

Case 35: Andrew Austin, born Sep 1845 Kentucky died 2 Mar 1903 Indiana

Andrew Austin was admitted to two Branch Homes for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers. Register 5468 of Marion Branch at Grant County, Indiana, shows his service notes and personal information as the same as on Register 2666 of Danville Branch at Vermillion, Illinois. He had a pension from the Union Army: Certificate 777.457. After his death, his second wife, Eliza J. Braxton Austin received a widow's pension #559.977. After Eliza's death, a "minor" named Addie Braxton Perry, Eliza's sister, received a pension #642.267.

On June 12, 1864, Andrew Austin enlisted as a Private in Company B of the 109th U. S. Colored Troops at Bowling Green, Warren, Kentucky. He was discharged honorably on February 6, 1866 in Port Lavaca, Texas at the close of the Civil War. More information about his service will follow after the information on the Home registers.

Personal Description

Andrew Austin, was age 53, born in Kentucky. He was 5' 6" tall, of dark complexion, had dark hair and eyes. He was a Protestant and a laborer by occupation. After the war he resided in Evansville, Indiana. He was married. His nearest relative was George Austin of Evansville. His pension income was \$24.00. His disability was rheumatism which he contacted Nov 15, 1865 at Ft. Harrison, Virginia.

Soldier's Home Information

Marion Branch admitted Andrew on May 18, 1898. He authorized the treasurer to send three-fourths of his pension income to his wife. On March 3, 1901 he was transferred to Danville Branch. A year later, on Apr 29, 1902, Andrew was discharged from Danville on his own request.

The 109th Regiment U. S. Colored Troops

According to Perkins, recruiting for black troops in Eastern Kentucky began in the early summer of 1864. She quoted the General Order No. 20, dated June 13, 1864, which specified that Union men will cheerfully bring forward their slaves to assist in crushing the rebellion. All who present themselves will be received and enlisted into the service of the United States. Owners were to be paid for the service of their slaves. That did not happen until after the War. The State also received credit for the volunteers. The owners of the slaves were furnished with the necessary certificate of enlistment.

According to his dates of enlistment and discharge, Andrew Austin joined at the beginning of the action of his regiment and stayed with them until the end and then continued on another skirmish on the Texas/Mexico

border. The action of his group is outlined on several websites.

The Family Search wiki has this: "The 109th USCT witnessed the fall of Petersburg, participated in the pursuit of Lee in April 1865 and was present at Appomattox Court House when Lee surrendered his army, April 9, 1865. Despite the end of the war, the 109th USCT did not immediately return home but embarked for Texas as part of an American build-up intended to discourage French operations in Mexico by Emperor Maximilian. The 109th USCT operated along the Rio Grande, Texas, until March, 1866. The regiment was finally mustered out at Louisville, Kentucky on March 21, 1866."

Although the ability of these soldiers was questioned at first, Schroeder quotes the USCT commander, Brig. Gen. George Crook from a report about the Battle of Appomattox, "We had not proceeded far before we met the... 'Darks' marching up to the front. I had heard so much pro and con about the fighting qualities of the Negroes that I sent my staff back to reorganize my command while I went along with this corps to see for myself, how these people would fight. They were the first I had seen in any numbers.... They marched up in splendid order, and although some of them were knocked over, they showed no flinching."

Also quoted was the 1st Maine Cavalry's regimental history, "As the men reached the woods at the edge of the field they met the infantry... black, to be sure, but their uniforms were blue and their hearts loyal, and the men were glad to meet them...." The Maine cavalrymen called out "Bully for you!" as the USCTs advanced.

Family Life

Andrew's residence in 1870 is not known. But, on 1872 he is listed in the Evansville City Directory as a whitewasher (painter). On 3 Jun 1880, Andrew Austin age 36, a laborer, b. 1844 in Kentucky was living on 722 Oak St. in Evansville, Vanderburgh County, Indiana with his wife Parthena, age 44. She was born 1836 in Virginia. Her parents were also Virginians. Andrew's parents were born in Kentucky.

The relative, George Austin, who was mentioned on the Home Register, could be the George W. Austin, a mulatto, age 31, a porter at a hotel in Evansville, who lived near Andrew. George was also born in Kentucky and his mother, Matilda Baswell, age 67, was living in the household. The wife of George, was Josephine age 30. They had an infant son, named William B. Austin who was five months old. Other people in the same household were Josephine's mother, Elizabeth Taylor age 52 and minors Belle, Wesley, and David Mcfadden.

In 1900 Andrew was listed twice on the U. S. Census. The Marion Branch National Military Home, Grant, IN, has Andrew Austin born Sep 1845 Kentucky, black, married in 1889, working there as a waiter. He was not employed for 8 months. He lived in Captain's barrack #1. His father was shown as born in Virginia and his mother was born in Kentucky. On 7 Jun 1900, Andrew Austin, born Sep 1845, Kentucky was living in a residence at 914 Walnut St., Pigeon Twp., Vanderburgh, Indiana. He was married in 1887 to his wife Eliza Jane Braxton, born Nov 1854 in KY. She was working as a laundress and said she had bore 8 children, but only two were living. They had two children living at home: Andrew Austin, Jr. age 9 b Nov 1890 and Matilda E. age 3, a daughter b. Jul 1896, both in Indiana.

The date of death of Andrew Austin is shown on three documents: The U. S. Pension Index Card, the County Health Office record of Indiana deaths and the cemetery records of Locust Hill Cemetery, Evansville, Indiana. He died on 2 or 20 March 1903 at Evansville, when he was age 58.

Eliza Jane Austin born 23 March 1854, died 4 Sep 1907, when she was age 53. Their daughter Matilda "Tillie" was raised by her Aunt Addie Perry, "widow" of David L. Perry. Addie worked as a laundress and lived until 1931. Young Tillie Austin, who was born to Andrew and Eliza, on 4 Jul 1896, died at age eighteen, on 9 Jul 1914. Tillie was buried in Locust Hill Cemetery near her parents and an unnamed infant. A William B. Austin, born 1880, and died 28 Jul 1895, was also there. He was likely the son of George W. Austin. It is not known what happened to Andrew Austin, Jr.

Compiled Jun 7, 2016 by helencaustin@afaoa.org

Sources:

Historical Register of National Homes for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, 1866-1938; NARA Publication M174

City Directory Evansville Indiana 1872-1922. Ancestry.com

Indiana Deaths, County Health Office, Evansville, Book H-11 Page 8. Indexed by Indiana W.P.A. ca. 1938-1941

Locust Hill Cemetery Records, Evansville, Indiana. www.findagrave.com

Perkins, Marlitta H.. Kentucky USCT units. <http://eakycivilwar.blogspot.com/2011/03/african-american-union-soldiers-from.html>

Schroeder, Patrick. *Civil War Times Magazine*, "USCT Soldiers at Appomattox", 2015. <http://www.historynet.com/usct-soldiers-at-appomattox.htm>

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U.S. Census: 1880, 1900, 1910-1920-1930 Evansville, IN. www.ancestry.com

Veterans Records from National Archives of Washington DC https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/109th_Regiment,_United_States_Colored_Infantry



109th Regiment U. S. Colored Troops (re-enactors)

NAME OF SOLDIER: <i>Austin, Andrew</i>				
SERVICE: <i>Late rank P Co. B 109 Regt U.S.C.T.</i>				
TERM OF SERVICE: <i>Enlisted 1 Discharged 1</i>				
DATE OF FILING.	CLASS.	APPLICATION NO.	LAW.	CERTIFICATE NO.
<i>1890 Jan 2</i>	<i>Invalid,</i>	<i>746 857</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>777 457</i>
	<i>Widow,</i>	<i>781 206</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>859 877</i>
	<i>Minor,</i>	<i>877 332</i>	<i>o g</i>	<i>642 267</i>
ADDITIONAL SERVICES:				
REMARKS:				
<i>44 1-1890 Died 1, 1903 at</i>				

Andrew Austin's Pension Record