

Major Civil War Forts & Camps in Hardin County, KY (1861–1862)

These camps formed a tight cluster around the Salt River, Bee Branch, and the Ohio River—supporting the construction and defense of Fort Duffield.

1. Fort Duffield — West Point

- **Type:** Union earthen fort
- **Built:** Late 1861
- **Builders:** 9th Michigan Infantry
- **Purpose:** Protect the Ohio/Salt River junction and the L&N Turnpike supply route
- **Notes:** Largest and best-preserved Civil War earthen fort in Kentucky
- **Location:** Pearman Hill, overlooking West Point

2. Camp Haycraft — Elizabethtown

- **Type:** Union camp
- **Dates:** 1863–1865
- **Location:** Southeast side of Elizabethtown
- **Purpose:** Guarding the Louisville & Nashville Railroad and supporting Union operations in central Kentucky

Camp Haycraft is located South-East of E-Town on the hill that once occupied Fort Haycraft (a 1790's Pioneer Fort). There is a hiking trail, part of the Greenbelt Trail, that will pass by the site of the pioneer fort and the civil war campground (1861-62). The hiking trail begins across from the Justice Center at Valley Creek Bridge and continues East about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile. The site of the encampment is marked by signs.

Regiments that used Camp Haycraft:

18th Ohio---Nov. 23, 1861 (see McArthur Journal)

18th Ohio—Nov. 15th—"History of 18th Ohio Vol. Inf- Camp Haycraft was described as a beautiful & healthy camp. While there, they were brigaded with the 37th Indiana & the 19th Illinois under Col. John Basil Turchin as brigade commander.

The month at Camp Haycraft was spent in marching & drill. Opportunities were found to give the men a chance to fire their muskets. On Dec 18th the brigade left Haycraft for Camp Stanton seven miles further down the road.

19th Illinois—Dec. 1861 (see Zouave Gazette)

Ky. Troops—Feb. 13th 1862 "Louisville Daily Journal"

9th Michigan—Jan 4th 1862—March 12th 1862. (see Microfilm 86)

37th Indiana <http://jerry.vigo.lib.in.us/civilwar/037notes.htm>

124th Ohio—see Haycraft diary.

Letter from Cincinnati Commercial: Camp Haycraft Dec. 7th 1861.

See Haycraft Diary—tells of troops camping on his farm.

(pg. 9) The 124th Ohio Regt. Col. Payne encamped on my lawn. The Indiana Cavalry encamped in my Orchard.

From Microfilm roll 86 (Troop movements)

The 9th Mich Inf & band; Co A,B,C,D,F,K at E-Town Jan/Feb 62. They were later joined by Co E&G. One of these companies was at Nolin Bridge & the other at West Point. The entire regiment was concentrated at E-Town until the 9th of March.

Jan. 4th 1862; Co K along with 5 others left West Point on Jan 4th and marched 12 miles to E-Town to Camp Haycraft.

The entire regiment was concentrated at E-Town until the 9th of March under command of John Smith. We camped at South side of E-Town so bridges could be guarded. Left March 12th, 1862 for West Point.

“Louisville Daily Journal—Feb 13th, 1862” Camp Sam Haycraft, near Elizabethtown. Feb 9th, 1862 Mrs. Sam Haycraft has been untiring in her efforts to soothe the suffering & minister to the wants of our sick “Kentucky Boys:.. Capt. Haycraft comes around every day to see what he can get for us.

Microfilm Roll 124th Ohio: Camped on Haycraft farm.

From “Louisville Daily Journal”

2-18-62; Brig. Gen Ward in command of 16th Brigade has hdq here at E-Town. Fry Scouts under Capt. H.G. Twyman attached to this brigade.

3-6-62. Ladies relief here for sick soldiers (March 3rd). Mrs Marshall & Mrs Christopher sent to convalescent barracks to render aid.

These Michigan soldiers died in Elizabethtown. (at Camp Haycraft)

Barshite, Lambert—Co B; Feb. 19th, 1862

Bessee, Augustus Co B June 24, 1862

Frazier, Alexander Co D Apr, 1862

Hadden, Newton D Co F Feb 8th, 1862

Hill, Cyrus Co F Mar 15, 1862

Hodgekiss, Ben Co G Mar 12, 1862

Lott, Joseph H Co B Mar 16, 1862 typhoid

Munson, Melvin Co K Feb 22, 1862

Sawyer, Milton W Co K Feb 22, 1862

Shook, Henry Co B Mar 8, 1862

Sibley, William H Co A Jan 25, 1862

Sutton, Solomon Co D Feb 24, 1862

Varnum, George Co D Mar 17, 1862

Hastings, James David (37th Ind-A) died at Camp Haycraft in Elizabethtown on Dec. 5th, 1861 of Typhoid Fever.

3. Camp Hazard — Near West Point

- **Type:** Union camp
- **Location:** Near West Point (exact site undetermined-Hardin Cty side of the Salt River)
- **Notes:** Listed among Union camps in the Hardin County area

4. Camp Holman — Near West Point

- **Type:** Union camp
- **Location:** Near West Point (possibly at Kulmer Beach to Ohio Valley Racetrack at the mouth of the Salt River)
- **Notes:** Often mentioned alongside Camp Hazard as part of the West Point military complex

5. Hardin's Fort / Hardin's Station (Historic Frontier Site)

- **Type:** Early frontier fort (pre-Civil War), but still listed in Civil War fort directories
- **Location:** Hardin County
- **Notes:** Not a Civil War-built fort, but appears in Civil War fort lists because of its historical military relevance

4. Camp Armstrong

- **Established:** November 9, 1861
- **Units:** 1st & 18th Ohio Volunteer Infantry
- **Location:** Just upstream from Bee Branch on the West Point side of Salt River
- **Notes:** Reached via pontoon bridge; part of the growing West Point encampment cluster.

5. Camp Buell

- **Established:** November 14, 1861
- **Unit:** 1st Wisconsin Infantry
- **Location:** Adjacent to Camp Duffield near the Bee Branch bridge
- **Notes:** One of the last major 1861 camps to arrive before winter.

Supporting/Adjacent Sites Often Associated With Hardin County

These are not inside Hardin County but directly connected to troop movement through West Point and Elizabethtown:

Camp Nevin (Nolin River) — Just outside Hardin County

Major Union training camp for tens of thousands of troops in 1861

Located in neighboring Larue County but supplied through West Point

Nolin Stockade — Near the Hardin County line

Protected the L&N Railroad

West Point & Fort Duffield, 1861–62)

October 1861 – The First Arrivals

- **Oct 24:** 37th Indiana arrives → establishes **Camp Holman** east of Salt River.
- **Oct 28:** 9th Michigan arrives → establishes **Camp Duffield** east of Salt River.

Early November 1861 – The West Point Build-Up

- **Nov 3:** 9th Michigan ordered to build a fort on Pearman Hill.
 - Construction camp established on the hill.
- **Nov 6:** 37th Indiana moves across the river → establishes **Camp Hazard** along the Ohio River.
- **Nov 9:** 1st & 18th Ohio arrive → establish **Camp Armstrong** near Bee Branch.

Mid-November 1861 – Final Reinforcements

- **Nov 14:** 1st Wisconsin arrives → establishes **Camp Buell** near Bee Branch.
- West Point becomes a **major Union staging area** guarding the L&N Turnpike and river junction.

Late November–December 1861 – Fort Duffield Rises

- 9th Michigan works daily on the fort.
- Soldiers rotate between construction duty and camp life.
- Sickness spreads due to cold, wet conditions and poor sanitation.

January 1, 1862 – Fort Completed

- Fort Duffield declared finished.
- Construction camp winds down.
- Units begin rotating out toward Elizabethtown, Munfordville, and the Green River line.

Early 1862 – Decline of the West Point Camps

- Camps Holman, Duffield, Hazard, Armstrong, and Buell are abandoned as the Union army shifts south.
- Fort Duffield remains lightly garrisoned.

Modern Reference Points

- **A. Salt River Bridge (South Street / KY 835)**
- **B. Bee Branch Bridge (South Street)**
- **C. Ohio River Boat Ramp / Veterans Memorial Park**
- **D. Downtown West Point (Main Street)**
- **E. Fort Duffield Trailhead (Pearman Hill Road)**
- **F. Kulmer Reserve / East Bank Flats**

1. Camp Holman (37th Indiana)

- **Direction:** East of Salt River
- **Distance from Salt River Bridge:** ~350 yards
- **Distance from Bee Branch Bridge:** ~500 yards
- **Distance from Boat Ramp:** ~600 yards northeast
- **Modern landmark:** Flat ground at **Kulmer Reserve**, just inside Jefferson County
- **Terrain:** Open bottomland with slight rise to the east

2. Camp Duffield (9th Michigan)

- **Direction:** East of Salt River, slightly upstream from Holman
- **Distance from Salt River Bridge:** ~450 yards
- **Distance from Bee Branch Bridge:** ~400 yards
- **Distance from Boat Ramp:** ~700 yards northeast
- **Modern landmark:** Same general area as Holman but closer to Bee Branch's mouth

3. Camp Buell (1st Wisconsin)

- **Direction:** East of Salt River, near Bee Branch
- **Distance from Bee Branch Bridge:** ~150 yards
- **Distance from Salt River Bridge:** ~300 yards
- **Distance from Boat Ramp:** ~650 yards northeast
- **Modern landmark:** East-bank flats directly across from Bee Branch

4. Camp Armstrong (1st & 18th Ohio)

- **Direction:** West Point side of Salt River, just upstream from Bee Branch
- **Distance from Bee Branch Bridge:** ~120 yards
- **Distance from Salt River Bridge:** ~250 yards
- **Distance from Boat Ramp:** ~450 yards southeast
- **Modern landmark:** The open ground between Bee Branch and the Salt River levee

5. Camp Hazard (37th Indiana after moving)

- **Direction:** West of downtown, along the Ohio River
- **Distance from Boat Ramp:** ~300–500 yards west
- **Distance from Salt River Bridge:** ~700 yards northwest
- **Distance from Fort Duffield Trailhead:** ~900 yards northwest
- **Modern landmark:** Fields between Veterans Memorial Park and the levee road

6. Fort Duffield Construction Camp (9th Michigan)

- **Direction:** On Pearman Hill
- **Distance from Trailhead:** ~150 yards uphill
- **Distance from Salt River Bridge:** ~900 yards southeast
- **Distance from Boat Ramp:** ~1,000 yards southeast

Camp Locations Explained Using Today's Landmarks

Camp Hazard

- Along the **Ohio River**, west of the boat ramp
- 300–500 yards from today's Veterans Memorial Park
- On the flats between the levee and the river

Camp Armstrong

- On the **West Point side** of the Salt River
- Just upstream from **Bee Branch**
- 250 yards east of the Salt River Bridge

Camp Buell

- On the **east bank** of the Salt River
- Directly across from Bee Branch
- 150 yards east of the Bee Branch Bridge

Camp Holman

- East of the Salt River
- 350 yards from the Salt River Bridge
- On the flats of today's **Kulmer Reserve**

Camp Duffield

- East of the Salt River
- 450 yards from the Salt River Bridge
- Slightly upstream from Camp Holman