

Camp Hughes — Gosport Cemetery

Camp Hughes Plaque Dedicated at Gosport Cemetery, Gosport, IN

On May 26, 2008 the Ben Harrison Camp No. 356 along with the 27th Indiana, Co D SVR, the 11th Indiana Reenactment Group, and the John Brighton Post 7850 VFW dedicated a new plaque recording the final resting place of eight 59th Indiana soldiers who died while at Camp Hughes which was located at Gosport Indiana. The ceremony of dedication was performed with approximately 75 guests in attendance. This ceremony was the culmination of over 2 years of research by the Ben Harrison Camp to mark the eight previously "unknown" graves. Camp Hughes was a Civil War training camp for the 59th Indiana and was located one-half mile southwest of Gosport on the White River and named for former Indiana Congressman James Hughes. Camp Hughes was in existence from September 1861 to February 13, 1862 when the 59th left Camp Hughes bound for New Albany, Indiana and active duty. Camp Hughes was the only known Civil War camp ever established in Owen County.

Research indicated that 12 men died while at Camp Hughes and that at least 8 men were buried in graves marked "unknown" at the Gosport Cemetery. The 59th Indiana soldiers who died while at Camp Hughes apparently contracted measles and died between late January and February 1862. It is unclear today why these men were buried in graves marked "UNKNOWN 59th IND INF" since the microfilmed 59th Indiana Correspondence File at the Indiana State Archives revealed that the regiment certainly knew who these men were as it listed 8 names that were reported to have been "buried by their regiment in the Gosport Cemetery." The Ben Harrison Camp made arrangements for a

plaque to be struck with the names of all 12 men who died while at Camp Hughes. The plaque was affixed onto a large granite marker already in place over the 8 “unknown” graves on May 10, 2008. This block of rough gray granite was placed over the graves in October 1923. According to an article in the *Gosport Reporter* of October 25, 1923, L. R. Gray placed the large granite stone there with the intention of having the marker either lettered or a bronze tablet attached. The granite stone was lettered with the following: IN MEMORIAM Died in Camp Hughes –1861-2. It is unclear whether they ever intended to list on this marker the individual names of the 59th soldiers who died while in camp.

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Members of the 59th Indiana Who Died While at Camp Hughes

Compiled by Tim Beckman – Ben Harrison Camp No. 356, SUVCW, Indianapolis, IN (updated 5-31-08)
<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~inbhsuv/>

The following is a tentative list of men that were members of the 59th Indiana who died while at Camp Hughes. Camp Hughes was a Civil War training camp for the 59th Indiana and was located one-half mile southwest of Gosport on the White River and named for former Indiana Congressman James Hughes. Camp Hughes was in existence from September 1861 to February 13, 1862 when the 59th left Camp Hughes bound for New Albany, Indiana and active duty. Camp Hughes was the only known Civil War camp ever established in Owen County. Some of these men were reported to have been buried by their regiment in the Gosport Cemetery, Gosport, Owen County Indiana.¹

Note: Alternate names/spellings are in parentheses.

Members of the 59th Indiana that died at Camp Hughes and who are most likely buried in the Gosport Cemetery (8):

Bennet, Uriah ^{1,2,3,4}

Private, Co. F. Date of Death 2/5/1862

Entered Service: Dec. 2, 1861 at Valeene, Ind.

Age: 18, Eyes: Blue, Hair: Light, Height: 5-7, Complexion: Light, Nativity: Orange Co., Ind., Occ'n: Farmer. Remarks: Died at Gosport, Ind. Feb. 5, 1862 of "Lung Fever."

Boon, Jefferson ^{1,2}

Private, Remarks: Buried at Gosport Feb. 15, 1862. "Taken from Death List."

Boyd, Adam ^{1,2,4}

Private, Co. E, Remarks: Buried at Gosport Jan. 27, 1862. "Taken from Death List."

Boyd, Clinton (Boyd, Unknown) ^{1,2,4}

Private, Co. I, Remarks: Buried at Gosport Feb. 8, 1862. "Taken from Death List."

Percifield, George ^{1,2,4}

Private, Co. G

Remarks: Buried at Gosport Feb. 11, 1862. "Taken from Death List."

Picket, Leonard ^{1,2,4}

Private, Co. E

Remarks: Buried at Gosport Feb. 28, 1862. "Taken from Death List."

¹ Indiana State Archives, Commission on Public Records, 59th IVI Correspondence Microfilm abstract of "Death List."

² Indiana State Archives, Commission on Public Records, Civil War Muster/Enrollment Cards Microfilm.

³ Terrell, W. H. H., *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Indiana, Volume VIII, Fifty-Ninth Regiment Infantry Roll of Honor*, Indianapolis, IN 1866.

⁴ National Park Service Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System On-line Database:
<http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/>

★ **Headquarters** ★
Grand Army of the Republic ★

General Orders No. 11,
WASHINGTON, D.C., May 5, 1868

The 30th day of May, 1868, is designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village, and hamlet church-yard in the land. In this observance no form of ceremony is prescribed, but posts and comrades will in their own way arrange such fitting services and testimonials of respect as circumstances may permit.

We are organized, comrades, as our regulations tell us, for the purpose among other things, "of preserving and strengthening those kind and fraternal feelings which have bound together the soldiers, sailors, and marines who united to suppress the late rebellion." What can aid more to assure this result than cherishing tenderly the memory of our heroic dead, who made their breasts a barricade between our country and its foes? Their soldier lives were the reveille of freedom to a race in chains, and their deaths the tattoo of rebellious tyranny in arms. We should guard their graves with sacred vigilance. All that the consecrated wealth and taste of the nation can add to their adornment and security is but a fitting tribute to the memory of her slain defenders. Let no wanton foot tread rudely on such hallowed grounds. Let pleasant paths invite the coming and going of reverent visitors and fond mourners. Let no vandalism of avarice or neglect, no ravages of time testify to the present or to the coming generations that we have forgotten as a people the cost of a free and undivided republic.

If other eyes grow dull, other hands slack, and other hearts cold in the solemn trust, ours shall keep it well as long as the light and warmth of life remain to us.

Let us, then, at the time appointed gather around their sacred remains and garland the passionless mounds above them with the choicest flowers of spring-time; let us raise above them the dear old flag they saved from dishonor; let us in this solemn presence renew our pledges to aid and assist those whom they have left among us a sacred charge upon a nation's gratitude, the soldier's and sailor's widow and orphan.

It is the purpose of the Commander-in-Chief to inaugurate this observance with the hope that it will be kept up from year to year, while a survivor of the war remains to honor the memory of his departed comrades. He earnestly desires the public press to lend its friendly aid in bringing to the notice of comrades in all parts of the country in time for simultaneous compliance therewith.

Department commanders will use efforts to make this order effective.

By order of
JOHN A. LOGAN,
Commander-in-Chief



Memorial Day 2008



**Remembering
those who died
while in the service
of their country in the
59th Indiana Volunteers
at Camp Hughes,
Gosport, Indiana
1861-1862**

**Ben Harrison Camp No. 356
Indianapolis, Indiana
May 26, 2008**

Ben Harrison Camp Set to Install and Dedicate Plaque at Gosport Cemetery

For over two years the Ben Harrison Camp has embarked on a project to appropriately mark the final resting place of soldiers who died while at Camp Hughes located in Gosport Indiana. Camp Hughes was a Civil War training camp for the 59th Indiana and was located one-half mile southwest of Gosport on the White River and named for former Indiana Congressman James Hughes. Camp Hughes was in existence from September 1861 to February 13, 1862 when the 59th left Camp Hughes bound for New Albany, Indiana and active duty. Camp Hughes was the only known Civil War camp ever established in Owen County.



Research indicated that 12 men died while at Camp Hughes and that at least 8 men were buried in graves marked "unknown" at the Gosport Cemetery. The 59th Indiana soldiers who died while at Camp Hughes apparently contracted measles and died between late January and February 1862. It is unclear today why these men were buried in graves marked "UNKNOWN 59th IND INF," as the microfilmed 59th Indiana

Correspondence File at the Indiana State Archives lists 8 names that were reported to have been "buried by their regiment in the Gosport Cemetery." The Ben Harrison Camp made arrangements for a plaque to be struck with the names of all 12 men who died while at Camp Hughes. The plaque will be attached to a large granite marker already in place over the 8 "unknown" graves. This block of rough grey granite was placed over the graves in October 1923. According to an article in the *Gosport Reporter* of October 25, 1923, L. R. Gray placed the large granite stone there with the intention of having the marker either lettered or a bronze tablet attached. The granite stone is currently lettered with the following: IN MEMORIAM Died in Camp Hughes -1861-2. It is unclear whether they ever intended to list on this marker the individual names of the 59th soldiers who died while in camp.

On Saturday, May 10th, starting at 9:00 AM EDT, the Ben Harrison Camp will be installing the new plaque on front of the granite marker and will also be cleaning and resetting the surrounding military stones. The official dedication will take place on Monday, May 26th, 2008 at 11:00 AM EDT. The camp would like to extend an invitation to all to attend the dedication on May 26th. The Ben Harrison Camp would like to thank the Department of Indiana for their kind monetary donation to this project. For more information please contact Tim Beckman of the Ben Harrison Camp at the following e-mail address: timbeckman@gmail.com or call 317-353-6322.