

Black Veterans of Athens County: An Exhibit

In November and December 2025, Mount Zion Black Cultural Center mounted an exhibit of items portraying the contributions of Black veterans from Athens County to our armed services.

The exhibit was hosted by Southeast Ohio History Center and displayed items pertaining to Black veterans who served in the Civil War, World War I, World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War and peacetime.

This document acknowledges those who contributed to the exhibit.

Black Soldiers and Sailors of Athens County

Civil War

BRUNSTON, Samuel J. (c.1824-1901) Civil War

Pvt Co H, 27th Regt USCI

Greenlawn Cemetery, Nelsonville, Ohio

BUSBY, Samuel (c.1840-?) Civil War

Pvt 27th USCI

COOPER, Calvin (1836-1917) Civil War

Pvt Co C 3rd Regt USCHA

Alexander Union Cemetery, Hebbardsville, Ohio

COURSEY, Thomas E. (c.1845-c.1866) Civil War

Stewart Cemetery, Stewart, Ohio

CROMWELL, Drury (1845-1892) Civil War

Pvt Co H 5th USCHA

West State Street Cemetery, Athens, Ohio

DAVISON, Eliza Brown (d. 1912) Civil War

Cook

West State Street Cemetery, Athens, Ohio

DIXON, Harrison (c.1835-1902) Civil War

Pvt Co G 5th USCI

West State Street Cemetery, Athens, Ohio

FREEMAN, David C. (1837-1912) Civil War

Pvt Co C 16th Regt USCI

Alexander-Union Cemetery, Hebbardsville, Ohio

GIBSON, William (1836-1911) Civil War

Pvt Co G, 5th Regt USCI

Bethel Wesleyan Church Cemetery, Plantsville, Ohio

GOINS, Horace (c.1836-1898) Civil War

Sgt Co K, 55th Massachusetts Inf

Broadwell Cemetery, Broadwell, Ohio

GOINS, Nimrod (c.1836-1916) Civil War

Pvt Co G, 5th USCI

West State Street Cemetery, Athens, Ohio

HARPER, William J. (1841-1925) Civil War

Pvt Co B, 5th Regt USCHA

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Dew Cemetery, near Buchtel, Ohio
HEDGEPATH, Richard (1820-1896) Civil War
Pvt Co K, 27th Reg't USCI
Haga Cemetery, Rome Township, Athens County, Ohio
HOLLEY, Calvis (c.1834-1889) Civil War
Pvt Co B, 5th USCI
Fort Street Cemetery, Nelsonville, Ohio
JULIUS, Silas (c.1821-1892) Civil War
Pvt Co F, 16th Regt USCI
Nye Cemetery, Chauncey, Ohio (unmarked grave)
LACY, Lemuel (1835-1894) Civil War
Pvt Co B 9th Regt USCHA and Co D 15th USCI
Greenlawn Cemetery, Nelsonville, Ohio
LUCAS, Granville (1842-1901) Civil War
Fireman, 2nd Class, USN
Haga Cemetery, Rome Township, Athens County, Ohio
LUCAS, John Calvin (1844-1920) Civil War
Pvt Co C and Co D, 18th Ohio Infantry
Haga Cemetery, Rome Township, Athens County, Ohio
LUCAS, William (c.1843-1918) Civil War
Pvt Co H, 27th USCI
West State Street Cemetery, Athens, Ohio
MASH, James E. (c.1843-?) Civil War
Pvt Co G, 5th USCI
Tabler Cemetery, Tablertown, Ohio
NORMAN, Amos J. (1846-1911) Civil War
Pvt Co G 5th USCI
Haga Cemetery, Rome Township, Athens County, Ohio
NORMAN, Henry (1841-1890) Civil War
Pvt Co G 5th USCI
Fort Street Cemetery, Nelsonville, Ohio
NORMAN, Michael C. (1836-1919) Civil War
Pvt
Morgan Cemetery, Wheatland Twp, Mecosta County, Michigan
READUS, Timothy (c.1844-1922) Civil War
Pvt Co A 111th USCI
West Union Street Cemetery, Athens, Ohio
RICE, James (1833-1891) Civil War
Sgt Co K 3rd USCC
Fort Street Cemetery, Nelsonville, Ohio
SIMMS, Jarie (c.1821-1909) Civil War
Pvt Co B 16th Regt USCI
Simms Cemetery, Rome Township, Athens County, Ohio
TABLER, James E. (1843-1874) Civil War
Pvt Co I 27th USCI
Tabler Cemetery, Tablertown, Ohio

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TABLER, Jesse (c.1836-1900) Civil War
Pvt Co C 5th USCI
Tabler Cemetery, Tablertown, Ohio

TABLER, John Jr. (c.1842-1921) Civil War
Pvt Co I 27th USCI and Co I 23rd USCI
Tabler Cemetery, Tablertown, Ohio

TABLER, Michael (c.1837-1896) Civil War
Pvt Co C and Co G 18th Ohio Infantry
Pine Hill Cemetery, Rome Township, Athens County, Ohio

TABLER, Thomas Jefferson (1848-1922)
Pvt Co I 27th USCI
Camp Delaware, OH
Tabler Cemetery, Tablertown, Ohio

WALKER, Willis (1842-1905) Civil War
Pvt Co B 5th USCI
enl by Milton Holland June 22, 1863 at Athens, Ohio
Greenlawn Cemetery, Nelsonville, Ohio

WHITFIELD, James L. (1836-1896) Civil War
Cpl Co B 27th Regt USCI
Tabler Cemetery, Tablertown, Ohio

WILEY, Jackson (1829-1897) Civil War
Pvt Co B 16th Regt USCI
Blake Cemetery, Alexander Township, Athens County, Ohio

WILKES, Payton (1833-1904) Civil War
Pvt Co I 15th USCI & Co H 9th USCHA
Hollister Cemetery, Hollister, Ohio

WOODSON, John (c.1834-?)
Pvt 5th USCI

WOODSON, William (1832-1929) Civil War
Pvt Co B 5th Regt USCI
enl August 26, 1864
disch 1865
Rendville Cemetery, Rendville, Ohio

WORMLEY, Green (1835-1905) Civil War
Pvt Co C 16th USCI
Greenlawn Cemetery, Nelsonville, Ohio

World War I

BLAND, Harry (1891-1934) WWI
Pvt Co C, 418th Service Battalion
Glouster Cemetery, Glouster, Ohio

BROWN, Mack (1893-1920) WWI
Pvt Co D, 418th Service Battalion
Glouster Cemetery, Glouster, Ohio

COURSEY, Lawrence (1901-1942) Peacetime between WWI and WWII
Medical Attendant, 3rd Class, U. S. Navy

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West State Street Cemetery, Athens, Ohio
DALTON, Ezra (1890-1958) WWI
Pvt 158th Pion Inf Regt & Co A 802nd Pion Inf Regt
Stewart Cemetery, Stewart, Ohio
GIBSON, Thomas E. (1894-1931) WWI
Pvt Co A 802nd Pioneer Inf Regt
Mt. Hermon Cemetery, Sharpsburg, Ohio
HAYES, Alexander J. (1891-1929) WWI
Pfc 28th Construction Company, Air Service
West Union Street Cemetery, Athens, Ohio
HAYES, McKinley (1895-1929) WWI
Pvt Co E, 812th Pion Inf
West Union Street Cemetery, Athens, Ohio
HOLBERT, George. WWI
JEWETT, William (1896-1939) WWI
Pvt Co A, 6th Pion Inf
West Union Street Cemetery, Athens, Ohio
JOHNSON, Romeo A., M.D. (1884-1931) WWI
1st Lieut Amb Co #366, 317th Sanitary Train, 92nd Div
West Union Street Cemetery, Athens, Ohio
LEWIS, Earnest (1892-1955) WWI
Pvt Co E 372nd Inf Regt & Co D 372nd Inf Regt
Greenlawn Cemetery, Nelsonville, Ohio
NERO, Henry W. (1892-1929) WWI
Pfc, Co D 813th Pion Inf
West Union Street Cemetery, Athens, Ohio
NORTHCUTT, Albert (1896-1942) WWI
Pvt Co A, 505th Engineers
Greenlawn Cemetery, Nelsonville, Ohio
SMITH, Roy A. (1896-1932) WWI
Pvt 158th and 161st Depot Brigades
Hollister Cemetery, Hollister, Ohio
THOMAS, Harry (1888-1942) WWI
Cpl Co C 317th Engineers
Greenlawn Cemetery, Nelsonville, Ohio
TOPSAIL, James A. (1894-1936) WWI
Pvt 158th Depot Brigade & 6th Pion Inf
Greenlawn Cemetery, Nelsonville, Ohio
TUTOR, Clophia R. (1895-1923) WWI
Pvt 158th Depot Brigade & Co I 813th Pion Inf
Hollister Cemetery, Hollister, Ohio
VALENTINE, C. H.
[documents needed]

World War II

BELL, Charles (1919-2010) WWII

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d. Mesa, Arizona, cremated
BELL, George (1922-2016) WWII
Evergreen Cemetery, Columbus, Ohio
BUTCHER, John Rex (1921-?)
Sgt
enl 1943
from Coolville, Ohio
BUTCHER, Robert Lewis (b. 1928-1994) WWII
enl December 6, 1945
disch December 29, 1946
Haga Cemetery, Rome Township, Athens County, Ohio
HOLBERT, Gale Gilbert (1922-1979) WWII
Pvt
enl 1942
Sand Rock Cemetery, Stewart, Athens County, Ohio
HOLBERT, Reginald (b. 1920-?) WWII
KENNEDY, Hayward (1920-1953) WWII
Pvt 1749th Engineer Regt
Mt. Hermon Cemetery, Sharpsburg, Ohio
MANN, Robert C. (1919-?) WWII
Mus 2/c US Navy
enl 1944
from Nelsonville, Ohio
MAYLE, William E. (1914-1944)
Pfc
enl 1943
from Cutler, Ohio
POLLEY, Thomas (1919-?) WWII
Sgt
enl 1941
TABLER, Earnest "Bus" Edward (1920-1980) WWII
Tec 5
Tabler Cemetery, Tablertown, Ohio
TOPSAIL, Franklin William. WWII
TAYLOR, Johnny. WWII
VINEY, Andrew Jackson Jr (1924-?) WWII
Pvt
enl 1943
from Glouster, Ohio
VINEY, Robert E. (1935-?) WWII
Pvt
enl 1946
from Glouster, Ohio
WALKER, Leslie Ray (1920-1994) WWII
Mount Hermon, Athens County, Ohio
WALKER, Sidney Delmar (1923-1990) WWII

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enl February 23, 1943
disch October 24, 1945
Chesterhill Cemetery, Morgan County, Ohio
WILLIAMS, James Edward (1921-1974) WWII
West State Street Cemetery, Athens, Ohio
WILLIAMS, Milton Scott (1919-1971) WWII
Dorie Miller Cemetery, Waco, Texas
WILLIAMS, Robert B. (1917-1948) WWII
rank and unit not known
West Union Street Cemetery, Athens, Ohio
WILLIAMS, William W. (1925-2008) WWII
WOODS, Henry. WWII
WOODS, Ralph Edward. WWII
WOODSON, Hope Austin (1906-1978) WWII
Pfc
enl March 24, 1944
disch September 17, 1945
Greenlawn Cemetery, Nelsonville, OH
WOODSON, Chapman (1909-1980) WWII
Tec 5
enl June 22, 1942
disch December 14, 1945
Greenlawn Cemetery, Nelsonville, Ohio

Korea and Vietnam

HOLBERT, Carl Edwin (1933-1952) Korea
Cpl
enl April 24, 1952
disch April 23, 1954
Riverside National Cemetery, Riverside, California
HOLBERT, James
LETHRIDGE, Huldah Delores Shoats (1929-1996) Korea
enl August 17, 1950
disch September 24, 1953
from Nelsonville, Ohio
LETHRIDGE, John E. (1930-1998) Korea
Cpl
Greenlawn Cemetery, Nelsonville, Ohio
LONG, John Anderson Jr. (1934-1997) Korea and Vietnam
Sgt Us Marine Corps
enl January 30, 1957
disch July 31, 1973
POLLEY, Richard Alan (1948-1968), Vietnam
Pvt Us Marine Corps
Greenlawn Cemetery, Nelsonville, Ohio
Polley Ball Field and Park in Nelsonville

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POLLEY, William E (1916-2005), Korea
Msgt Us Air Force
School Lot Cemetery, Carpenter, Meigs County, Ohio
SAUNDERS, Ronald (1934-?), Korea
SINGER, Kenneth. Korea or WWII
SINGER, Roy. Korea or WWII
STRICKLAND, Blaine. Vietnam
buried in Columbus
STRICKLAND, Terry (Living) Vietnam
STRICKLAND, Frank (Living) Vietnam
WARNER, John. Korea and Vietnam
WOODSON, Jack Austin (b. 1937-living) Korea
Air Force
enl 1956
disc 1960

THOMAS, Elijah. Currently serving

THANK YOU & NOTES

John Cunningham compiled the first-ever list of names through WWII.
Elizabeth Williams and Ada-Woodson Adams compiled post-1953 names of veterans. Andrea Frohne typed the entries.
Elizabeth Williams lent remastered copies of family photographs collected by her Aunt Mary Williams Nero.
OU Professor Cassidy Brauner Jarrahi of Photography + Integrated Media and the ART 3820 class scanned and edited E Williams' photographs for the exhibition.
Ada-Woodson Adams lent copies of photographs from the Alvin C. & Ada-Woodson Adams, Jr Collection.
Dessie Workman lent copies of photographs from the Dessie Butcher Workman Collection.
Michael Carpenter underwrote the refreshments
Christ Lutheran Church provides working space for Mount Zion Black Cultural Center
Jessica Cyders and the Southeast Ohio History Center generously hosted Mount Zion Black Cultural Center's exhibition.

There are 2,801 Athens County records of veterans. The information exists on grave registration cards taken from burial or cemetery records. They have been preserved under good conditions in the county recorder's office. The names in this exhibit can be identified as Black soldiers from the Civil War, World War I, World War II up to about 1953, and peacetime service. Post-1953 names were collected by living descendants.

A list of Black Veterans of Athens County did not exist before now. It is presented in the Southeast Ohio History Center exhibit for the first time. The project is incomplete and ongoing; please share additional information with ewilliams@mountzionathens.org

Black Veterans of Athens County: An Exhibit

**Guest curated by members of the History and Research Committee of the Mount Zion
Black Cultural Center for Veteran's Day, November 2024.**

Black Veterans of Athens County: An Exhibit

Lenders to the 2024 Exhibition

Ronald Saunders (b. 1934-?), Korea

From the collection of Dr. Harold and Tonya Thompson

From the collection of Elizabeth Williams

Courtesy of the Multicultural Genealogical Center, Chesterhill, Ohio

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Courtesy of the Multicultural Genealogical Center, Chesterhill, Ohio

Courtesy of John Cunningham

Courtesy of Clark Morgan

Courtesy of Clark Morgan

Courtesy of Clark Morgan

Courtesy of Clark Morgan

Collection of Southeast Ohio History Center

Collection of Southeast Ohio History Center

Collection of Southeast Ohio History Center

Collection of Southeast Ohio History Center

Collection of Alvin C. & Ada-Woodson Adams, Jr

Collection of Dessie Butcher Workman

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Collection of Dessie Butcher Workman

Black Veterans of Athens County: An Exhibit

From the collection of Mary Williams Nero and Elizabeth Williams

Collection of Mary Williams Nero and Elizabeth Williams

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From the collection of Mary Williams Nero and Elizabeth Williams

New Pittsburgh Courier, 31 January 1942.

George Holbert, WWI

Collection of Alvin C. & Ada-Woodson Adams, Jr

Huldah Delores Shoats Lethridge, Korea

Collection of Alvin C. & Ada-Woodson Adams, Jr

Hope Austin Woodson, WWII

Collection of Alvin C. & Ada-Woodson Adams, Jr

Jack Austin Woodson, Korea

Collection of Alvin C. & Ada-Woodson Adams, Jr

Robert Butcher, WWII

Collection of Dessie Butcher Workman

Carl Holbert, Korea

Collection of Dessie Butcher Workman

Gale Holbert, WWII

Black Veterans of Athens County: An Exhibit

Collection of Dessie Butcher Workman

Reggie Holbert, WWII
Collection of Dessie Butcher Workman

Roy Singer, Korea or WWII
Collection of Dessie Butcher Workman

Earnest "Bus" Tabler, WWII
Collection of Dessie Butcher Workman

Les Walker, WWII
Collection of Dessie Butcher Workman

Sidney Walker, WWII
Collection of Dessie Butcher Workman

Henry Nero, WWI
Collection of Mary Williams Nero and Elizabeth Williams

Charles Bell, WWII
Collection of Mary Williams Nero and Elizabeth Williams

George Bell, WWII
Collection of Mary Williams Nero and Elizabeth Williams

Franklin William Topsail, WWII
Collection of Alvin C. & Ada-Woodson Adams, Jr

James Edward Williams, WWII
Collection of Mary Williams Nero and Elizabeth Williams

Milton Scott Williams, WWII
Collection of Mary Williams Nero and Elizabeth Williams

William W. Williams, WWII
Collection of Mary Williams Nero and Elizabeth Williams

James Edward Williams, WWII
Collection of Mary Williams Nero and Elizabeth Williams

Milton Scott Williams, WWII
Collection of Mary Williams Nero and Elizabeth Williams

William W. Williams, WWII
Collection of Mary Williams Nero and Elizabeth Williams

Black Veterans of Athens County: An Exhibit

James Edward Williams, WWII
Collection of Mary Williams Nero and Elizabeth Williams

Milton Scott Williams, WWII
Collection of Mary Williams Nero and Elizabeth Williams

William W. Williams, WWII
Collection of Mary Williams Nero and Elizabeth Williams

James Edward Williams, WWII
Collection of Mary Williams Nero and Elizabeth Williams

Milton Scott Williams, WWII
Collection of Mary Williams Nero and Elizabeth Williams

William W. Williams, WWII
Collection of Mary Williams Nero and Elizabeth Williams

James Edward Williams, WWII
Collection of Mary Williams Nero and Elizabeth Williams

Milton Scott Williams, WWII
Collection of Mary Williams Nero and Elizabeth Williams

William W. Williams, WWII
Collection of Mary Williams Nero and Elizabeth Williams

Hat of Lorener F. Ford and 6888 Battalion of the Women's Army Corp (WAC) in WWII. Also worn in the film *The Six Triple Eight* by Tyler Perry on Netflix.
Courtesy of Dr. Tee Ford

Harlem Hellfighters

Courtesy of John Cunningham

Ronald Saunders (b. 1934-?), Korea
From the collection of Dr. Harold and Tonya Thompson

Civil War era cannonball
Courtesy of Tom O'Grady

From the collection of Dr. Harold and Tonya Thompson

Black Veterans of Athens County: An Exhibit

Harry Bland, WWI

Collection of Mary Williams Nero and Elizabeth Williams

Arley Henry

Collection of Dessie Butcher Workman

Soldiers and Sailors Arranged by Unit

Servicemen marked with an asterisk * served in more than one unit or on more than one naval vessel.

CIVIL WAR

CAVALRY

3rd United States Colored Cavalry
Company K
Sgt. James Rice

HEAVY ARTILLERY

3rd Regiment United States Colored Heavy Artillery
Company C
Pvt. Calvin Cooper
5th Regiment United States Colored Heavy Artillery
Company B
Pvt. William J. Harper
Company H
Pvt. Drury Cromwell
9th Regiment United States Colored Heavy Artillery
Company B
Pvt. Lemuel Lacy*
Company H
Pvt. Payton Wilkes

INFANTRY

5th Regiment United States Colored Infantry
Company B
Pvt. Calvis Holley
Pvt. Willis Walker (*enlisted by Milton Holland*)
Company C
Pvt. Thomas Coursey
Pvt. Jesse Tabler
Company G
Pvt. Harrison Dixon
Pvt. William Gibson
Pvt. Nimrod Goins
Pvt. James Mash
Pvt. Amos J. Norman
Pvt. Henry Norman
15th Regiment United States Colored Infantry
Company D

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Pvt. Lemuel Lacy*
16th Regiment United States Colored Infantry
Company B
Pvt. Jerry Simms
Pvt. Jackson Wiley
Company C
Pvt. David Freeman
Pvt. Green Wormley
Company F
Pvt. Silas Julius
18th Ohio Infantry
Company C
Pvt. John Calvin Lucas*
Company D
Pvt. John Calvin Lucas*
23rd Regiment United States Colored Infantry
Company I
Pvt. John Tabler, Jr.*
27th Regiment United States Colored Infantry
Company B
Cpl. James Whitfield
Company C
Pvt. William Lucas*
Company D
Pvt. William Lucas*
Company H
Pvt. Samuel Brunston
Company I
Pvt. James E. Tabler
Pvt. John Tabler, Jr.*
Company K
Pvt. Richard Hedgepath
55th Massachusetts Infantry
Company K
Sgt. Horace Goins
111th United States Colored Infantry
Company A
Pvt. Timothy Readus

NAVY

Many Vessels on the Mississippi River and the Gulf Coast
Fireman, 2nd Class Granville Lucas*

WORLD WAR I

AIR SERVICE

28th Construction Company
Pfc. Alexander J. Hayes

ARMY

6th Pioneer Infantry Regiment
Company ?
Pvt. James A. Topsail*
Company A
Pvt. William Jewett
Company I
Pvt. Clophia Tutor*
158th Depot Brigade
Pvt. Roy A. Smith*
Pvt. James A. Topsail*
Pvt. Clophia Tutor*
Pvt. Ezra Dalton*
161th Depot Brigade
Pvt. Roy A. Smith*
317th Engineer Regiment
Company C
Cpl. Harry Thomas
317th Sanitary Train
Ambulance Company #366
1st Lieut. Romeo Johnson
372nd Infantry Regiment
Company D
Pvt. Earnest Lewis*
Company E
Pvt. Earnest Lewis*
418th Service Battalion
Company C
Pvt. Harry Bland
Company D
Pvt. Mack Brown
505th Engineer Regiment
Company A
Pvt. Albert Northcutt
802nd Pioneer Infantry Regiment
Company A
Pvt. Ezra Dalton*

Black Veterans of Athens County: An Exhibit

812th Pioneer Infantry Regiment
Company E
Pvt. McKinley Hayes
813th Pioneer Infantry Regiment
Company D
Pfc. Henry Nero

PEACETIME SERVICE

NAVY
Lawrence Coursey*

WORLD WAR II

ARMY

1749th Engineer Regiment
Pvt. Hayward Kennedy

Unit and rank not known
Robert B. Williams

Description

Ohio, along with other states, made a concerted effort to locate the gravesites of veterans from all wars prior to 1943. The Athens County records, 2801 in all, contain a few recorded after that date. Each record is found on a pre-printed card arranged alphabetically by the veteran's name. The information on the grave registration cards was taken from burial or cemetery records. They have been preserved under good conditions in the county recorder's office. The following are those that can be identified as Black soldiers from the Civil War, World War I, World War II up to about 1953, and peacetime service. The supplementary information was provided by the compiler.

Abbreviations:

AEF = American Expeditionary Force
Amb = ambulance
Co = Company
Cpl = Corporal
disbl = disabled
disch = discharge
Div = Division
enl = enlistment
Inf = Infantry
Lieut = Lieutenant
mus = mustered
Pfc = Private first class

Pion = pioneer
Pvt = Private
Regt = Regiment
svc = service
trsfr = transferred
USCC = United States Colored Cavalry
USCHA = United States Colored Heavy Artillery
USCI = United States Colored Infantry
USN = United States Navy
wnd = wounded
WWI = World War I
WWII = World War II

Black Soldiers listed in the Athens County Veteran's Military Grave Registration Card File