

## **Military Record and Family History of Corporal Mansfield Austin**

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**Mansfield Austin, born Oct. 22, 1840 in Jackson County, Ohio, died Oct. 16, 1918 at Mount Sterling, Madison County, Ohio.**

There is no record for this soldier on the microfilm of Registers of the U. S. Homes for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers. However, on the Civil War Union Soldiers Service Records for Company A of the 5<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the U. S. Colored Troops I saw his war record next to the Jeremiah Austin of Case #25. Since he is also listed on the African-American section of this website as one of the Civil War soldiers in the U.S. Colored Troops, I thought I would write a story about his life to go with our other postings.

### **Military Record**

The 5th United States Colored Infantry Regiment was an African - American unit of the Union Army. A part of the U. S. Colored Troops, the regiment saw action in Virginia as part of the Richmond-Petersburg Campaign. The 5<sup>th</sup> Regiment also saw action in North Carolina and participated in the attacks on Fort Fisher and Wilmington and the Carolinas Campaign.

What is different about Mansfield's record is that he is shown as a "Free" man on April 19, 1861. He enlisted in 1863 when he was age 19. He was 5'4" tall, of yellow (light) complexion, had black eyes and black hair and was a farmer. He was in action on Jun 15, 1864. He was in the campaign at Petersburg, Virginia. In a battle at New Market Heights, Virginia, Mansfield was wounded in the hand. This caused the amputation of one finger.

In January 1865 he was promoted from Private to Corporal. The end of the War was coming soon. It was a short time later, when Mansfield was discharged. He went home to his family in Jackson County, Ohio.

It is worth mentioning that I noted some differences in the residence and the enlistees of African-Americans who were from Madison County, Ohio and the enlistees from Kentucky or slave-holding states. Ohio was a "free state" and many of the former slaves who moved there to get land before 1840 had been freed by their owners in Virginia. As free men, these soldiers were entitled to receive direct payment from the U. S. Army and they were eligible for pensions. Mansfield was paid \$6.00 per month for his service.

### **Family Background**

The father of Mansfield was Cornelius Austin, who was born 1804 Henrico County, Virginia and died 1846 in Liberty Township, Jackson, Ohio. He married Maria H. Steptoe about 1828 at Henrico County, VA. They

had at least seven children: Elizabeth b. 1828; Anna (Alice?) b. 1830; Robert b. 1832; Cornelius b. 1838; Maria Austin b. 1841; Mansfield b. 1843; Nancy A. b. 1844. After Cornelius died, Maria remarried. In 1850 her husband was John Beaumon (Beaumont). The family continued living in Liberty Township, among other closely related farming families.

It is remarkable that Cornelius was able to purchase land in Ohio. The Austin land is shown on a survey map on Ancestry.com. He had forty acres issued on Apr 10, 1843, purchased as a cash sale. The land was described as 1 NE ¼ of NW ¼ Ohio River Survey Township No. 8 N, Range 19 West Section 35. The farm of Cornelius was next to the larger, 140 acre purchase of the Beaumont family. In 1860, John and Maria Austin Beaumont's real estate was valued at \$1,500.00 and their personal property was valued at \$236.00. Her Austin children living with her were: Cornelius age 22; and Mansfield age 20. Her son Robert married Jane White in Ross Co., Ohio and had eleven children in twenty-one years. There are many descendants of that Austin Line. Robert was seventy years old when he died in Jackson Co., Ohio.

After Mansfield returned from the War he married Ann H. Steptoe on 21 Feb 1875 in Ross County, Ohio, and they removed to Muhlenberg Township, Pickaway County, Ohio. In 1870 their mail went to the Five Points Post Office. They were farming and had a daughter, age three, named Roxanna "Roxie". Next door was William Steptoe, age 25 and wife Nancy who could be a brother and sister-in-law of Ann. The next neighbor was John Steptoe age sixty and his wife Lucy. Both were born in Virginia and were the parents of Ann.

The family prospered and the following children were born and raised on the farm in Pickaway County: Roxanna b. 1867; Hope b. 1871, a son; Elizabeth b. 1873; John Payton Austin b. 13 Mar 1876; Charles b. 1879. In 1880 Lucy Steptoe, age sixty, mother-in-law of Mansfield is living with Mansfield and Ann. A few years later, Ann Steptoe Austin died and Mansfield married Martha (b. 1830 – d. 1905).

Mansfield Austin moved again before 1900 to Mt. Sterling, Pleasant Township, Madison County, Ohio. He was a day laborer and his wife, Martha Austin, was age sixty-two. She was from Virginia. Certainly this is the same Mansfield as the person of the military record, because the location was the same place as Pleasant Cemetery where he was buried in 1918. Several of his children and Steptoe relatives are also buried there.

### **Next Generation**

1. Roxie, born Nov 25, 1866, married a Mr. Johnson and was working as a cook when she passed away at age

49. She is buried at Pleasant Cemetery, Mt. Sterling, Ohio.

2. John Payton Austin, born 13 Mar 1886 applied for a Social Security Card in 1937. He listed Mansfield and Ann Steptoe as his parents. That date is ten years later than his birthdate as shown on the U. S. Census of Ohio in 1880 and Wisconsin in 1910. The birth date on the SS Card was repeated on the WWII Draft Registration card in 1942 when John Payton Austin was working for the Northwestern Railroad and living in Milwaukee, Wisconsin at 1818 N. 8<sup>th</sup> Street. This researcher believes that the most authoritative birth record is the one made when he was born. The Ohio Birth and Christening Index of 1776-1973, shows that John P. Austin was born 15 Mar 1876 in Muhlenberg, Pickaway, Ohio. His parents were Mansfield Austin and Annie Steptoe.

In 1910 John worked as a janitor and had a wife named Lena who he married in 1908. They were living in a rented house at 300 8<sup>th</sup> Street in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

3. Charles Austin, born Oct 7, 1879 in Pickaway Co., Ohio, lived with his father at Mt. Sterling and died there when he was age twenty-seven, on Mar 12, 1906. The marker on his grave at Pleasant Cemetery is interesting because it seems to mark three graves. Listed on the marker are: Martha Austin (his step-mother) b. 1830 – d. 1805; and Jean Steptoe Austin b. 1888 – d. 1904. She was only age sixteen when she died. Perhaps Jean was a wife of Charles?

4. James Austin, born May 11, 1876 in Darbyville, Pickaway Co., Ohio is listed in the Pleasant Cemetery record as a son of Mansfield Austin. A Social Security application for a James Minor Austin, born 11 May 1876 also showed a death date of 22 Apr, 1940. This is the same as on the Ohio Health Department Death Index. In 1900, James was living in Washington, Fayette County, Ohio. He worked as a servant for a physician named Dr. George Hudson.

On Sep 12, 1918, at age 42, he registered for the Draft for WW I in Newark City, Licking County, Ohio. His address was 106 Hudson St. and he was a janitor for Roe Emerson at the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> and W. Main Street. James was described as short, of medium build, with black hair and eyes. His nearest relative was Mrs. Mary Logan of 219 Eaton Ave., Dayton, Montgomery, Ohio. James was still living in Newark when he died.

The most exciting thing about writing this sketch has been to learn more about how some families of former slaves were freed in Richmond, Virginia before 1840 and were able to go to the free state of Ohio and purchase land for a family farm where their family could grow and prosper.

Compiled June 10, 2016 by [helencaustin@afaoa.org](mailto:helencaustin@afaoa.org)

Sources:

*Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Union Soldiers Who Served in The U. S. Colored Troops.* <https://www.fold3.com/>

*Gravestone of Mansfield Austin 1840-1918.* Pleasant Cemetery, Mount Sterling, Madison Co, OH. Plot: L-7;row-34. [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com)

*Ohio Map of Liberty Township 6, Range 20.* 1875 Liberty Township detail [www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/)

*U. S. General Land Office Records 1795-1907* Cornelius Austin

*U.S. Census:* 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1900, 1910 Ohio [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)

Smith, Anthony. Family History on Ancestry.com. permission to copy documents: “

Images:

- (1) *Gravestone of Mansfield Austin 1840-1918.* Pleasant Cemetery, Mount Sterling, Madison Co, OH. Plot: L-7;row-34. [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com)
- (2) *Henrico County Virginia Registry of Free Colored 1840.* Page number not known A.D. Smith
- (3) *Land Contract Cornelius Austin 1843 Jackson County, Ohio*
- (4) *Ohio Marriages: Marriage record Mansfield Austin and Anna Steptoe 21 Feb 1875.* [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)



April 10, 1843 Land Contract – Cornelius Austin, Jackson County, Ohio

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**CERTIFICATE** } **THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,** ✓  
No. 12002 } **To all to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting:**

**WHEREAS** *Cornelius Austin of Jackson County Ohio*

*has* deposited in the **GENERAL LAND OFFICE** of the United States, a Certificate of the REGISTER OF THE LAND OFFICE at *Chillicothe* whereby it appears that full payment has been made by the said *Cornelius Austin*

according to the provisions of the Act of Congress of the 24th of April, 1820, entitled "An Act making further provision for the sale of the Public Lands," for the North East quarter of the North West quarter of Section thirty five, in Township Eight, of Range Nineteen, in the District of Lands subject to sale at Chillicothe Ohio containing Forty acres,

according to the official plat of the survey of the said Lands, returned to the General Land Office by the **SURVEYOR GENERAL**, which said tract has been purchased by the said *Cornelius Austin*,

**NOW KNOW YE**, That the **United States of America**, in consideration of the Premises, and in conformity with the several acts of Congress, in such case made and provided, **HAVE GIVEN AND GRANTED**, and by these presents **DO GIVE AND GRANT**, unto the said *Cornelius Austin*

and to his heirs, the said tract above described: **TO HAVE AND TO HOLD** the same, together with all the rights privileges, immunities, and appurtenances of whatsoever nature, thereunto belonging, unto the said *Cornelius Austin* and to his heirs and assigns forever.

**In Testimony Whereof, I,** *John Tyler*

**PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**, have caused these Letters to be made **PATENT**, and the **SEAL** of the **GENERAL LAND OFFICE** to be hereunto affixed.

**WITNESSE** under my hand, at the **CITY OF WASHINGTON**, the *tenth* day of *April* in the Year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and *forty three* and of the **INDEPENDENCE OF THE UNITED STATES** the *Sixty seventh*



**BY THE PRESIDENT:** *John Tyler*  
By *R. Tyler*

*J. Williamson* **RECORDER of the General Land Office.** Sec'y.

Date	Child No.	Name	Age	Sex	Description	Notes
March 7-1840	949	Elizabeth Austin	12 yrs 2 mos	girl	(child of Cornelius and Maria Austin) a girl of a very light complexion, a little freckles, with a scar over the left eye.	curly hair, with a scar on his left jaw.
March 7-1840	950	Alice Austin	9 yrs 5 mos	girl	(child of Same) a girl of a light complexion, no mark or scar perceivable	
March 7-1840	951	Ro. Austin	7 yrs 8 mos	boy	(child of Same) a boy of a light complexion, no mark or scar perceivable.	
March 7-1840	952	Cornelius Austin	5 yrs 1 mo	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
March 7-1840	953	Maria Austin	3 yrs 1 mo	Ditto, a girl	Ditto	Ditto
May 4-1840	954	Billy Hamplow	30 mo 3 wks	boy	a black man, with a small scar between his eyes.	3 ft
May 7-1840	955	James Croft	19	boy	a woman of a light complexion, with a scar on the left side of his left eye, and a small cut on the right arm.	4 ft
July 6-1840	956	Ellen Bluntyale	17 years	woman	of a very light complexion, long curly straight hair, with a scar on her right arm.	

**1840 Henrico County, Virginia Registry Free Colored Children of Cornelius & Maria Austin**

The State of Ohio, Ross County, ss,  
 This 21<sup>th</sup> day of February 1848, personally  
 came Mansfield Austin and made  
 oath, that he is  
 twenty-one years of age, and that Anna Steptoe  
 is Eighteen years of age, and a resident of this County, that both said last named  
 persons are unmarried, and are not nearer of kin than first cousins.

**SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN** to before me  
 the day and year aforesaid.

Thomas Walker Mansfield Austin  
 Probate Judge. Mark

**Marriage Record – Mansfield Austin & Anna Steptoe**