

80 YEARS

over 35,000 troops at a time.

During the “fighting years,” Camp McCoy hosted dozens of divisions and units for basic, advanced, and specialized training before deployment overseas. Units trained at McCoy included: 2nd Infantry Division, 76th Infantry Division, 100th Infantry Battalion (Nisei soldiers from Hawaii), and various artillery, engineer, and support units.

The 100th Infantry Battalion, especially was one that made historical achievements during the war. The 100th was the first Japanese-American unit in the Army during World War II, and they arrived at McCoy in 1942.

Their successful training at McCoy helped prove the loyalty and capability of Nisei Soldiers, McCoy’s history states, leading to the creation of the famed 442nd Regimental Combat Team, the most decorated unit of its size in U.S. military history.

Training for the 100th at McCoy lasted roughly six months, covering marksmanship, physical conditioning, and tactical exercises. Anecdotes highlight the unit’s advanced, multi-weapon training to prove their loyalty and competency. One story from The Real McCoy archives show five 100th Soldiers received the Soldier’s Medal for rescuing civilians from drowning on a frozen Wisconsin lake.

Soldiers with the 100th also interacted with local communities, especially in Sparta, La Crosse, and Tomah. The Soldiers even formed a baseball team nicknamed the “Aloha team,” complete with Hawaiian musicians and leis, playing local teams around Wisconsin. They also hosted a farewell luau before departing — full of music, food, and aloha spirit.

McCoy also served as a prisoner-of-war (POW) camp during World War II. The former Civil Conservation Corps discharge and reception center located on South Post was converted into a POW and relocation camp, history shows. The facility consisted of 35 buildings and a 20-acre enclosure. The FBI relocated 293 enemy-alien internees (five Italians, 106 Germans, and 182 Japanese) to Camp McCoy. The camp was the largest holding facility for Japanese POWs (2,700) in the Continental United States and also housed nearly 3,000 German and 500 Korean POWs until POW operations were ceased in 1946. Camp McCoy is unique in American history as having housed both relocated Japanese-Americans from the West Coast as well as European and Japanese POWs captured during World War II.

McCoy was also well known for specialized training during World War II. The camp supported training in cold-weather operations, artillery, engineering, and maneuver warfare. Its varied terrain (woods, rivers, and open prairie) made it ideal for simulating European combat conditions, as stated by many of the World War II veterans who trained for war at the post.

By the end of World War II, hundreds of thousands of troops had passed through Camp McCoy. It was a symbol of both American preparedness and the integration of diverse groups (including Nisei soldiers) into the Army, the history states. And the post remained active after World War II, serving in the Korean War mobilization and



U.S. Army Historical Photo

This is a news photos from summer 1945 of the current headquarters of U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy. At that time the building was 3 years old.

later evolving into today’s Fort McCoy, a key Army and mobilization training center.

Fort McCoy history is also highlighted in every monthly issue of The Real McCoy — Fort McCoy’s official newspaper — in the “This Month in Fort McCoy History” column. See past editions at <https://www.dvidshub.net/publication/1002/the-real-mccoy>.

Learn more about Army history by visiting the Army Center for Military History at <https://history.army.mil>.

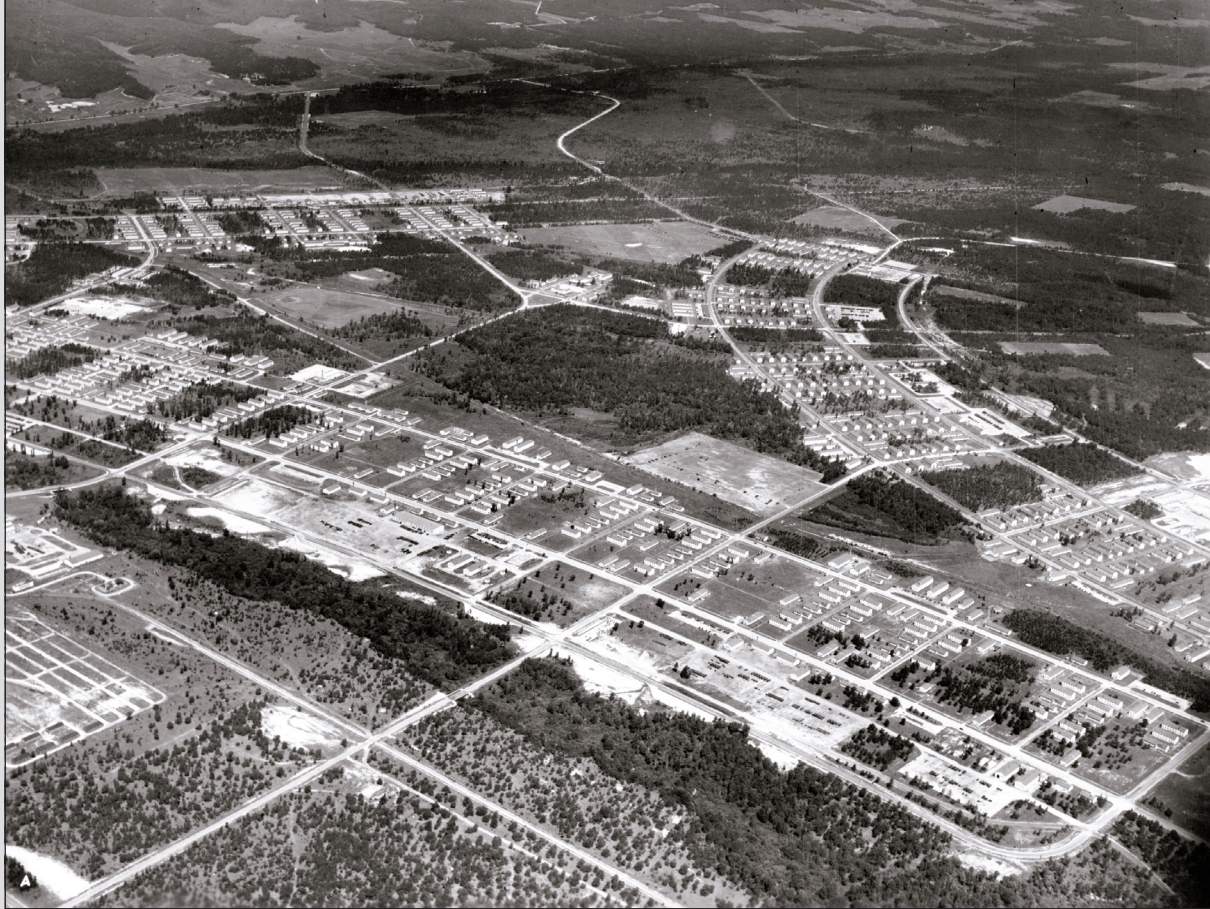
And learn more about Wisconsin’s history by visiting the Wisconsin

Historical Society at <https://www.wisconsinhistory.org>.

Learn more about Fort McCoy online at <https://home.army.mil/mccoy>, on Facebook by searching “ftmccoy,” on Flickr at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/fortmccoywi>, and on X (formerly Twitter) by searching “usagmccoy.”

Also try downloading the My Army Post app to your smartphone and set “Fort McCoy” or another installation as your preferred base. Fort McCoy is also part of Army’s Installation Management Command where “We Are The Army’s Home.”

THROUGH THE WAR YEARS: Photos at Camp McCoy, 1942-45



U.S. Army Historical Photos

(All photos) This a small collection of historical photos of then-Camp McCoy from 1942 to 1945. Fort McCoy was known then for its training support capabilities in preparing troops for war and more. Eighty years later, now Fort McCoy, and the installation continues as the Total Force Training Center for tens of thousands of troops every year.



THIS MONTH IN FORT MCCOY HISTORY:

September World War II years, 1942-1945

This Month in Fort McCoy History — Here's a collection of excerpts from the special columns of This Month in Fort McCoy history that highlighted history at then-Camp McCoy in September between 1942 and 1945.

80 Years Ago — September 1945

SEPT. 21, 1945: Col. George M. MacMullin, the man who guided Camp McCoy through its war years to national fame as a training center, left the post for a new assignment in the Pacific. Under MacMullin's command, Camp McCoy gained fame as the Middle West's top combat training center. He assumed command June 17, 1942, at that time in the old camp, now the prisoner of war camp.

In August of that year the new camp opened and it was here that, under MacMullin's command, McCoy gained nationwide fame. Here the 2nd and 76th Infantry Division and the 100th Infantry Battalion trained for what later proved to be action against the Germans. A host of other units were also readied for combat against the Nazis and later distinguished themselves in battle.

SEPTEMBER 1945: Seeing his son for the first time in 11 months was a great thrill for Staff Sgt. E. M. Shaw of Medford, Wis., who had been stationed at Camp McCoy since 1942. His son, Pfc. James Shaw, was sent to Camp McCoy for redeployment after serving in Germany. Two other members of the Shaw family were in service, as well: Lt. Grace Shaw with a hospital in Chicago and Tech Sgt. Jack Shaw, stationed in France.

SEPT. 9, 1945: A 100 percent boost in the rate of discharges from the Camp McCoy Separation Center was reported the week of Sept. 9, 1945, by Maj. Thomas B. Hammond, separation center commanding officer. Where previously the average daily discharge load was about 250, that week's daily totals topped the 500 mark, Hammond said. He said the center was aiming for a 1,200-a-day rate of discharge goal and would probably hit a peak of somewhere between 1,600 and 2,000 after the first of the year.

SEPT. 14, 1945: A member of the famed 100th Infantry battalion, made up of Americans of Japanese descent from Hawaii, returned to become a civilian employee the week of Sept. 14, 1945, at Camp McCoy, where he had trained with the unit for more than six months about 2 1/2 years before. Kenneth Koji was working as a mail clerk at the camp post office. "It's good to work at Camp McCoy," Koji said. "Wisconsin weather is different than Hawaii's, but I like it very much here."

Most of the remaining original 100th Infantry members had already been discharged, according Koji said. Their combat record, which has been cited as one of the most outstanding of any unit's in the European Theater of Operations, included nearly two years of fighting from North Africa, the length of Italy, through France from the south, and back for the victory push in Italy. With headquarters company of the 100th Infantry, Koji earned six campaign stars and the distinguished unit citation with which the unit was honored.

81 Years Ago — September 1944

FROM THE SEPT. 2, 1944, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER: *New camp 2 years old; termed 'last word' in Army training centers (By Newspaper Staff)* — Camp McCoy this week celebrated the second anniversary of the opening of the new camp — marking the birthday without incident but with an accelerated war effort. Every office shop and unit on the post worked harder to speed victory.

Col. George M. MacMullin, post commander, commenting on the anniversary, declared: "Camp McCoy has established an enviable reputation as a training site. It ranks among the nation's greatest camps. Its personnel — both military and civilian — has been a credit to the United States, and I am sure will continue unceasingly to work toward victory." At the camp's opening two years ago, 50,000 visitors toured the post expressing surprise at its wonders. The Army has continually pointed to Camp McCoy as the last word in training camps. Since its erection two years ago, the camp gained the reputation throughout the nation as being one of the finest. It has pioneered experiments for the Army and has produced fighting men who are today giving excellent accounts of

themselves on the battlefields of France, Italy, and in the Pacific.

Built with permanency
All the experience and practice the Army accumulated in building hundreds of training camps across the nation in the months before Pearl Harbor were combined and brought to the full flower in the construction of Greater Camp McCoy. The new camp, as differentiated from the old camp — now a prisoners of war center — won praise from high-ranking Army officials as the most modern and most beautiful in the Middle West, if not the entire land.

Spacious — it takes in over 6,000 acres of rugged terrain — the camp bears as much resemblance to the first cantonments thrown up following the move to rearm as a city slum does to a modern housing project. The Army gave Camp McCoy the best — building it with permanency. Hundreds of barracks, 12 chapels, six theaters, 14 post exchanges, a dozen recreation halls, two service clubs, two guest houses, dozens of offices and blocks of warehouses and shops make Camp McCoy a city out of an area where once only jack pine and scrub oak grew.

Only one for artillery
Giving troops advanced combat training was the objective of Camp McCoy. These troops were generally trained in the field and hardened by months of living in the open before coming here. The camp's rugged terrain, steep ridges, sandy soil, and hundreds of streams made it ideally suited for preparing Soldiers for combat tests.

Its size made it the only Army station in the North Central states capable of handling the big guns of heavy artillery units.

FROM THE SEPT. 16, 1944, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER: *Medal of Honor award given to hero's dad here; 76th Combat Team stages huge parade (By Newspaper Staff)* — The nation's highest award — the Congressional Medal of Honor — was presented posthumously at Camp McCoy on Friday afternoon by Maj. Gen. William R. Schmidt, 76th Infantry Division commander, to Erland Gibson, Rice Lake, Wis., in recognition of Gibson's son's gallantry in action. Technician Fifth Grade Eric Gunnar Gibson, 24, was killed in Italy after leading his squad on a dangerous mission. Under heavy enemy artillery, machine gun, and rifle fire, Gibson advanced and destroyed four enemy positions, killed five, and captured two German soldiers and secured the left flank of his company before he fell.

Came over from Sweden
A parade of a reinforced division combat team with motorized elements preceded the presentation. In attendance were Mrs. Gibson, the hero's mother; Cpl. Sven Gibson, 22, his brother, who is in the air force stationed at Shepherd Field, Texas; and a group of Rice Lake legionnaires.

82 Years Ago — September 1943
FROM THE SEPT. 11, 1943, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER: *Camp McCoy Harvest Army's 'Jungle' to farms extended another week by War Department order (By Pnt. Frank Brookhouse)* — FINLEY, N.D. — Thousands of shocks of wheat await threshing before the journey to market figuratively toppled over on the Army's marching orders and, as a result, the Soldiers of the 278th Field Artillery Battalion continued their campaign in the North Dakota grain belt for another week. The six-day extension of time to aid the farmers was finally granted by the War Department and word of the decision reached the temporary camps on Sunday as the men were preparing for the trip back to Camp McCoy.

The extension lengthened the work period to Sept. 10 and affected the entire 177th Field Artillery Group from McCoy, both battalions having been scheduled to leave Monday under previous orders. This group, under the command of veteran campaigner Col. R. T. Guthrie — who found nothing about threshing in the numerable training manuals he studied — is the largest individual group which was moved to the grain fields in the home front emergency. Scenes that might be called the tragi-comic type developed from the sudden change in virtually all camps. Here in Finley, "home" of the 278th's "Charlie" Battery, the men had just taken down all of the six-man tents when the telephone call from headquarters came through to Capt. Ernest E. Keusch. A photographer with the artistic touch could have caught nearly a hundred inspired portraits of "man beset by adversity" if he had been on the grounds when the announcement was made.

SEPT. 4, 1943: Shots fired at Camp McCoy were heard around the world as the Army Hour picked up a five-minute broadcast from the camp as part of its show. The program included Camp McCoy rifle marksmanship under the direction of Lt. Frank W.

McCoy's 80-Point Veterans Get Releases; 35s Are Next

Eligibles Given Discharges At SC Here

(Continued from Page 2)
Pvt. James Hays. These are the separation center personnel discharged: T-3 Philip W. McMillan, Sgts. Raymond J. Galt, Alvin W. Hays and Michael Mayersville, T-4 Carl F. Weber, Pvt. Robert G. French, Sgt. Lester S. Hansen, Cpl. Thomas G. Erdal and Pfc. John F. Gosselin, George A. Coppen, Norbert M. Gilman, Alvin J. Kowalski and Raymond S. Reed. The following LIEB H and S Co. men are being discharged: T-3 Sgt. Neil Peters, T-3 Sgt. James Hays, S-3 Sgt. John Kuerstner, T-3 George Koppman, T-3 Harvey Visk, Sgt. Albert Nichols, T-3 Christ Galt, T-4 Dan Erickson, T-4 Clarence White, T-3 George Hays, T-3 Harold Brown, T-3 Willard Hendrickson, T-3 Otto Hoffman, T-3 Richard White, Pfc. Albert Johnson, Pfc. Eugene McManis, Pfc. Fred Koenig, Pfc. Lawrence Emmerich, T-4 John Kuerstner, T-4 Harold Schmitt, Pfc. Wm. Carmack, T-3 Sgt. George Hays, T-3 Sgt. Florian Holmbeck, S-3 Sgt. Donald Hansen, T-3 Louis Jacobson, Sgt. Theodore Gosselin, Sgt. Geo. Simon, T-4 Milbert Proring, T-4 Steve Sagovik, Cpl. Warren Griffith, Pfc. Harold Egan, T-3 Harold Egan, T-3 Clarence Schmitt, Pfc. Lawrence Hansen, Pfc. George DeVries, Pfc. Carl Johnson, Pfc. Joseph Medek, Pfc. Raymond Storing, S-3 Sgt. Donald Peters, Cpl. Walter Schmitt, T-3 David Le Chate. T-3 Sgt. Thomas Burroughs, T-3 Sgt. Emil, S-3 Sgt. Pauline Senger, T-3 William McConnell, Sgt. Lee Lusk, Sgt. Geo. Ulrich, T-4 Donald Hansen, T-3 Warren Trench, Cpl. Harold Hoffman, T-4 John Hays, T-3 Leo Mankowski, T-3 Richard Phareson, T-3 Benno Barnes, Pfc. Charles Holmbeck, Pfc. Stanley Kettner, Pfc. Raymond Perez, Pfc. Lester Storing, S-3 Sgt. Palmer Sherriff, T-3 Donald West. T-3 Sgt. Charles Hays, S-3 Sgt. Clarence Galt, T-3 Carl Hays, T-3 Lawrence Trench, Sgt. Ed Mitchell, T-4 John Anderson, T-4 Alphonse St. John, T-4 Fred Visk, T-3 Clarence Emmerich, T-3 Anthony Gosselin, T-3 Luke Mathis, T-3 Victor Pryorik, T-3 Ralph Stokke, Pfc. Harold Burdick, Pfc. Lucia Jacobs, Pfc. Edward Lusk, Pfc. J. Richmond, Pvt. Paul Kaskin, Sgt. Robert Kaskin and Sgt. Edward Meyer.



ONCE PRISONERS OF NAZIS—Two Nazis once held prisoners by the Nazis are now working in Camp McCoy's clothing waste warehouse and enjoying life again as is evident from the smiles on their faces. Standing is Pvt. Dan Fogel, while seated checking records is Pvt. John Fleming, both of Chicago.

3 McCoy Men Compare Notes on Nazi PW Camps

Sleeping on hard straw mattresses, eating rotten, worm-infested food, tortured by body lice and fleas, and enduring filth and dirt from the lack of baths are some of the horrors of a German prison camp as related by Pvt. Daniel Fogel and John Fleming and Pfc. Ed E. Wright now assigned to the clothing warehouse here.

Fogel, Chicago, Ill., in service 34 months and a member of the 20th Infantry division, fought in England and France before his capture. During the first month of his imprisonment he was bathed in "baths" for his captives were working on a farm and used here was considered much better. Later, assigned to the railroads for a period of nine months, he suffered at the hands of the enemy.

Back in action after 21 convalescing days, Fleming fought from Belfort Gap, France, to the Rhine river where he was captured. Four months prior to his liberation were spent in a prison camp at Muenster, Germany. Wright, of Walker, Ill., fought with the 8th Infantry division in France receiving wounds that hospitalized him for 30 days. Later in the Hargen battle he was captured and held as prisoner for 18 weeks in Liebenstein. He has had 42 months in service, 11 of which were spent overseas.

Oscar Quale New Telephone Exchange Chief

Oscar Quale, former manager of the Wisconsin Telephone company, Hudson, Wis., has been appointed assistant manager of the telephone center here taking over his duties this week. In addition to the assistant manager four new operators have been added to the personnel of the center in order to take care of the 25 per cent increase in the number of calls made during the past several weeks. The increase in calls is due largely to men returning from faraway rather than new arrivals for separation as announced by W. F. Hoffmann, manager.

Pacific, ETO Doctors at McCoy

Join Station Hospital Staff

Capt. Leo H. Frigo and Lawrence A. Drobett, returned veterans of overseas service, have been added to the medical staff of the station hospital. Capt. Frigo, Chicago, Ill., spent 24 of his 34 months in service in Europe theater of operations assigned to the 34th Medical Battalion in Africa, Sicily and Italy and to the 40th Combat Engineers in France. Coming through without a scratch was somewhat of a miracle for the officer who followed within two miles of the firing line during for the wounded and assisting in getting the men back to evacuation hospitals. He wore five battle stars and an arrowhead. Holding a M. D. degree from the University of Iowa, Capt. Frigo practiced medicine in Chicago five years prior to entering service. In service 40 months, Capt. Drobett of Lansing, Mich., spent practically one year of that time in Australia and New Guinea with the First Field Hospital. Prior to assignment here he was stationed at the induction center in Chicago. Holding a M. D. degree from Loyola university, Chicago, Capt. Drobett practiced medicine six years before entering service at Lansing where his wife and three sons make their home. Entering service the same day with Capt. Drobett were his sister, First Lt. Dorothy A. Drobett, who served 23 months with the 23rd General Hospital in the South Pacific, and a brother, Capt. Donald J. Drobett, with the medical corps of the 3rd Armored Division in the European theater of operations.

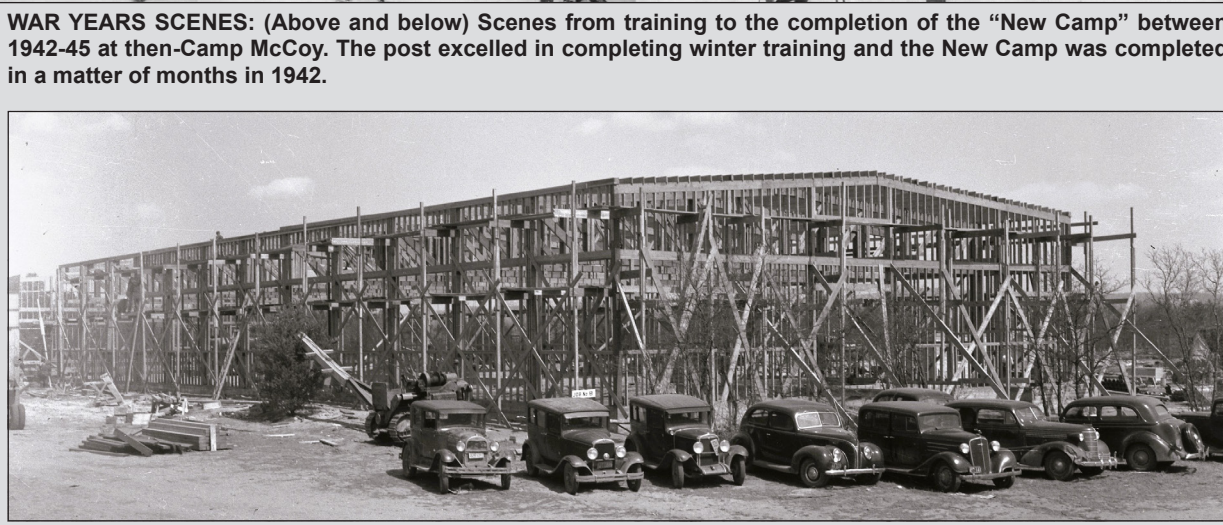
80 YEARS AGO: This is a news clipping from the Sept. 21, 1945, edition of The Real McCoy newspaper. The post was busy processing Soldiers for discharge from the war.

Luchowski, 23rd Infantry. Enlisted men appearing on the program included 1st Sgt. Edwin L. Neyrey, Cpl. Glenn W. Spray, Pfc. James R. Hill, and Pfc. Robert K. Garritt.

Written and directed by Maj. Jack Harris, executive officer of the radio branch of the War Department Public Relations Division, the Camp McCoy portion of the Army Hour came between the pickups from Fort Benning, Ga., and North Africa.

83 Years Ago — September 1942
NOTES AND NEWS: Avocado — "Avocado

has the highest food value of all fresh fruits, claim scientists." This one liner was printed in the September 1942 edition of The Real McCoy. A forecast for the future of avocados. Believe it or not, but The Real McCoy is believed to be the "first Army camp paper" in America to be sold by newsboys on the streets of a civilian city. This unusual phenomenon occurred in Sparta, Wis., (1942); shortly after The Real McCoy came off the presses with its sixth issue. The unusual fact; which thrilled the camp paper's personnel was that it almost outsold all other publications for those days. (See THIS MONTH IN HISTORY, Page 4)



WAR YEARS SCENES: (Above and below) Scenes from training to the completion of the "New Camp" between 1942-45 at then-Camp McCoy. The post excelled in completing winter training and the New Camp was completed in a matter of months in 1942.

81 YEARS AGO: This is a news clipping from the Sept. 16, 1944, edition of The Real McCoy newspaper at then-Camp McCoy.