

Information Sheet

R **Hughes, John Calvin, 1827-1863.**
309 **Papers, 1862-1863.**
 Two folders, photocopies.

This collection is available at The State Historical Society of Missouri. If you would like more information, please contact us at shsresearch@umsystem.edu.

These are typescripts of the Civil War letters of John C. Hughes, a native of Washington County, Missouri, and member of Co. I, 33rd Missouri Infantry. He wrote to his wife from camps at St. Louis, Rolla, Salem, Houston, and Hartville, Missouri, Columbus, Kentucky, and Helena, Arkansas. Folder 2 contains genealogical data and copies of military service and pension papers from the National Archives.

John Calvin Hughes began his brief military career at Caledonia, Missouri, on 21 August 1862. In company with friends and acquaintances, he joined Co. I of Col. Clinton B. Fisk's 33rd Missouri Infantry. Although his grandfather, Capt. John Hughes, had led a company of riflemen from New Madrid in 1812 and his family had a tradition of frontier military service, his decision to enlist could not have been an easy one. He left his wife and four small children on their farm in the Bellevue Valley. He never saw them again.

Hughes mentioned several motives for his enlistment. He seems to have been drawn by a patriotic desire to strike at the rebels, by Col. Fisk's reputation as an advocate of temperance, and the generous enlistment bounty put up by St. Louis businessmen. Hughes and the other soldiers from Washington County met the remainder of the 33rd at St. Louis, where they were mustered in during late September 1862. The regiment was posted briefly at Rolla, then was sent on a circuitous march through Phelps, Dent, Texas, and Wright counties. The campaign was notable chiefly for the capture of the regimental baggage train by rebels at Beaver Creek in Wright County.

The 33rd was recalled to Benton Barracks in late December prior to transfer to forces operating along the Mississippi River. After a brief stay at Columbus, Kentucky, the 33rd was assigned to the garrison at Helena, Arkansas. John C. Hughes was never healthy after leaving Missouri. He was plagued with chronic diarrhea, and in March 1863 he was hospitalized with pneumonia. His condition worsened and he was placed aboard the steamer *City of Memphis* for transport to the general hospital at St. Louis. He died en route on 8 April 1863. He is buried in the Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery at St. Louis.

The Hughes collection contains 27 letters to his wife, beginning on 7 September 1862 and continuing through 27 February 1863. Twenty-one of the letters, all dated 1862, were written from encampments in Missouri. There is one letter from Columbus, Kentucky, and five from Helena, Arkansas. Hughes expressed himself well, and his letters are interesting and informative. In addition to family and household matters he commented on camp life, officers, furloughs, dissatisfaction with the military, soldiers from Washington County, the attack on the wagon train at Beaver Creek, and sickness within the regiment. Hughes was obviously homesick, and his morale suffered when he missed a visit by his wife to the camp at Salem. His disillusionment with the war increased as his health deteriorated. He wrote on 9 February 1863 that even some of the officers were suggesting that desertion, under the conditions, had become a duty. However, he assured his wife that he could stand the service a while longer. Less than eight weeks later he was dead.

These typescripts were made by the donor from the originals, which are no longer available. The donor has also supplied genealogical material on John C. Hughes and his family, and copies of military and pension records at the National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Shelf List

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Folder 1: Letters, 7 September 1862 – 27 February 1863 (39 pages, photocopies).

Folder 2: Pension papers and genealogical data, n.d. (42 pages, photocopies).

<u>Date</u>	<u>From</u>
7 September 1862	Benton Barracks (Saint Louis, Mo.).
9 September 1862	Benton Barracks (Saint Louis, Mo.).
10 September 1862	Benton Barracks (Saint Louis, Mo.).
11 September 1862	Benton Barracks (Saint Louis, Mo.).
14 September 1862	Benton Barracks (Saint Louis, Mo.).
16 September 1862	Benton Barracks (Saint Louis, Mo.).
20 September 1862	Benton Barracks (Saint Louis, Mo.) [Cont'd 21 September].
25 September 1862	Camp near Rolla, Mo.
29 September 1862	Camp near Rolla, Mo. [Cont'd 30 September].
4 October 1862	Camp near Rolla, Mo. [Cont'd 5 October].
8 October 1862	Camp near Rolla, Mo. [Fragment, cont'd 10 October].
15 October 1862	Camp near Rolla, Mo.
20 October 1862	Camp near Salem, Mo.
25 October 1862	Camp near Salem, Mo.
31 October 1862	Camp near Salem, Mo.
3 November 1862	Camp on Little Piney, en route to Houston, Mo.
6 November 1862	Houston, Mo. [Cont'd 7 November].
17 November 1862	Hartville, Mo.
4 December 1862	Houston, Mo.
10 December 1862	Houston, Mo.
21 December 1862	Benton Barracks (Saint Louis, Mo.).
1 January 1863	Columbus, Ky. [Cont'd on 2 January].
7 February 1863	Helena, Ark. [Cont'd 8 February].
9 February 1863	Helena, Ark.
12 February 1863	Helena, Ark.
22 February 1863	Helena, Ark. [Fragment].
27 February 1863	Helena, Ark. [Cont'd 28 February aboard steamboat <i>Lebanon</i>].

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22 December 1986

Thomas Caulley

Gift

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