

Amos Humiston

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Amos Humiston (April 26, 1830–July 1, 1863) was a Union soldier who died in the Battle of Gettysburg.

Civil War

Humiston served in the [Union Army]] and was killed in action during the American Civil War on the Gettysburg Battlefield, dying with his children's image that his wife had mailed to him months earlier.^{[7]:69} A local girl found the image, and Dr. J. Francis Bournes saw it at her father's tavern and subsequently publicized the image.^[8] "wounded, he had laid himself down to die. In his hands ... was an ambrotype containing the portraits of three small children ... two boys and a girl ... nine, seven and five years of age, the boys being respectively the oldest and youngest of the three. The youngest boy is sitting in a high chair, and on each side of him are his brother and sister. The eldest boy's jacket is made from the same material as his sister's dress ... [It is] desired that all papers in the country will draw attention [so] the family ... may come into possession of it" (*The Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 19, 1863).^[9]



Image used to identify Humiston.

Amos Humiston



Born	April 26, 1830 Owego, New York ^[1]
Died	July 1, 1863 (aged 33) Gettysburg, Pennsylvania 39°49′55″N 77°13′43″W ^[2]
Buried at	Gettysburg National Cemetery, NY Section B, grave 14 ^[3] (now "Section O") ^[4]
Allegiance	 United States of America
Service/branch	 United States Army <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Union Army
Years of service	1862–1863
Rank	 Sergeant
Unit	 Company C, 154th New York
Battles/wars	American Civil War <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chancellorsville (WIA) Gettysburg †
Relations	Spouse: Philinda Humiston Children: Franklin, Alice, Frederick ^[5] Descendants: David H. Kelley ^[5] & Allan Lawrence Cox ^[6]

Humiston's wife in Portville, New York—who hadn't received a letter from her husband since the Battle of Gettysburg—responded to the photograph's description in the *American Presbyterian* of October 29. She subsequently confirmed the image^[7] after Bourns sent her a carte de visite copy of the image.^[5] Bourns took the original to her; and the image identification, as well as Bourns' project for an orphans' home at Gettysburg, were publicized.^[7]

The family subsequently resided at the "National Homestead at Gettysburg" (opened October 1866) for 3 years until the widow remarried, when they relocated to Massachusetts.^{[7]:70}

Historiography

After numerous postbellum retellings and a 1993 memorial regarding the story at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania,^[10] historian Mark H. Dunkelman published Humiston's 1999 biography using Humiston's war letters—including a May 1863 poem of how Humiston missed his family.^[1]

References

- Dunkelman, Mark H. (1999). *Gettysburg's Unknown Soldier: The Life, Death, and Celebrity of Amos Humiston* (<http://books.google.com/books?id=bC7gNo0mmrsC&lpg=PA154&ots=x2CcNfbLz1&dq=humiston%20gettysburg%20graves&pg=PA155#v=onepage&q=humiston%20gettysburg%20graves&f=false>). Greenwood Publishing Group. ISBN 0-275-96294-6. LCCN 98-40342 (<http://lccn.loc.gov/98-40342>). *The American Presbyterian revealed the identification of Amos Humiston on November 19 ... [Humiston] rested in his unknown's grave on Judge Samuel Russell's lot. ... the Gettysburg Compiler carried the story of the identification on November 30* (The lot of the "Hon. S. R. Russell" was used for Pennsylvania College's 1887 Glatfelter Hall.)^[1] (<http://news.google.com/newspapers?id=ilQmAAAAIBAJ&sjid=JgAGAAAAIBAJ&pg=1646,6385126&dq=round-top-park+1887&hl=en>)
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- Maj. Gen. O.O. Howard (1867). "List of Names" (<http://books.google.com/books?oe=UTF-8&id=N3MmMWsnGTwC&pg=PA69>). *Revised Report Made to the Legislature of Pennsylvania, Soldier's National Cemetery, at Gettysburg*. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Singerly & Myers, State Printers. p. 69. Retrieved 2015-01-17. *"Sergt. Amos Hummiston"* [sic].
- "Amos Humiston" (<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=12394>). Find a Grave. Retrieved 2008-10-30. "Sergt. A. Humiston" on gravestone. (<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=pv&GRid=12394&PIpi=94990>)
- Morris, Errol (March 29 – April 2, 2009). "Whose Father Was He?: Part One" (<http://morris.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/03/30/whose-father-was-he-part-two/> Part Two)" (<http://morris.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/03/29/whose-father-was-he-part-one/>). New York Times. *"Within a few days the ambrotype came into the possession of Benjamin Schriver, a tavern keeper in the small town of Graeffenburg, [sic] about 13 miles west of Gettysburg. ... Four men on their way to Gettysburg were forced to stop at Schriver's Tavern when their wagon broke down. They heard the tale of the fallen soldier and saw the photograph of the children. One of them, Dr. J. Francis Bourns,"*

6. Third Friday Wine website entry (<http://www.thirdfridaywine.com/sample-page/>)
7. Reef, Catharine. *Alone in the World: Orphans and Orphanages in America* (<http://books.google.com/books?id=e7eH2BtttEC&pg=PA69>). "read the account in November 1863 [and suspected they were] *their children, Frank, Alice, and Fred, ages eight, six, and four.*"
8. "Amos Humiston: Union Soldier Who Died at the Battle of Gettysburg" (http://www.historynet.com/wars_conflicts/american_civil_war/3026901.html). HistoryNet.com. June 12, 2006. Retrieved 2011-08-31. "*After seeing to it during his stay in Gettysburg that the soldier's grave was well marked, Dr. Bourns returned to his Philadelphia home, where he put his [publicity] plan into action.*"
9. "Whose Father Was He?". *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. October 19, 1863. " "*The children, two boys and a girl, are, apparently, nine, seven, and five [sic] years of age... The youngest boy is sitting in a high chair, and on each side of him are his brother and sister. The eldest boy's jacket is made from the same material as his sister's dress.* "" (quoted by Morris)
10. "The Children of the Battlefield" (<http://www.brotherswar.com/Gettysburg-1u.htm>). *The Battle of Gettysburg - Wednesday, July 1, 1863*. BrothersWar.com. "*This modest marker rests upon the site where, several days later, a Gettysburg civilian found a then anonymous Union soldier*"

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| Union military personnel killed in the American Civil War

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