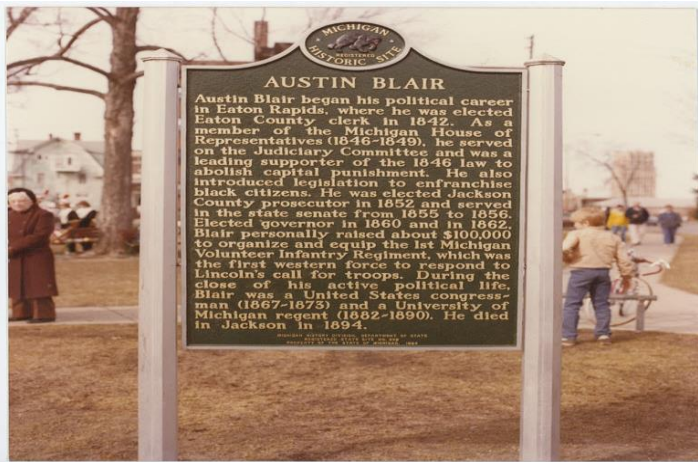


Historical Marker - S559C - Austin Blair (Marker ID#:S559C)



Front - Title/Description

Austin Blair

For over a half century, Civil War governor Austin Blair (1818-1894) was a resident of this city. Born in Tompkins County, New York, Blair moved to Jackson in 1841. He began his law practice and was admitted to the Michigan bar in October of that year. After a brief residence in Eaton Rapids (1842-1844), he returned to Jackson. Originally a Whig, Blair joined the Free Soil Party in 1848. In 1854 he was a leader of the over three thousand delegates who met in Jackson and founded the Republican party, the immediate goal of which was to stop the further extension of slavery in the territories. Blair served as a delegate to the Republican National Convention in Philadelphia in 1856 and chaired the Michigan delegation at the national convention in Chicago in 1860. In 1860 and again in 1862 he was elected governor of Michigan on the Republican ticket.

Significant Date:

Civil War and After (1860-1875)

Registry Year: 1984 **Erected Date:** 1984

Marker Location

Address: 600 Greenwood Avenue

City: Jackson

State: MI **ZipCode:**

County: Jackson

Township: Summit

Lat: 42.24293000 / **Long:** -84.40937300

Web URL:

Back - Title/Description

Austin Blair Began his political career in Eaton Rapids, where he was elected Eaton County clerk in 1842. As a member of the Michigan House of Representatives (1846-1849), he served on the Judiciary Committee and was a leading supporter of the 1846 law to abolish capital punishment. He also introduced legislation to enfranchise black citizens. He was elected Jackson County prosecutor in 1852, and served in the state senate from 1855 to 1856. Elected governor in 1860 and in 1862, Blair personally raised about \$100,000 to organize and equip the 1st Michigan Volunteer Infantry Regiment, which was the first western force to respond to Lincoln's call for troops. During the close of his active political life, Blair was a United States Congressman (1867-1873) and a University of Michigan regent (1882-1890). He