

**BIOGRAPHY OF
EUGENE A. AUSTIN
OF BOULDER, COLORADO**

Eugene A. Austin, who for three terms in succession served acceptably to the citizens of Boulder as mayor, having been elected by the local Republicans, is now acting as a member of the city council, as alderman from the first ward. He previously served in this capacity for two terms. Without doubt, he is the youngest member of the Grand Army of the Republic in Colorado, not excepting drummer-boys of the Civil war, and the circumstances of his enlistment into the Union army are briefly as follows: One morning, January 22, 1864, he and a school-mate, Frank Nash, started for school as usual, but when the bell rang they went over to the recruiting office. Young Austin, then but fourteen and a-half years of age, but tall and weighing one hundred and thirty pounds, was accepted, and assigned to Company M, Fourth New York Heavy Artillery. He was mustered into the service in Rochester. The artillery served most of the time as infantry in the Army of the Potomac, from the battle of the Wilderness until the surrender of the rebel forces at Appomattox. He and his school-mate were comrades and messmates until the disastrous engagement of Ream Station on the Weldon Railroad, when his friend was wounded. Over two-thirds of the regiment to which Mr. Austin belonged was either captured or killed, and every one of their field officers met death or received wounds. Their regiment was on the extreme left of the Union army, which was attacked fiercely upon that wing. Their men fought desperately and with distinguished heroism, but the odds were against them. Nevertheless, their colors were saved by the daring color-bearer, who was obliged to tear them from the staff in order to preserve them, as they were all cut to pieces. After Lee's surrender Mr. Austin was assigned to guard duty in forts, etc., until October, 1865, when he was mustered out and honorably discharged. It was his privilege to participate in the grand review at Washington at the close of the war.

The parents of our subject were Clement W. and Elmira (O'Rallow) Austin. The father, who now resides in Boulder, was born near Bristol, NY, and was a farmer in the vicinity of Rochester, Monroe County, NY, during his active years. He and his wife were both from good old New England families. She died in the Empire state. They were the parents of five children, four of whom survive. Mrs. Newcomb is a resident of Denver and Mrs. Stanley lives on the old homestead, while Alphonso is a farmer of Monroe County, NY.

Eugene A. Austin was born August 11, 1849, in Rochester, NY, and attended the public schools until his memorable enlistment in his country's service. Upon his return from southern battlefields he resumed his studies.

In the spring of 1866 he came to Colorado with his father, and together they opened a coal-mine in Erie, the first in Weld County. It was owned by an uncle of our subject, and after it had been mined for about two years, it was sold to the Boulder Valley Railroad Company. In 1868 the young man went to Gilpin County, where for two years or more he was engaged in mining at Central City, Blackhawk and Georgetown. In 1870 he settled in Boulder, opened a meat-market on Pearl street and for several years dealt quite extensively in cattle and livestock as well. Then selling out, he turned his attention to the real-estate business and with his brother-in-law, Mr. Russell, bought a tract of land known as North Boulder (including Lover's Hill), some seventy acres, and has laid it out in town lots.

When the excavations were being made at Thirteenth street for filling in around the courthouse Mr. Austin noticed the peculiar feeling of the moist clay under foot, one morning after a rain, and curiously examining it, came to the conclusion that it was a superior quality of shale clay, used in the manufacture of flue pressed brick. After testing it in various ways and sending some of it to Chicago to experts for analysis, he and Mr. Russell organized the Boulder Pressed Brick Company and built their works, equipping the same with special machinery brought from Chicago. The Boyd press has a capacity of sixteen thousand brick per day. The clay is very fine, being smooth, and capable of being used in its natural state, with only the processes of pulverizing, screening, dry pressing and burning. The company has built up a large and remunerative trade, shipping to Denver and places in different parts of the state. Mr. Austin is the president and general manager of the company and Mr. Russell is the secretary and treasurer.

January 8, 1871, Mr. Austin married, in this city, Miss Jennie A. Gilbert, who was born in Ohio and who died here, leaving one child, Evan, now attending the University of Colorado. Mr. Austin was afterwards married in Michigan to Miss Sarah Phelps, daughter of Henry Phelps, an old settler of Flint, Mich. They have two children, Russell and Hazel. Their handsome home, No. 1343 Pine street, was built by Mr. Austin in 1875. He is past commander of Nathaniel Lyon Post No. 5, G. A. R., and served on the staff of General Carr, of the department of Colorado and Wyoming, as quartermaster, with the rank of colonel.

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REFERENCE:

PORTRAIT AND BIOGRAPHICAL RECORD OF DENVER AND VICINITY COLORADO, Containing Portraits and Biographies of many well known Citizens of the Past and Present Together with Biographies and Portraits of all the Presidents of the United States, CHAPMAN PUBLISHING COMPANY, CHICAGO 1898

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