



Photo 1: Michael Awalt - provided by Becky Ann Woessner Litke

Michael Abraham Awalt

1785 - 7 Jun 1835

Michael Abraham Awalt Jr. was born in 1785 in Burke County, North Carolina. When he was twenty-one years old, he carried on family tradition by joining the US Army, enlisting at Salisburg, NC around 15 Aug 1806. His father, Michael Abraham Awalt Sr. served in the American Revolution in North Carolina (and also in the War of 1812.) Awalt Jr. served for 5 years as a Private in Capt. Christian Limbaugh's Company in General Pickering's cavalry in the Regular Army until he was honorably discharged at New Orleans about the 15th Aug 1811. Although it's not clear how long he was stationed in New Orleans, the years between the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 and it's admittance into the union in April 1812 were surely exciting times.

When Michael returned home, he married Sarah Tipps in Morgantown, Burke County, North Carolina on 19 Sept 1811. The following month, the Awalts moved to Tennessee, likely with other family members, as Jacob Awalt and George Tipps from Franklin County, Tennessee testified about Sarah & Michael's marriage in the War of 1812 pension file. A mere nine months later, the US declared war on Great Britain on 18 June 1812.

On 25 Sept 1814 in Lincoln County, TN, Michael volunteered to serve as a substitute for George Rimerly. His widow states in his pension file that Michael had blue eyes, dark hair, and fair complexion and was a farmer at the time of his enlistment. His brother-in-law, Jacob Tipps, his father, Michael Awalt Sr. and several other Tipps family members all served in the War of 1812. Michael served as a Private in Capt. William Russell's Company, Russell's Separate Battalion, Tennessee Mounted Gunmen, commanded by General Andrew Jackson. Russell's unit participated in a mission into West Florida in December and January 1815 along the Escambia River to capture Creek Warriors who had fled Pensacola when Jackson captured it. Compromised by lack of supplies, not many Indians were capture, so the company headed toward New Orleans to meet up with Jackson's other troops. The company had made it only to Baton Rouge by the time the war ended in January. Michael continued to serve until he was again honorably discharged at New Orleans in March 1815. Like most vets, Michael and the Tipps cousins were on left to their own devices to return to Tennessee; a Tipps story tells of hardships without shoes and eating corn out of fields.

Between 1812 and 1832, Michael & Sarah had eleven children: Elizabeth, Henry Harrison, Permelia, William, Jacob, George Washington, John, Margaret, Mahala and Nancy. With their youngest only three years old, Michael died at 50 years old on 7 June 1835. Sarah states in her husband's War of 1812 pension file (WO 40882 / WC 31388) that her husband died in Bartholomew County, Indiana, mostly likely buried on his farm. Michael also has a War of 1812 service Memorial marker in Winchester City Cemetery, Winchester, Franklin County, TN, near his father's grave. At the time of his widow's pension file in 1881, Sarah Awalt was living in Appanoose, Iowa with her children and grandchildren.