

GILSON Burial Site, Eddy County, New Mexico

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Submitted By: Richard Wilkinson jr~~rr~~@zianet.com

GUADALUPE MOUNTAINS, EDDY COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

GILSON BURIAL SITE RECORDS

Records extracted by Richard Wilkinson
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My thanks to Elizabeth (Campbell) Hutchinson for her help in giving information on Mr. Gilson. Also, the late Chester Walcup, for the work he has done in cemetery research in Eddy County and some neighboring sites as well as one or two in the remote areas of Texas that border with southern NM/Eddy Co. His work can be seen at the Family History Center in Carlsbad, NM.

The GPS (Global Positioning System) coordinates for this site is: 32deg 13min 59 sec North and 104deg 40min 59sec West at about 5142 feet above sea level. The margin of error for these coordinates is 29 feet. You might have a problem seeing the grave at 29 feet away if the grass is full from the spring growing season.

B.G. Gilson was born in 1840 and was killed in 1883. The canyon he was killed in is now named after him as is the springs that once was there.

There are two stories behind this death. 1) That Gilson was wanted by the Texas Law and that two Texas Rangers ambushed him and killed him and rode off and left him. 2) That he was a loner and trapped and hunted the Guadalupe's and the Indians came up to him as he was skinning a bear and they shot and killed him. 3) He was ambushed by unknown persons and shot in the back. When found by two neighbors there was evidence of being shot in the back and a torn pants pocket where he kept his gold watch. The watch was missing.

Mrs. Hutchinson alleges that her grandfather Campbell and his friend came up on Gison and found him shot in the back. They buried him where they found him.

I visited the National Forrest Office in Carlsbad and was shown the location of the burial site on a topographic mape. The site is in Gilson Springs which is in Gilson Canyon. This site is marked on the topo map. To access the canyon, you must start by going up into the mountians via state road 137 and turn right at the sign to the Forrest Administration Office. This will be Forrest Road 68E. As you come to the office, the road will split off to the right with a small Forrest Service sign "68E". Take this road and

continue to the north coming to a fence and cattle guard. Turn left after crossing this cattle guard and follow the road until just as it starts to drop downward. The distance from state road 137 to this spot will be about 1.25 miles. The road will now be very bad and even with a four wheel drive truck, it is not wise to continue. You will do very well to use an ATV. The road will continue for another mile as you drop down. At one point you will drop sharply and be between Gilson Canyon to the left and Anderson Canyon on the right. The road will follow a ridge between the two canyons for a short distance then drop to the slope on the Anderson Canyon side.

Continue on the trail as the road will then turn left at the saddle between the two canyons and will drop sharply into Gilson Canyon. You will have a wonderful view of one part of the canyon at this point. The view will be a "valley" enclosed by the canyon walls where it widens out. This level, grassy area is where Gilson is buried.

As of the posting of this information, there is a large, dead, juniper tree on the north side of the grassy area. Gilson is buried under this tree.

The site is only marked with a pile of rocks over the grave. One lone, large rectangle rock marks the head of the grave. The rocks are being hidden by grass growing over the site. These rocks are the only ones you will find in this grassy area. To the west of this site is a short rock wall where the terrain drops down into the springs.

The spring area is very spectacular also, it contains some rare trees, and formations and possibly some post permian age paw prints in the rock floor. When visiting this area, please respect the National Forrest (even though it doesn't look like a forrest) and take out any trash, and do not disturb any natural formations. Take water as it will be a long hard climb out.