The early years of Alonzo Martin's life remain something of a mystery. The public records accessed in the search for information on Alonzo are incomplete at the moment. He was born about 1818 in Orwell, Vermont. The names of his parents remain unknown at this time. Where he lived and what he did from 1818 until 1850 is hidden from view in the public records for the time being.

Alonzo surfaced in the public domain around 1850 when he was thirty-two years old. He was married and lived in Somersworth, New Hampshire. His wife was Lois (Louis) Stacey from Orwell, and she was twenty-six. Their marriage date was October 20, 1847. At the time, Alonzo was farming. The couple's first child, Maria (Mayra) was born on June 12, 1857 in Vermont.

By 1860, Alonzo, his thirty-six year old wife, and their two daughters, Maria (two years) and two month old Flora A. all lived in Sudbury, Vermont. Alonzo was a forty-two year old day laborer. His total net worth at the time was $550.00. Flora Ann Martin had been born on March 22, 1860.

When the war broke out in April of 1861, Alonzo Martin was no spring chicken. He was a forty-four year old dirt farmer from Orwell with a wife and two children depending on him for survival. Yet on December 13, 1861 in Brandon, Vermont, he signed his enlistment papers and became a five feet seven and one quarter inch Private in Company B of the Seventh Vermont Infantry Regiment. The blue eyed, untanned soldier with light hair volunteered for a three year term. He was mustered -in on February 12, 1862 in Rutland, Vermont. His service record noted that he refused to take the oath administered at that time to the new volunteers.

The Seventh Vermont Regiment of volunteers was organized during the last part of 1861 and the early part of 1862. It was mustered into the Federal service on February 12, 1862 at Rutland, Vermont. Colonel George T. Roberts commanded the Regiment. It numbered nine hundred forty-three officers and enlisted men. It was a three years' infantry regiment which served in the Western Theater, mostly Louisiana and Florida, under
General Butler with whom the Vermonters had a strained relationship from the start of their serving together. The Seventh was the longest serving Vermont regiment during the war. It was not mustered-out until March of 1866. The delay (between June 9, 1865 surrender of Lee and March, 1866) was in part at least due to General Butler's dislike of the Regiment.11

On March 10, 1862, the Seventh left Rutland for New York City. There it boarded two old-fashioned sailing ships, the Premier and the Tammerlane, and sailed for Ship Island, Mississippi. The Premier arrived on April 5 and the Tammerlane on the tenth.12 The voyage on the crowded transports took upwards of three weeks and was very miserable for the men who were unaccustomed to bouncing around on rough seas churned up by the heavy March gales.13

On May 3, Company B (Alonzo's), C and part of D were sent aboard the gunboats USS New London and the USS Calhoun to capture the Confederates at Fort Pike that guarded the entrance to Lake Ponchartrain. On arriving, they discovered the Fort abandoned. So they took possession and began repairing the damage caused by the Rebels when they evacuated it. The rest of the Regiment was shipped off to Carrolton, a suburb of New Orleans.14 In a few days, the Seventh was moved to Baton Rouge.

Alonzo was sick in the Regimental Hospital when, on June 19, 1862, eight companies of the Seventh along with three other regiments and a light battery of artillery (about 3,500 men altogether) launched an ill conceived expedition against Vicksburg on General Butler's orders. Even though supported by Admiral Farragut's entire fleet of warships, the twenty-eight day siege of Vicksburg was a failure. The only accomplishment was the loss of many lives primarily from exposure and sickness. By July 26, 1862, the Federals had returned to Baton Rouge.15

Shortly after, on August 5, 1862, the Confederates reciprocated with their own offensive push. The Battle of Baton Rouge took place on a very foggy day. In the confusion created by the attack, several Federal units accidentally fired on each other. Following orders, the
Seventh Vermont was one of those. They unwittingly fired a volley into the Twenty-first Indiana during the battle. Although this tragedy, along with the mortal wounding of the Seventh's commander, Colonel Roberts, was devastating to the Vermonters, the Confederate attack was repulsed. Immediately after the engagement, General Butler was quick to blame the Seventh for poor performance on the field citing the mistaken identity incident during the battle and further accusing the Vermont regiment of "withdrawing" in the face of the enemy. The so called "withdrawal" from the enemy was the evacuation of the hospital containing a large number of the Seventh including Alonzo, to a safe place near the river bank. General Butler's accusations were based upon hearsay reports made to him by subordinates after the battle. General Butler, himself, was no where near the action at Baton Rouge. The officers of the Seventh, who were well aware of General Butler's political ambition to run for President, felt that his allegations were his way of diverting attention away from his lack of strategic planning before the engagement. The Vermonter's felt that General Butler used the Vermonter's as a scapegoat because the small state had no great representatives with powerful influence in Washington. General Butler further rubbed salt into the Seventh's wounds by forbidding the Regiment permission to put the battle honor "Baton Rouge" on their battle flag and prohibited the Regiment from carrying their colors. Permission to carry was later restored.  

Baton Rouge was evacuated on August 20, 1862. The Seventh returned to Carrolton. There it manned the forts south of Pensacola, Florida. The Vermonters performed garrison duty at Fort Barrancas and Fort Pickens from November, 1862 to August, 1864.

During the Vicksburg campaign, the mortality rate of the Regiment reached its peak. At the close of its first year of service, it had lost over three hundred by death and upwards of one hundred discharged for disability including Private Alonzo Martin who had been discharged on March 11, 1863 at Fort Pickens. Like most of the others discharged for disability, Alonzo went back home with permanently shattered health from diseases contracted in the line of duty while serving in an unhealthy environment. The original members of the Regiment, now minus Alonzo as well as many others, had the opportunity to re-enlist as veteran volunteers. All but fifty-eight did so. This entitled them to a thirty day veteran's furlough to Vermont and to redesignate the Regiment as the
Seventh Veteran Volunteers. The Seventh performed vital service in Florida as artillerists, mounted and dismounted infantry, scouts and garrisoning various fortifications protecting Pensacola Harbor where vast naval stores had been stockpiled for the use of Farragut's West Gulf squadron. It survived two seasons of yellow fever and several severe combat engagements. It became part of the Thirteenth Corps, commanded by General Gordon Granger, after February, 1865. The Seventh took part in the siege of Mobile and Spanish Fort, the battle at Whistler, Alabama, and the surrender of the Confederate Army of Mobile at Citronelle, Alabama.

On May 30, 1865, the Regiment was put on the steamer "General Sedgwick" and shipped to Texas to become part of the "Army of Observation" along the Rio Grande which kept an eye on Maximilian's French Army there. Some authorities of history claim that General Butler had a great deal to do with the Seventh being sent on protracted duty to Texas. It was implied by some that it was his last jab at the Vermonter's for their substandard performance at Baton Rouge. The Seventh was eventually mustered-out on March 14, 1866 at Brownsville, Texas. During its term of service, the Vermonters lost eleven men killed; fifteen died of accidents; six died in Confederate prisons; three hundred seventy-nine died from disease plus another two hundred forty-two were discharged for disability, primarily from disease. Total losses were six hundred forty-nine.

When Alonzo enlisted in the army in December of 1861, he was a healthy, forty-four year old husband and father of two young daughters. He made a living doing manual labor. His fitness for duty was attested to by his commanding officer, Lieutenant J.V. Parker: "...I certify that the said Private Alonzo Martin when he enlisted was a sound able bodied man & so continued until about the last of May 1862...." That assessment was further corroborated by Captain William Cronan of Company B, Seventh Regiment Vermont Volunteers (Alonzo's Company) in his Officer's Certificate statement: "...Alonzo Martin while in the service as aforesaid, and the line of his duty, was disabled...at Ship Island he became unfit for duty by reason of sickness Chronic Diarrhea and chill Fever which disease was contracted while he was in the service aforesaid and in
the line of his duty by reason of exposure and fatigue; he remained unfit for military duty from that time which was on or about the fourth of May 1862 up to the date of his discharge, which was on the third day of March, 1863 with the exception of a few weeks while the Reg't was at Camp Kearney in Oct. of same year, Said soldier previous to said sickness at Ship Island he was a rugged good soldier...."25 By his own account, Alonzo related the following information about his disability: "...he was taken sick at Ship Island, with chronic Diarrhea and Fever, followed by chills went from there to Fort Pike remained six weeks sick wholly unable to do duty. from there to Baton Rouge about the middle of June 1862. There till about the last of August. sick and unable to do duty. from there to Camp Kearney improved some, So that he was able to do duty about three weeks. when he was again taken sick worse with same disease. from there he went to Pensacola. in the Hospital where he remained until discharged. he further says that his disease was wholly contracted while in the service, from exposure hard service bad water, etc...."26 The Army surgeon who examined Private Martin, Enoch Blanchard of the Seventh Vermont Regiment, also found young Martin incapable of performing the duties of a soldier because of "...Chronic Diarrhea...which has continued till this time (March 3,1863) Entirely unfitting him for service and he does not appear likely in service in this climate...."27 And so, Alonzo was dismissed from the service effective March 11, 1863 at Fort Pickens, Florida by order of Major General Butler by reason of Surgeon's Certificate of Disability.28

Mr. Alonzo Martin went home to Vermont a severely altered middle-aged man. In his application for an invalid pension filed six months after his discharge from the service, Alonzo stated "... he is confined to his room most of the time with same disease & chills. he further states that he was sound and free from disease at the time of enlisting. he is a farmer by occupation, and has resided in said Sudbury since his discharge and return from the Service but wholly unable to obtain his subsistence from manual labor. he further says there is no army surgeon within thirty miles of applicant."29 The reference to the great distance between himself and any army approved surgeon came from a condition attached to the approval of Alonzo's pension application that required a semi-annual examination. The army surgeon who analyzed him for that application, Cyrus
Porter, had determined that Alonzo suffered from '…incipient consumption pain in chest
night sweats profuse mucopurulent expectoration and cough with occasional Diarrhea.'
His disability was total according to the doctor.\(^{30}\) Alonzo was granted a pension of $8 per
month on September 1, 1863 commencing from March 3, 1863.\(^{31}\) Alonzo did not linger
long after his return to civilian life in Sudbury, Vermont. He died of consumption on
April 26, 1866.\(^{32}\)

Louis and her two daughters continued to reside in Sudbury four years later, in 1870. She
was listed as "keeping house", so it appeared her widow's pension of $8 per month plus
$2 per month for each dependent child was her sole means of support ($12/mo).\(^{33}\) Her
daughters were thirteen and ten years old in 1870. They would continue to receive minor
children payments until they reached sixteen years of age. Louis lived another eight years,
dying at age fifty-four on December 10.\(^{34}\)

NOTES
1. Vermont in the Civil War/Cemeteries/Vermont/Orwell/Mountain View Cemetery/
   Martin, Alonzo/Vitals.
3. Fold3.com, Widow's Declaration for pension, dated May 1, 1866, image 291582554.
4. Ibid., letter from Nathan Gale, attending physician in support of widow's application
   for pension, December 18, 1866, image 291582566.
7. Fold3.com, Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Union Soldiers Who Served
   in Organizations from the State of Vermont, p. 2, image 311422663. Herein-
   after referred to as Compiled Service Records.
8. Ibid., Compiled Service Records, p. 3, image 311422666.
9. Vermont in the Civil War/Units/Seventh Vermont Infantry.
10. Ibid.
11. en.wikipedia.org/7th Vermont Infantry.
12. Ibid.
13. Vermont in the Civil War/Units/Seventh Vermont Infantry.
14. en.wikipedia.org/7th Vermont Infantry.
15. Vermont in the Civil War/Units/Seventh Vermont Infantry.
16. en.wikipedia.org/7th Vermont Infantry.
17. Ibid.
18. Vermont in the Civil War/Units/Seventh Vermont Infantry.
19. Ibid.
20. en.wikipedia.org/7th Vermont Infantry.
21. Ibid.
22. Vermont in the Civil War/Units/Seventh Vermont Infantry.
23. en.wikipedia.org/7th Vermont Infantry.
25. Ibid., Widow's Service Records, image 291582598. Officer's Certificate signed by Cap't William Cronan dated June 9, 1863 at Stoughton Santa Rosa Island.
26. Ibid., Widow's Pension Records under Alonzo Martin, image 291582585. Declaration Rutland County Court on May 27, 1863 by Alonzo Martin, 45, of Sudbury, VT.
27. Ibid., Compiled Service Records, p. 16, image 311422702.
29. Ibid., Widow's Pension Records under Alonzo Martin, image 291582585.
30. Ibid., Widow's Pension Records under Alonzo Martin, image 291582596. Claim for Invalid Pension (proof).
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid., Widow's Pension Records under Alonzo Martin, image 291582579. Official evidence of service and death.
33. Ibid., Claim For Widow's Pension… under A. Martin, image 291582544.