Austin Dabney

Austin Dabney lived from 1765 to 1830. He was a black slave, but he became a private in the Georgia militia during the American Revolution. Because of his services during the American Revolution, he became the first African American to receive land, and he was also one of the few American Revolution veterans who received a federal military pension. He was a very important part of the American Revolution.

Austin Dabney was born in Wake County, North Carolina in 1765. Dabney was born a slave. In the late 1770s, Austin Dabney moved to Wilkes County, Georgia with his master Richard Aycook. When the American Revolution started, Richard Aycook sent Dabney to the Georgia militia as a substitute, so he wouldn’t have to serve in the militia himself.

During the Battle of Kettle Creek, which took place on February 14, 1779, Austin Dabney served as an artilleryman under Colonel Elijah Clarke, and he was the only black soldier to fight in the Battle of Kettle Creek, and the Battle of Kettle Creek was one of the most significant battles fought in Georgia during the Revolutionary War.

Unfortunately, Dabney was severely injured during the battle. Luckily for him, Giles Harris brought him back to his home, and he nursed Austin Dabney back to health. Dabney worked for the Harris family for the rest of his life because Giles Harris nursed him back to health.

On August 14, 1786, Austin Dabney became the first African American to receive land by the state because of his services in the American Revolution. He was given fifty acres. The Georgia legislature gave him seventy pounds (the currency used in America back then) for having to work for Richard Aycook, his old master. Dabney paid for Giles’ son, William, to go to Franklin College which is now known as the University of Georgia.

The friendship between Dabney and the Harris family lasted for the rest of Dabney’s life. Dabney died in 1830 in Zebulon. In 1835, William Harris, Giles Harris’ son, named his son Austin Dabney Harris in Dabney’s honor.