

Case 21: Otis Austin, a Sailor, born 1824 Boston, Massachusetts and died at Eastern Branch Home, Kennebec, Maine.

The register 6333 of Eastern Branch Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers of Togus, Kennebec, Maine, does not list much of a military history for Otis Austin. He was a sailor in the U. S. Navy who enlisted Sept. 15, 1841 in Boston, when he was only seventeen. He was discharged in March of 1845. When the Civil War required able-bodied seamen to serve the Union, Otis re-enlisted November 29, 1862 in the U. S. Navy and was discharged March 24, 1864.

Otis must have served as a merchant marine or had some other work for the next twenty-three years, but this researcher did not find him listed on the U. S. Census of 1850 to 1880, although there are other Otis Austins living in Massachusetts who could be related. In 1860 there was a mariner, named Otis, living near the docks of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania at a Sailor's Home. However, the birth date and place do not match this Otis.

There is no domestic history on the Register to describe what Otis Austin looked like. His nearest relative was Elizabeth or Eliza Austin of Cleveland, Ohio, possibly a sister. He never left the home to go to Cleveland. He might not have married nor had children.

Boston was definitely the town where Otis wanted to be, when he was able to leave the Home in Maine to travel. Otis took furloughs to visit friends or family in Boston and returned four times from the time he entered the Home on September 30, 1887, at age 63, a single man, to the day that he died in the hospital, eight years later, at Togus, Maine, February 23, 1895. His disability when he entered the Home was listed simply as, old age. He died of pertussis, whooping cough. The Register has that he was buried by the Home at Sec F, Row 1, #15.

The database of AFAOA has a listing for an unlinked Otis that seems to closely match the sailor. Evidently the burial record for this Otis, of The National Cemetery at Togus, Kennebec, ME, who was buried at Sec. F, Lot 1-15, Grave T81 23 February 1890, was researched and submitted by Patricia Austin to the database. No ancestors have been proven for this Otis Austin, the sailor.

Veterans Affairs, Record Group 15; National Archives, Washington, D.C. Eastern Branch, Togus, Kennebec, Maine.

U. S. Census 1860, Philadelphia, PA, Ward 5, So. Div, 24 Aug 1860, Dwelling 1413, Fam. 2920. Sailor's Home, Otis Austin, ae. 29, male, mariner, b Pena. This is not proven to be the Otis in the story above.

Enlistments and Service Records of the U. S. Navy were not available on the internet at the time this story was written.

AFAOA.org - Master Index. Otis Austin.

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Source: *Historical Register of National Homes for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, 1866-1938*; (National Archives Microfilm Publication M1749, 282 rolls); Records of the Department of