

Ancestor Profile

Finas Euen Lance

Ancestor of Brother Michael L. Lance

Finas Euen Lance was born about 1825 in Gibson County, Indiana. He was the 3rd child born to John and 'Nelly' (Lemasters) Lance. On April 17, 1846, he married Elizabeth Leet in Warrick County, Indiana. Like his father, Finas followed farming as his occupation. He and Elizabeth became the parents of 5 children.

On October 1, 1850, Finas was a 25 year old farmer living in Pike County, Indiana when the federal census enumerator visited the Lance farm. He was farming with his 22 year old wife, Elizabeth, and their first 3 children. They were all still lodging on the old family homestead with his elderly parents. The census enumerator reported Finas could not read or write.

Elizabeth, passed away in the latter part of 1859 or early 1860 at about age 31. Finas soon re-married. On May 26, 1860, Lydia Murphy became his 2nd wife. Their marriage record listed Finas as being 50 years old (instead of about 35 years old). "This certifies that I joined in marriage as husband and wife 'Ewen' F. Lance and Lydia Murphy on the 12th day of April, 1860"¹. About 1862, as the Civil War raged, Finas and Lydia were blessed with the birth of a son, Abraham Lincoln Lance.

On September 27, 1864, Finas would have been about 39 years old when he received a draft summons from the 1st Congressional District to serve with the Union Army. On December 8, 1864, he reported to Captain Johnson in Evansville, Indiana to sign up for 1 year. Eleven days later and many miles to the north, Finas was present in Indianapolis to be mustered-in as a Private with Company F, 12th Regiment, Indiana Infantry. "Ewing Lance, Co. F, 12 Reg't Ind. Inf., age 44 [sic], height 5 feet, 9 inches, complexion dark, eyes grey, hair black, place of birth Indiana, occupation farmer, was drafted Sept. 27, 1864, held to service Oct. 31, 1864. Mustered out July 17, 1865 as of Co. E, 59 Ind. Inf. To which transferred. From acceptance to muster-out, he held the rank of Pvt. And the rolls on file for that period show him present except as follows: MOR of Co. F 12 Ind Inf dated June 8/65, only roll of that Co. on which borne, assigned to Indiana Oct for transfer to a Regtl organ."²

In June 1865, Finas' new regiment, the 59th Indiana Infantry, marched from Atlanta to Savannah, Georgia. It then moved up through the Carolinas to Raleigh where it rested awhile before marching on to Washington, DC. For the Grand Review. The regiment was then transferred to Louisville, Kentucky from where it was mustered-out on July 17, 1865. "The proper name of said soldier was, it seems, [was] Finis Ewing Lance; but I never heard him called any name but Ewing, as that was the one he was always called, and I never had seen his name written properly before."³ "I was well acquainted [with] Finas E. Lance when he went into the Army, was in the same Company & Reg. with him, wrote all of his letters home and read all he received for him. I know he complained and was sick at Louisville, Ky when in camp there, for about one month until he come home."⁴ Finas "was discharged July 17, 1865, as of Co. E, 59 Indiana Vol. Inf. To which transferred."⁵

On June 3, 1870, 'F. E.' Lance was enumerated as a 50 year old (instead of about 45) coal miner living in Ohio Township in Warrick County, Indiana. He was living with his 27 year old 2nd wife, Lydia, their 8 year old son, Abraham L. Lance; and F. E.'s 2 older sons from his previous marriage – 'Benji' [Benjamin Franklin] and Finas E. Lance Jr. The 1870 Indiana census also shows 'F. E.' still could not read or write. On March 12, 1878, he passed away in Warrick County at about age 53 (note: several of Finas' documented ages and dates conflict with each other).

The location of Finas' final resting place was eventually forgotten over time. In 1997, an intense search for it began. A badly weathered military marker was finally found proudly standing, although leaning to the side a bit, at Sharon Cemetery in the city of Newburgh in Warrick County. The inscription read: "Uren Lance – Co. F – 12th Ind. Inf." A new VA military gravestone has been recently placed on his grave and a formal dedication is being planned for June 2005.

Sources:

1. Jacob Houghland – Minister of the Gospel – Warrick County, Indiana.
 2. 'Service and Soldier's Personal Description' document – widow's military pension file – 30 Sep 1904.
 3. W. W. Slaughter, M.D. – Physician's Affidavit, widow's military pension file – 29 Mar 1895.
 4. Affidavit – William M. Leach of Newburgh, Warrick Co., IN – widow's military pension file – 25 Sep 1891.
 5. Military Secretary B. F. Ware – Department of the Interior, Bureau of Pensions, Washington, D.C. widow's military pension file – 19 Sep 1904.
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