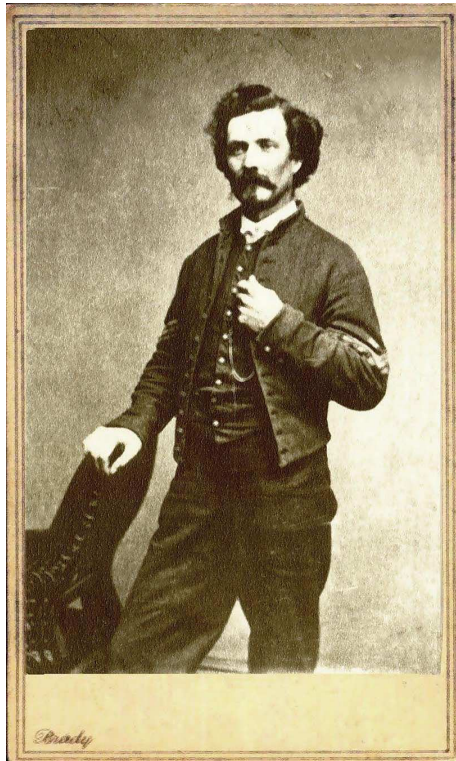
Wesley Curtis Howe was born March 19, 1833 at Edinburgh, Pennsylvania, a small town in the northern foothills of the Allegheny Mountains where they descend toward Lake Erie. At some point he moved to Shippensville, Pennsylvania, a township situated close enough to Gettysburg that when the great battle was fought, its residents heard the rumble of distant artillery from beyond the horizon.

During the early months of the Civil War, Wesley was in California working as a miner. On March 20, 1863 he enlisted with the California Battalion and prepared to head east from San Francisco to fight in the War. He was 30 years old and was mustered in as a Sergeant in Company C, eventually to be re-designated Company M of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Massachusetts Cavalry.

Sergeant Howe seems to have served with distinction as he worked his way through the ranks, receiving promotions successively to 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant, Second and First Lieutenant and eventually Captain.

Through 1863 and early 1864 his regiment skirmished with Colonel John S. Mosby along the byways of secessionist Virginia. He was with Company M in a hot skirmish when Colonel Mosby was wounded at Coyle's Tavern, Virginia on August 25, 1863. As the third year of the war wore on, the reputation of the Californians as tenacious fighters increased. They were eventually absorbed into Sheridan's Army of the Shenandoah and found themselves taking an active role in the hard fought battles against Confederate forces commanded by Jubal Early.

On September 19, 1864 during a fierce fight at Winchester, Virginia, Wesley (now a Lieutenant in A Company) was wounded and taken prisoner by the Rebels. He was transported to Richmond, Virginia and then on to Salisbury, North Carolina where he was held as a prisoner of war. In the early months of 1865 Lieutenant Howe was paroled and returned to his command, participating in the battles of South Ana Bridge, White Oak Road, Dinwiddie Court House, Five Forks,



Sailor's Creek and then was present at the surrender of Robert E. Lee at Appomattox Court House. In the months after Appomattox, as the

Army gradually disbanded, he was promoted to Captain but was not mustered as such.

When Howe mustered into the 2<sup>nd</sup> Massachusetts Cavalry, he served initially in Company M whose guidon is pictured above. As fate would have it,

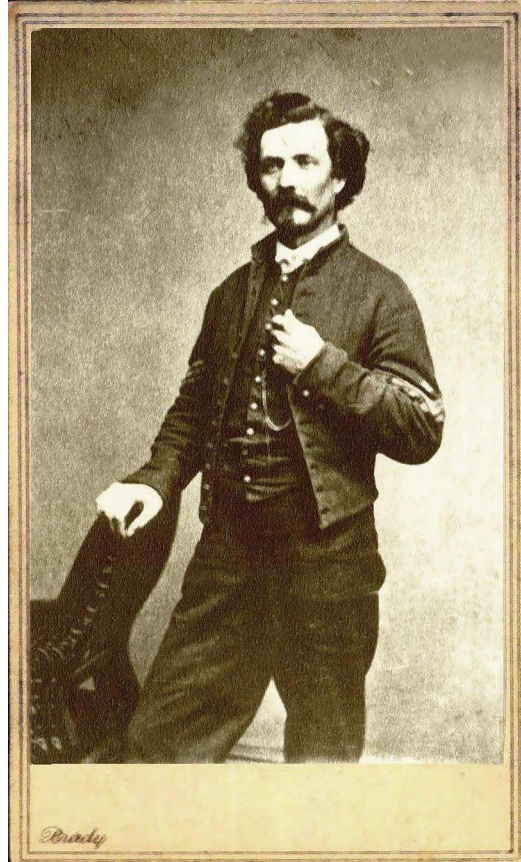




Company M would be present at most of the difficult actions the Californians had against Mosby's forces through 1863 and 1864.

When Howe was returned to the regiment after his stay in Confederate prison camps during 1864, he was issued the Spencer carbine pictured above. It is a .52 caliber rimfire, serial 53790. When the war ended, he purchased his Spencer from the Federal government for \$10.00.

After his discharge in 1865, Wesley Howe left the service and located at Franklin, Pennsylvania where he was prominently connected with the Pennsylvania National Guard. Subsequently he moved to Kansas City, Missouri where he died July 16, 1914.



## LT. WESLEY C. HOWE

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Massachusetts Cavalry

#### Civil War Service Chronology

1863

Mar 20	Musters into California Battalion, Co. C
May 11	Commence picket duty around Washington D.C.
Jun 26	Action at <b>Hanover Court House</b> , Virginia
Aug 24	Skirmish near <b>Coyle's Tavern</b> , Virginia against Mosby

<b>1864</b>	Jan 26	Fighting at <b>Ellis Ford</b> , Virginia
	Feb 22	Heavy fighting, <b>Dranesville, Virginia</b> against Mosby, many casualties
	Mar 25	Promoted to 2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant
	Apr 28	Fighting at <b>Leesburg</b> , Virginia
	Jun 02	Transfer to Company K
	Jul 06	Action at <b>Mt. Zion Church</b> , Virginia against Mosby, 55 men lost
	Jul 11	Defense of <b>Ft. Stevens, Washington D.C.</b> , 106 men lost
	Aug 10	Beginning of 21 consecutive days engaged with enemy troops
	Sep 19	<b>Wounded during heavy fighting at Opequan Creek (Winchester)</b>
	Sep 27	Registered as Prisoner of War at Richmond, Virginia
<b>1865</b>	Oct 27	Transferred to Salisbury, North Carolina prison
	Jan 08	Promoted (while absent in prison) to 1 <sup>st</sup> Lieutenant
	Feb 27	Paroled at James River, Virginia
	Jun 16	Promoted (not mustered) to Captain