

The Military Service
of
Austin and Spencer Sober

In August of 1862, in answer to a call from Washington, the Governors of the states of Indiana and Ohio made a request for volunteers to serve in the Union Army. The Sober brothers were among those that answered the call.

On August the 12th and 14th, Austin and Spencer, the only sons of Benjamin and Eliza Sober, enlisted at Huntsburg, Ohio for duty in the Union Army for a period of three years. They were enrolled by Captain B. W. Canfield.

They left Huntsburg for Camp Cleveland, Ohio, a distance of about thirty miles, arriving there on or before August 16th, as Spencer's first letter is dated the 16th.

They were both mustered into Captain William's Company F of the 105th Regiment of the Ohio Volunteer Infantry at Camp Cleveland on August 21, 1862, as privates according to their service records; however, Spencer's letter of August 26th stated that they were mustered in on the 20th. The Company's Muster-In-Roll listed Austin as being sick when they were mustered.

The Company's "Descriptive Book" listed the following information:

Austin - Age: 18 years	Spencer - Age: 21 years
Height: 6' 1"	Height: 5' 9½"
Complexion: Light	Complexion: Light
Eyes: Black	Eyes: Blue
Hair: Brown	Hair: Brown
Occupation: Farmer	Occupation: Joiner (Carpenter)

Their Mother's application for a pension, stated that both sons were single.

On August 21st, they left Camp Cleveland by rail car arriving in Cincinnati, Ohio on the 22nd. On the day of their arrival they marched to Covington, Kentucky, which was across the Ohio River from Cincinnati. They stayed there until the 25th, when they marched to Lexington, Kentucky, arriving there the next day. They had been in the army for one week and probably had not received any training what so ever. They were to have been stationed at Lexington.

Their stay at Lexington was short lived as the result of the Confederate victory at the battle of Richmond, Kentucky, on August 30th. They left Lexington with their Regiment on the 30th, headed to Richmond, a distance of about twenty miles, but after having traveled about ten miles they met a portion of the troops that they had been sent to relieve in "full retreat". They immediately reversed their march and returned to their camp at Lexington. The next day, the 31st, they continued the retreat arriving two days later on September 2nd, at Frankfort, Kentucky. Three days later on the 5th, they arrived at Louisville, Kentucky, thus ending their retreat. The Confederate cavalry pursued them until they were nearing Louisville, when they discontinued their pursuit.

The Battle of Richmond, Kentucky was between the seasoned Confederate forces commanded by General Kirby Smith and the green Union forces com-

manded by General William Nelson. The Union casualties were 206 killed, 844 wounded and 4,303 captured or missing of which about 4,000 of this number were captured. The Confederate casualties were 78 killed, 372 wounded and 1 missing. The Confederate forces captured an entire Union wagon train, substantial army stores, 10,000 small arms and 9 guns. The battle was a total rout of the Union forces. Three fourths of Nelson's army had been shot or captured; the rest were fugitives, hiding out in the woods and cornfields. Nelson's troops were almost entirely composed of raw recruits. Their periods of service had ranged in general from three weeks to three days.

Austin and Spencer stayed in camp near Louisville throwing up entrenchments around Louisville until October 1st, when they left marching southeast toward Bardstown, Kentucky, looking for the Confederate Army. Austin was forced to return to camp at Louisville on the first day of marching due to a sore leg. He entered the hospital upon his return.

Spencer continued his march and arrived at Perryville, Kentucky on October 8th, where his unit went into battle at 2:00 P.M. that day. The Battle of Perryville (Chaplin Heights) was fought entirely on the 8th. The battle was between the approximate 55,000 Union troops under the command of General Don Carlos Buell of which only about one-half were engaged and the 16,000 Confederate troops under the command of General Braxton Bragg. The Union casualties were 845 killed, 2,851 wounded and 515 captured or missing. The Confederate casualties were 510 killed, 2,635 wounded and 251 captured or missing. Perryville was tactically a confederate victory.

The Confederate Army was divided and weakened, so General Bragg withdrew his forces after midnight (A.M. Oct. 9th) and on the 9th joined with General Kirby Smith's forces at Harrodsburg, Kentucky. Here the united forces waited two days for an attack by the Union forces which did not come and then they withdrew toward Tennessee. General Bragg choose to call the movement a withdrawal, after the successful completion of a giant raid, rather than call it a retreat.

Spencer left Perryville on October 10th or 11th and marched to Harrodsburg, Kentucky, and then to Danville, Kentucky, and then on to Lebanon, Kentucky, and finally to Munfordsville, Kentucky, arriving there on October 23rd. Spencer stated in his letter of October 28th that he had marched in all about two hundred miles.

Austin arrived in Munfordsville on October 26th, directly from Louisville, after having been released from the hospital. On November 4th, Spencer wrote that Austin had come down with the measles and was in the hospital. On November 8th, Spencer wrote that he had visited Austin in the hospital and that Austin was so sick that he hardly knew him. Spencer then began his efforts to get Austin discharged and sent home.

On November 19th, Spencer stated in his letter, that Austin was better but that he had come down with the measles himself. Spencer's letter of November 27th, stated that they both were still in the hospital in Munfordsville.

Their regiment left Munfordsville on November 29th, headed for Tennessee, but they both stayed in Munfordsville. Spencer wrote on December 18th that Austin would probably be sent to Louisville where he stood a good chance of getting discharged. Spencer stated that he would go to his regiment when Austin left for Louisville.

Some how Spencer was able to arrange to accompany Austin to Louisville. He stated in his letter of December 25th, that they arrived in Louisville on the 23rd. Austin was still very weak and his doctor had recommended that he be discharged, but the recommendation would have to be reviewed by the medical board. Austin was granted a furlough and on December 29, 1862, and left the hospital in Louisville for his home in East Claridon, Ohio. Austin died at home on January 2, 1863, from the effects of measles.

Spencer left Louisville on a river transport on January 16th, bound for Nashville, Tennessee. He arrived in Nashville on the 29th. He left Nashville for Murfreesboro, Tennessee, on the 30th, and found his regiment at Murfreesboro on the 31st. Spencer's last letter dated February 2, 1863, made no mention that he was sick.

On February 25, 1863, Spencer died of pneumonia at Hospital No. 8 in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. He is buried in grave number 05723 at Stone's River National Cemetery at Murfreesboro.

Austin's and Spencer's mother died on March 23, 1900, at the age of 85 years. Their father died sometime between December of 1873 and March of 1893.

september 18th (1862)

dear sister

I just received your letter. I was glad to hear from you. I am well and hope that these few lines may find you the same. We are expect (expecting) a battle. There are about 8,000 rebbels (rebels) with in 8 miles of us. We have about 70,000 men around louisville (KY). I am in hopes they will gett (get) thrashed out slick and clean. I ant (ain't) a frard (afraid) of gettend (getting) killed. All the 105 is all anchovs (anxious) to gett (get) a chance at them.

sunday morning sept 21

I have ben (been) on gard (guard) for the last 20 hours. We hade (had) an order friday knight (night) that we must go and renforce (reinforce) general Buel (General Carlos Buell). gen braggs (Confederate General Baxton Bragg) is in betwen (between) him and us. braggs (General Bragg) has about 30,000 men. Coarnal hall (Colonel Hall) sead (said) that we must cutt (cut) our way to him. We all sead (said) three chears (cheers) for Cornal (Colonel). Cathrin (Catharine) you gett (get) some boddy (body) to gath (gather) up the corn and not husk my part. (Take it) home and putt (put) my part in the barn and feed it out to my ? . I will pay for it.

I want you to go down and see Charlley mack (Charlie Mack) and ask him if he has if he has got to go to minasota (Minnesota) to fight the indindans (indians). If he has got (to) go right (write) to me. Right (Write) strate (straight) for I want to know.

good by (bye)

Note: The letter was not signed but was written by Austin Sober. He did not sign any of his four letters.

Camp near Louisville (KY)

Sept 20th / 62

Dear Sister

I now take opportunity to let you know that we ar (are) well and hope that these fiew (few) lines will find you the same. We ar (are) going to march today to help catch the rebels that is between us and gen. Buell (General Carlos Buell). We have bin (been) entrenching our selves. We have thrown up entrenchments some 5 miles long. It extends round the city from the river below the town to the river above. The money that I expressed was put in a package with all the geauga (Geauge County, Ohio) boys that is in our company. It was in two packages \$20 in one \$25 in the other ten of the money was Austins and the rest is mine makeing (making) \$10 for him \$35 for me. It was expressed in F. D. Williames name. All in one pack and ours was marked in fathers name. If it does not get there before this does he can go to parkman (Parkman, Ohio) whare (where) this Williames lives.

F. D. Williames
Parkman
Geauga Co
Ohio

And if he can let Strong have the money it would suit me well enough. You spoke of sending me some socks and a towel. I have provided my self with all them so you need not send them. I received your letter the 18th. Dock (Austin) got one the same time. I did not get time to wright (write) yesterday for we was at work on the entrenchments. I can not wright (write) any more at preasant (present). You can let our folks see this and that will answer for both. In regard to Dan he can settle with him as he thinks best. There is due me \$63.23 cts.

Tell all to wright (write) wright (write) soon.

Yours as ever

S. Sober

Love to all
enquiring friends

So good by

the end

Head quarters lite (Light) briggad (Brigade)
army of Kentucky

I date my letter the last day of September

30 (th) of september 1862

lewisville (Louisville, KY)

dear father

I now have the present opportunity of wrighting (writing) you a few lines to lett (let) you know that we are both well and hope that these few lines may find you enjoing (enjoying) the same great blessing. The redgment (regiment) wass (was) called out this morning just as we was eating breaffast (breakfast). We all jumped up and left every thing on the ground and gott (got) our guns and was in line less than 5 minets (minutes). We marched out and was in line of battle and then marched down the pique (pike) about 2 milds (miles). The enemy was reported to be within 5 milds (miles) of us. The Calvery (Cavalry) Companyies (Companies) and redgmentes (regiments) was out for about 2 milds (miles) in length. We calculated to have a little brush with them but no such good luck as that.

October 3, 1862

Dear father and mother

I now have the present opportunity of telling you since I comenced (commenced) my letter Sept the 30th I am now trying to finish it. Our briggade (brigade) started Sept (Oct) 2 after old general price (Confederate General Sterling Price) I hade (had) the ? in my leg right whare (where) I had it last sumer (summer) but I thought it would not stop me from travlin (traveling) so I started on with the redgment (regiment). I went about 9 milds (miles) with them. My legg (leg) got so sore that I could not travel eney (any) further. I shode (showed) it to the docter (doctor) and he said that I must not travel eney (any) further with the redgment (regiment) so he gave me a pass to come back to camp. I left the redgment (regiment) at 3 oclock (o'clock) thursday after noon. I traveled about 7 milds (miles) that day. At sundown I was with in three milds (miles) of camp. I slept in the woods that night with my rifle by my side. I gott (got) in Camp the next morning about 8 o clock on friday october 3. There is to (two) sargents (sergeants) in our Company and they are fine men both of them. They told me to taket (take it) cool and easy. (If) I did so my leg will gett (get) along I think. Now the docter (doctor) haint (ain't) gott (got) medison (medicine) enough in his office to cure it. If the redgment (regiment) don't come back with in a wek (week) we shall all be sent to Scinnatia (Cincinnati, Ohio) to the hospital. If I go thare (there) I shall think I am at home again. I figs (figure) thair (there) I will right (write) to you. Spencer is a tuff (tough) as a bare (bear). If he would let them grow (whiskers) out they would lok (look) as bad as old Ben Bahchdor. Henry wanted me to tell you to tell ? that he was tuff (tough) as a not (knot) and stood marching first rate. I forgot to tell you they have started for Bardstown (KY) to rought (rout) the enemy from that place. I hant (haven't) any thing more to right (write) to you. Dyrect (direct) your leter (letter) as before.

So good by (bye)

Note: This letter was not signed but was written by Austin Sober. He did not sign any of his four letters. General Price was not involved in the Kentucky Campaign of 1862.