



SUPPLEMENT TO THE OFFICIAL RECORDS OF THE UNION AND CONFEDERATE ARMIES, Part II
Record of Events, Vol. 78, Serial No. 90, published by Broadfoot Publishing Co. of Wilmington NC, 1998

These last two pages specifically address Company A of the 42nd United States Colored Infantry (“US Colored Troops – USCT, per the tombstone). This company was enlisted at Chattanooga and remained there throughout the war – at least for the time that the company existed, from October of 1864 to June of 1865. The only exception was two 15-mile marches to “Gordon’s Mill” and back, giving a total march of 30 miles twice. The remainder of the time was given to “garrison duty” or “fatigue duty”, maintaining the “Sanitary Gardens” (latrines?) and other labor on fortifications of the post. As the Union correspondence showed, the company consisted of black men considered to be invalids or otherwise unfit for regular combat field duties. These men were generally recruited in northern Alabama and Georgia, according to the Union notes. Austin Groves is not specifically mentioned in the correspondences, but anyone who may be sufficiently concerned with the details of his personal activities and any particular health problems or handicaps that he may have had can acquire his service records. At least the Union accounts provide some insights not commonly known regarding the fact that (stated “in Missouri”) some of the slave owners actually paid their slaves “fair wages”, treating them almost as indentured servants until they accumulated sufficient funds to buy their freedom. That was noted as a reason for slow recruitment for the black units among Southern slaves. Austin Groves now rests in a very peaceful setting, with the war and old plantation system long gone.

Prepared by John P. Rankin, September 11, 2005