

Carey Austin AKA Ray Bailey
Private, Company F, 4th Heavy Artillery
Dorothy Granberry, Geneva Miller Historical Society

Carey Austin was a United States Colored Trooper (USCT) with the 4th Heavy Artillery during the American Civil War. When Austin enlisted at Fort Pillow in August 1863 he used the name Ray Bailey. Ray was a shortened form of his given name, Carey; Bailey was the surname of his enslavers.

Austin, born in 1846 or 1847 in Franklin County, AL, came to Haywood County, TN in the 1850s following the unexpected death of his slave master, Christopher Columbus Bailey.

When Carey joined the Union Army his age was listed as 18, although he may have been only 16. In an affidavit given in 1874, Carey indicated he grew physically after joining the army. Carey ran away to join the army with three other men from the local slave community. The runaways were Mack Wills, Andy Parker, and James Parker. The runaway men were all enslaved by Edmund Willis Wills or one of Wills' relatives. Carey's enslaver was Edmund Wills' daughter, Eliza Bailey, the widow of Christopher Columbus Bailey.

At the war's end, Carey returned to Haywood County and married a local girl, Lucy Williams in 1867. He also began using Austin as his surname rather than Bailey. In 1874, he was farming land owned by Kit Bailey, the son of his former enslavers. Carey and Lucy were the parents of at least six children. The family left Haywood County sometime in 1891 or 1892 for Arkansas. Carey filed for a soldier's pension from Arkansas in 1892.