



Austin Families Association of America

Newsletter

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Austin Research Organizations Working Together as a Team

Edith Austin Moore began researching her Austin roots after her father's death in 1912. She labored long and hard compiling histories and genealogies for New England Austins and allied families, and became the pre-eminent Austin family historian in New England. The research eventually exceeded the capabilities of one person, and she decided to get more Austin descendants involved.

In 1942, Edith and her brother Henry Warner Austin founded the Austin Family Association, with Henry serving as its first president and Edith as its first historian.

At first, members were mostly Robert Austin line descendants, but the new organization quickly grew to encompass Austin families of all lines, and was re-named the Austin Families Association of America (AFAOA). This nationwide family organization remains alive and well today.

Edith published books on the lines of Robert Austin of Kingstown, RI and Richard Austin of Charlestown, MA and placed several Austin manuscripts in the D.A.R. Library in Washington, DC and the New England Historic and Genealogical Society in Boston, MA. Aside from her efforts, however, little else was being published to help Austin family researchers.

Recognizing this, in 1979, Dr. Michael Edward Austin of Concord, MA and Carol Leighton Hull of Sudbury, MA founded a new organization named the Austins of America. Its goal was to publish Austin related research and make it more generally available. The organization has since

evolved into the Austins of America Genealogical Society (AOAGS), and Dr. Michael Austin continues to serve as the AOAGS Director. Largely on the basis of its quality publications, AOAGS membership has grown steadily, and the AOAGS is now the largest group of Austin family researchers in the United States (URL: <http://www.AOAGS.org>).

In 1986, Harold Austin Steiner of Las Vegas, NV was elected AFAOA President. Under his leadership, the AFAOA has annually examined its strengths and weaknesses in order to improve its ways and methods for helping all Austins, both nationally and worldwide, to discover their Austin heritage. By any standard, this self-analysis has been a remarkable success, for the AFAOA has become one of the nation's best family oriented organizations, and maintains one of the most valuable family genealogical sites available on the Internet (URL: <http://www.rahul.net/afaoa>).

Both the AFAOA and AOAGS both seek to further Austin research in every manner possible. Rather than being competitive, the organizations complement each other. The AFAOA has held reunions and national conventions for 56 years in cities throughout the United States. The AOAGS has actively participated in most AFAOA sponsored national conventions held during the past 15 years. Many Austin family researchers belong to both organizations. To continue and further their spirit of camaraderie and cooperation, the AFAOA and AOAGS co-sponsored the 1998 National Austin Convention held in Salt Lake City, UT, and now plan on co-sponsoring all future conventions.

Austinburg, OH, the Home of Sycamore Hall

Ed. Note: This article appeared in the Feb. 1997 edition of the *Ashtabula Co. Gazette*. It, and the article on Jerry, the slave, was provided by Gene Austin. Eliphalet Austin was a descendant of Richard Austin of Charlestown, MA.

Legends, lore and history weave through the galleries of the Austin home located at the present site of Sycamore Hall Gardens at 1873 Route 45, and even beyond the stately manor.

Eliphalet Austin, the original owner was one of 6 sons of a prominent Connecticut family,

Please see **Austinburg**, page 3

Jerry: The only slave ever bought and sold in Ashtabula County

In the latter 1830s, Sycamore Hall became an important stop on the Underground Railroad and a center of abolitionist activity. Beneath the living room is a secret room 4 feet in height, accessed only from the dining room closet, where escaped slaves were hidden.

History recounts the escape of a refugee named Jerry, who found safety and eventual freedom by being hidden away at Sycamore Hall.

Please see **Jerry**, page 8



New Members Welcomed

Charles E. Austin

630 E. 10th Ave.
Hutchinson, KS 67501
Samuel b. 1814, George W. b. 1855, Roy Wm. b. 1895, Charles b. 1927.

Elaine M. Austin

317 Cobblestone Ct.
Lancaster, PA 17601-3347
Robert of RI, Joseph b 1743, Robert b 1785 CT, George b 1750/3 CT, George b 1781 MA, Noah b 1803 MA, Luman b 1830 MA, Frank b 1872 NY.

James J. Curtis

7560 Drew Cir. Apt. 12
Westland, MI 48185-6549
Nicholas b IRE, Philip b 1820 IRE, Morgan b 1846 ONT, Philip H. b 1877 ONT

Betty L. Holmes

1150 S. Maine St.
Fallon, NV 89406-8923
Charles Stacy b 1802 NY, Phebe Austin

Kathie Austin Padgett

4925 Swisswood Dr.
Raleigh, NC 27613
Caleb ca 1777, Alfred A. OH, Horton R. b 1844 OH, Katherine b 1877 WV, Lyle L. b WV

Donald R. Austin

19 Snowden St.
Forty Fort, PA 18704-5009
Richard b 1598 ENG of MA

Grace K. Austin

P.O. Box 356
Ransomville, NY 14131
(No lineage information available)

Kem K. Hart

3528 Shelton Road
Portsmouth, VA 23703-3829
Robert of RI

Pauline Dennis

P.O. Box 954
Sheffield, MA 01257
Richard b. 1598 Eng

Peggy Spencer

2035 Halford Ave.
Santa Clara, CA 95051
(No lineage information available)

Jere J. Austin

1480 Queensbury Ave.
Los Altos, CA 94024
Richard b 1598 ENG.

William Austin

3005 SW Austin Rd.
Roseburg, OR 97470
Richard b 1598 ENG of MA.

Jo Saille Carmichael

4255 Auburn
Wichita, KS 67220
John Sr. of VA.

Janet M. Czerwinka

1617 Mendota Street
Madison, WI 53704
Richard b 1598 ENG of MA.

Richard A. Fisk

5630 Troon Court
Discovery Bay, CA 94514
Robert b ENG of RI, Jeremiah ca 1664 of RI, David ca 1700 of RI, Joseph b 1731 RI, David b 1752 RI, Ethan A. b 1789 VT, Benjamin F. b 1829 VT, Stanley M. b 1860 IA, William M. b 1887 MN.

Fern M. Green

1221 Cheyene Rd.
Zillah, WA 98953
William D. b 1883, Charles E., Velma M.

Glenda Kasper

Rt. 3, Box L-99
La Cygne, KS 66040-9770
Hetty May b 1871 IA, Almon A. b 1830 NY, Agrippa b 1776 RI, Silas b 1753 RI, Jedediah ca 1734 of RI, Edward, Edward, & Robert.

Kenneth C. Kirtland

3505 N. 12th St., Apt E9
Grand Junction, CO 81506-2875
Richard b 1598 ENG of MA.

Joyce Olson

5085 Eucalyptus
Cypress, CA 90630
*Richard b 1598 ENG of MA.
Starr S. b 1858 CT.*

Roxanna Austin

1039 B N Jamestown Rd.
Decatur, GA 30033
Charles b ca 1793/4 GA/SC, James M. b 1823 GA, James M. b 1862 GA, Charles b 1886 GA.

Christine A. Longhurst

20531 13th Dr. SE
Bothel, WA 98012
Thomas, John b NY, Sarah A. b 1836 NY. Also: Henry b ca 1687 MD, Samuel b ca 1710 MD, Eleanor Marshall.

Susan A. Yoder

9226 Presidential Dr.
Alexandria, VA 22309
(No lineage information available)

Michael A. Klein

20001 Fairway
Uniontown, OH 44685
Richard b. 1598 Eng of MA, Anthony, Richard, Ebenezer, Andrew, Horace, James, Jorace, Stanley.

Sue A. Osborn

2883 Redwood Rd.
Napa, CA 94558
John, Sr. b ca 1680/1700, John, Jr. b. ca 1720 VA, Stephen b ca 1755 VA, Rebecca Gray b 1795/1796 VA.

Barbara S. Hunter (Re-instated)

1115 S. Bryan St.
Mesquite, TX 75149
Richard b ca 17__ NC?, Charles b 1796 NC, Ephraim H. b 1820 NC, Phoebe E. Woodward b 1850 TN.

Richard Dwyer (Corrected spelling)

624 Kastle Rd., Lexington, KY

Land Records Tip #1

In the lower left corner of many old deeds, you will find signatures of 2 to 4 witnesses. The first one is always from the husband's side of the family. The next is always from the wife's side of the family - to protect her 1/3 dower right under law. Nothing will give you greater clues to maiden names than witnesses to old deeds.

--Heart of WI GS NL Vol. 24, Dec 1997

**The deadline for the Newsletter
Spring Issue is March 17, 1999
Please send all articles to the
Editors.**



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

During the 1998 National Austin Convention, it was decided, by vote of the membership in attendance, that the 1999 Convention would be held in the Washington, DC area. This area was chosen because of its excellent genealogical research facilities, its cultural and tourist attractions, and its geographical closeness to our Southern Austin cousins.

The Holiday Inn-Capitol hotel, located 550 C Street SW (i.e., the corner of C Street and 6th streets) has been chosen as the site of the 1999 National Austin Convention. 30 rooms have been reserved up to (8 July 1999) by the hotel between 3 and 12 August 1999. Room rates quoted are \$109 plus applicable taxes. However, attendees can choose a less expensive hotel and still have easy access to the Holiday Inn Capitol via the Metro (Washington's subway system).

The Holiday Inn-Capitol is only one block from the L'Enfant Metro Station and one block from the National Air and Space Museum. It is two or three blocks from the Smithsonian Institution, Sackler Gallery of Asian Art, National Gallery of African Art, National Gallery of Art; four to six blocks from the Freer Gallery of Art, National Archives, Navy Memorial Museum; seven to nine blocks from the Washington Monument, National Holocaust Memorial Museum, American History Museum; one mile from the White House, Lincoln Memorial, Jefferson Memorial and Vietnam Veterans' Memorial.

So make a note in your calendars:
1999 NATIONAL AUSTIN CONVENTION, 6, 7, and 8 August at the Holiday Inn-Capitol hotel, Washington, DC.

Registration will be at the hotel on Friday afternoon, August 6th, beginning at

1:00 PM, and ending at 5:00 PM. A "Let's Get Acquainted" reception will be held from 5:00 PM until 6:00 PM. Participants are then on their own for dinner, although the usual practice has been for everyone to gather for dinner at a local restaurant.

The official proceedings start Saturday, August 7 with plenary sessions and workshops running from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM. Again, participants are on their own for dinner Saturday evening. Plenary sessions and workshops continue on Sunday, August 8 from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, followed by a formal reception at 6:00 PM. At 7:00 PM we will be seated for the 57th Annual Banquet including a key-note address and the presentation of the prestigious AOAGS Eagle Award for outstanding contributions to Austin Genealogical Research.

Cost per person will be \$50 which includes the Sunday banquet. The Convention Committee is currently at work enlisting noted genealogists and research specialists for the various workshops and "How-to" sessions. Look for specific details in the Spring edition of the *Newsletter*. The Convention page on the AFAOA web site is currently displaying this information along with a map of the downtown Washington, DC area (URL: <http://www.rahul.net/afaoa/afaoar.html>).

Now I personally wish to invite all Austins or those researching the Austin surname to make a special effort to attend this convention. Although participation can become expensive in the Washington area, holding the meeting there serves two purposes. Besides the plentiful genealogical research facilities, it is a destination place for family sight-seeing as well, allowing members to attend the convention while their families enjoy the history and sights of the area. So start making plans now.

Hal Steiner
AFAOA President

Galvanized Soldier - Civil War

A *galvanized* soldier was a soldier who was captured and sent to prison, and who then won his release by agreeing to enlist in and fight for the opposing army. As a result, some "Rebels" may have received Union pensions. Many families are unaware that an ancestor may have fought on both sides.

--Search Notes, 12/1996, by Jeannette Wynne

Austinburg

Continued from page 1

who gained a distinguished service record in the War of 1776.

He remained at the family home in Connecticut caring for his aged parents until the occasion of an eventful encounter with what was thought to be a "mad dog." Austin's doctor, who had no remedy for the bite of a rabid dog, advised the young man to go away and not concern himself with the possibilities. Taking the doctor's advice, Austin arrived in the Western Reserve area, which would later become Austinburg, in 1799.

After establishing himself and his family in a log cabin, in the years 1803 to 1815 the 2 story Western Reserve style brick home was constructed. Austin determined, that in spite of the cost and the labor involved, the home would be made of brick. The task required a force of laborers who patiently made each brick by hand at Coffee Creek and hauled them to the site by ox cart where they were mortared into the edifice. The exterior walls as well as some interior walls are 16 inches of solid brick construction.

According to legend, one of the ox cart drivers bearing a load of bricks ran over a sapling sycamore tree and Austin was incensed. He admonished the drivers and instructed them that the tree was to be preserved. Sycamore Hall took its name from that tree and today, that sycamore is said to be the largest sound sycamore in the state of Ohio.

The tin roof Austin ordered from Scotland still covers the house today, nearly 2 centuries after it was first put in place. In the 1840s, construction began on a 3 story addition in the new Italianate style of the period.

The Austins left a living legacy to the area in the history they helped build, and the home which stands today as a testimony to their presence. Sycamore Hall has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Austin home is now a private residence which is undergoing extensive restoration. It is also the home to Sycamore Hall Gardens which will open for the season on May 1.





*AUSTIN QUERIES - Please send all new queries to the following address. In responding to any of the following queries, please write directly to the submitter, **also sending a copy to:***

Bonnie Bigolin
P.O. Box 1094
Green River, WY 82935-1094

Q8-4,1 - Robert Maxwell, 6931 Papoose Landing Rd., Mantowish Waters, WI 54545 <ramaxwell@centuryinter.net> Need further information on the ancestors and descendants of Issac Austin & Deborah Reynolds. Known children: Issac, Joel (Joel?), Stewart, Seymour, Sarah & William. Also need proof or disproof that Isaac's parents were David Austin & Margaret Stuart of CT. (See Q8-4,3 below)

Q8-4,2 - Barbara Austin, 1 Shorter Circle, Rome, GA 30165-4257 (706)-290-0432 <WHAJIM@aol.com> Nathaniel Austin (Sr.) was in VA circa 1750. He was married to Mary ____, who may have died in Louisa County, VA about 1753. He later married Agnes Dickinson and moved to SC. Where did Nathaniel come from? Was he an immigrant from England? English genealogists have had no luck finding his parents in England. Did he migrate from another part of this country into Virginia? If so, where was he born? And who was his wife Mary? Any information on these early Austins would be greatly appreciated. (See Q8-4,8 below)

Q8-4,3 - Michael & Shirley Gallegos, 765 Newark St., Aurora, CO 80010 <OlingerGallegos@email.msn.com> Need ancestry of Stewart Austin b ca 1798 NY, son of Isaac Austin & Deborah Reynolds. Stewart mar. Eliza Reynold. Stewart & Eliza's ch all born PA: 1850 Census of Whiteside Co., IL - Hiram 20, William, Isaac 16, Lenora 14, Amanda 11 & Sarah 8. (See Q8-4,1 above)

Q8-4,4 - Anthony R. Austin, Rte 7, Box 2843, Augusta, ME 04330 Looking for any further info on my Austin line. 1- Frank Austin b 1874 prb Hallowell, Kennebec Co., ME mar. Cora Belle Grant; 2- Henry D. Austin b. 1842 Hallowell, ME mar. Eunice A. Overlock; 3- Henry Simmons Austin b 1811Greene, Androscoggin Co., ME mar. Ann Wing; 4- Henry D. Austin b ca 1776/85 ME mar. Rachel C. Keenan; 5- John Austin b 1732 Brunswick, Cumberland Co., ME mar. perhaps Mercy ____?____; Benoni Austin b ca 1712, of New Meadows, ME mar. Mary Thompson; 6- William Austin b ca 1670.

Q8-4,5 - Bonnie Bigolin, P.O. Box 1094, Green River, WY 82935-1094

Looking for descendants of Charles & Polly Austin's children: John Austin b 1810 Peru, ME, mar. Maria B. Burgess; Luther Austin b 1813 Peru, ME, mar. Deborah F. Stevens; Mercy H. Austin b 1816 Franklin Co., ME, mar. 1) Alden Frost, 2) Daniel Hall; Betsey J. Austin b 1818 Franklin Co., ME, mar. ____?____ Mason; Abigail H. Austin b 1821 Franklin Co., ME, mar. Harrison Burgess; Melinda W. Austin b 1824 Franklin Co., ME, mar. Alpheus Burgess; Amanda Austin b 1828 Franklin Co., ME, mar. Caleb Walker; Maria B. Austin b 1832 Franklin Co., ME, mar. Zadoc Eastman; Charles H. Austin b 1836 Oxford Co., ME, mar. Malissa Mann.

Q8-4,6 - Christine Longhurst, 20431 13th Dr. SE, Bothell, WA 98012 <clongh@gte.net>

Looking for further info on ancestors of Sarah A. Austin b 1836 Albany Co., NY, mar. Edgar George Sharp. Sarah is dau. of John Austin b ca 1789 Albany Co., NY, mar. Rebecca Williams. John is son of Thomas and Abigail Austin.

Q8-4,7 - Mike Wright, P.O. Box 374, Exeter, RI 02822 Need ancestry of Charles H. Austin b May 16, 1853 Amity, Aroostook Co., ME, d Sep 4, 1951Carmel, ME; mar. Effie Rollins b Reed Plantation, ME, d Oct 20, 1908 Wytovitlock, ME. Charles's father is James Austin according to the 1850 & 1860 Aroostook Co., ME census records.

Q8-4,8 - David K. Austin, 2607 W. Kentucky, Midland, TX 79701 <daustin11@juno.com>

Francis Austin, son of immigrant Nathaniel Austin and Mary Maning, b. abt. 1757 Louisa Co., VA. Listed in 1820 Census for Spartanburg Co., SC. Had 3 daus. (need their names), sons Chisholm b. abt. 1809 VA and Vincent b. 11 Nov 1811 VA, d. 18 Apr 1894 Greenville Co., SC (Davenport Baptist Church). Francis lived most of his life in Greenville Co., SC area. Looking for more information on Francis and Vincent. (See Q8-4,2 above).

Q8-4,9 - Chip Mattocks, 277 Bill Branch Rd., Chula, GA 31733 <cowboy@surfsouth.com>

Mary Josetta Austin, d/o John Austin & Josephine ____, marr1 Thomas Welch in Gosfield, Essex Twp., Ontario, Canada and produced 2 children: Leonard J. Welsh b. 1880, & Norman Welsh. Mary marr2 ____Agla aft. 1880. She d. Port Huron, St. Clair Co., MI. Mary's mother Josephine d. aft 1927 in Applegate, Sanilac Co., MI. Any help would be appreciated.

Q8-4,10 - Susan Austin, 7638 New Route 31, Baldwinsville, NY 13027-9742 <susanaustin@hotmail.com>

Hezekiah H. Austin, said to be son of Sir Henry Austin who came from England abt. 1800, (Henry's wife came later, abt. 1804). Hezekiah b. 8 Apr 1822 CT, lived Tompkins Co., NY, moved abt. 1840 to Steuben Co., NY, d. 8 May 1893 in Savona, Steuben Co., NY. Hezekiah marr Mary Ann Evans 16 Dec 1843. She was b. 14 Jul 1827 in Oberlin, OH, d. 21 Dec 1912 Binghamton, Broome Co., NY. Children: Almira b. 1844, Julia Ann b. 1846, George Alonzo b. 1847, Amelia E. b. 1850, James Adelbert b. 1852, John C. Malory b. 1855, Almond J. (or W.) b. 1857. Any help with these people will be appreciated.

Q8-4,11 - Barbara Cain, 706 Old Bridge Rd., Brielle, NJ 08730 Need any information on ancestry and siblings of Capitola Austin who mar. June 30, 1934 to Clifford Cain, son of Erdman Cain & Maude Reeve. Res. New Jersey.

(Convention flyer appeared here)

AFAOA YEAR END FINANCIAL REPORT

General Fund

Beginning Balance: \$7,814.77

Membership Dues	\$4,985.00
Misc. books, disks	442.50
Bank Interest	<u>124.25</u>
Total Income	\$5,550.75

Newsletters (4)	\$1,241.10
Web Page	191.00
Computer	1,536.69
Software	225.96
Supplies, Postage	580.30
Convention deficit	35.87
To Publishing Fund	<u>2,000.00</u>
Total Expenses:	\$6,212.51

Ending Balance: \$7,554.60

Publishing Fund

Beginning Balance: \$ 0.00

Transfer from General Fund	2,000.00
Income from Books Sold	8,393.50
Marketing, Boxes, Postage	1,524.50
Payments on Publishing Loan*	<u>8,000.00</u>

Ending Balance: \$ 869.00

*(Balance due on Publishing Loan \$10,733.32)

Respectfully Submitted,
Alice Austin Martin, Secretary

Food for Thought:

By Bonnie Austin Bigolin
AFAOA Genealogist

Ideally, you look into a genealogy book and low and behold, there's your great great grandparents listed with all the information you might ever need to know about them! Wouldn't that be nice? And of course everything you see on these pages must be fact, because there it is, in black and white and in a lovely hard back cover too! WRONG! What you are looking at is an indispensable tool to help you research your specific ancestral line. No matter how diligent a compiler strives, to get everything exact and precise - errors occur. Family legends are not always fact. Transcribing data errors, typing errors, circumstantial evidence, always leaves a margin for error.

Those of you who have taken on a project

of compiling a genealogy manuscript, know, that no matter how long and hard you work at it, errors may occur. Many persons will not even publish their own line, let alone take on a large descendanty project for distant cousins lines, because they fear that someone might point out errors in their work. As genealogists, where would we be if these family history descendanty book projects where never undertaken and printed for others to reap benefits from? Your job would be a lot harder, wouldn't it?

So appreciate the compilers hours of hard work, but remember that what you see in black and white is not necessarily correct. Use these many books as great clues or as an outline on your journey back through your ancestor's past. But please, don't stop there, take this outline and really put effort into researching that ancestor. A manuscript often times can only provide you with basic facts, like birth, death, maybe only some of their children. Double check the clues the compiler gave you, look up the records for yourself, make photocopies for your family records. Send for copies of wills, land records, etc. Really get to know your ancestor!

Now that you have double checked the compilers information and perhaps found an error or two. Help correct any errors or additions, by writing to the compilers with the new information along with your documentation. If you cannot contact the compiler, send your new information & documentation to an appropriate family organization and/or newsletter, where it will be available to others researching that line. Share your information generously and you will reap the benefits down the line.

The article beginning on page 7 of this Newsletter was sent to me by John M. Austin currently residing in Oman, he is a descendant of Samuel Austin of Boston, MA. His article inspired this article. His ancestor Nathan Austin was included in Edith Moore's book with just basic facts. John M. Austin took off from Ms. Moore's lead and added "life" to his ancestor. Enjoy his story about Nathan Austin and his wife Hannah Farnum of Methuen, MA

Over 30,000 Austins on the Web

By Bill Minnick
Head, Austin Computer Project

In 1997, we placed over 30,000 Austin family members on the Web for public access by researchers the world over. The databases we have displayed from our AFAOA Web page (URL: <http://www.rahul.net/afaoa>) include: *Some Descendants of Richard Austin, Charlestown, MA 1638** (includes 25 photos); *Some Descendants of Robert Austin, Kings Town, RI 1668*; *Some Descendants of Samuel Austin, of Massachusetts, 1669*; *Some Descendants of Daniel Austin and Mary Brackett of Maine, 1772*; *Unlinked Austin Families of Maine*; *Some Descendants of Henry Austin, Sr. Of Calvert County, MD 1745*; and *Unlinked Austin Families From The Southern States*.

We are able to monitor the number of Austin database pages viewed on the Web and the level of interest remains at about 200 pages per day which are browsed by people worldwide. We continue to use an Internet Provider to place 25 megabytes (of Austin databases) on the Internet, thereby enabling this vast amount of Austin data to be accessible by anyone in the world 24-hours per day.

The system of Web publishing we use was designed jointly by myself and Tim Doyle of Dallas, Texas. Tim Doyle wrote the software, called IGM which runs under Unix on the Internet Server computer.

*Please note that the *Richard Austin of Charlestown, MA 1638* database accessible on the Web is **not** the same as that used to produce the hard-cover bound book recently published. The Web version has had all "living" individuals (those who were either 100 years old or less, or for whom we had no given death date) removed to assure their privacy.

Land Records Tip #2

In the 1800's and before, it was a tradition, that when a daughter married, the father would either cover the loan or carry the note for the son-in-law as part of her dowry. If you know the husband's name but not the wife's maiden name, find out to whom they made their mortgage payments. About 70% of the time it will be her father.

--Heart of WI GS NL Vol. 24, Dec 1997

John Austin and Hannah Farnum of Methuen, Massachusetts

By John. M. Austin

Although it is impossible to overstate Mrs. Edith Austin Moore's contribution to Austin Family research, the very scope of her work precluded her from performing in-depth research into every single branch of the family. As a result, certain details escaped her view, and it is with an eye towards making up for these omissions that I now wish to fill in some blanks concerning the life of Nathan Austin and his family in Methuen, Massachusetts.

Nathan Austin was born in Methuen in 1725 and on Feb. 11, 1748, married Hannah Farnum, (born in Andover, MA in 1729), who was apparently already five months pregnant. The date of their marriage is missing from the town records, but is listed in Rev. Christopher Sargent's personal list of marriages he performed in Methuen. Although Mrs. Moore takes a guess at who Hannah's parents were, her parents were actually Stephen and Hannah Richardson Farnum, who had moved to Dracut, MA by 1733 and owned a farm there, as well as some land across the provincial line in Pelham, NH.

Nathan and Hannah's first child, Nathan Jr. was born in Methuen on Jun. 11, 1748. Their second child, Hannah was most likely born in Feb. 1749/50, not 1749 as is published in the Methuen Vital Records to 1850. The date in the original record is all the way over on the right hand side of a badly worn page and the "/ 50" cannot be seen, but it would not be physically possible for Hannah to give birth to a healthy baby only 8 months after her first child. Also, the Austins had each of their children baptized with 6 months of their birth, and this second baby was baptized in Methuen in Apr. 1750, thus also lending credence to the 1750 birth date. Their third child, Abijah, was born in May 1752. In Nov. 1753, their three year old daughter died, and 4 months later Hannah gave birth to their fourth child, Phebe.

So, by the summer of 1755, Nathan and Hannah were living in Methuen with their three surviving children and in June, Hannah became pregnant again. At this time, tensions were rising between the French and the British over the control of North America. In September, the French were soundly defeated at Lake George, NY and the call went out for reinforcements for the garrison at Lake George. Nathan apparently volunteered for this duty on Sep. 15, 1755, and was soon on his way to the wilderness with the other militia men from the area. He and the other colonial soldiers were discharged from Lake George on Dec. 15, and they started to make their way home. From Hannah's later testimony, we learn that along the way Nathan was taken sick with a fever near the town of Leicester. He died there in Jan. 1756, in the home of Dr. Pliny Lawton (who himself would die of smallpox a few years later) leaving Hannah pregnant and with three small children. The published Methuen vital statistics list Nathan's death as just "Jan. ___ 1755", which is clearly not possible. A closer inspection of the original record book shows that whoever wrote the death record made the same mistake that most of us do in January, i.e. he wrote last year's date and then corrected himself. If you look at the original, or the microfilm of the original, you can see where the second "5" has been corrected to a "6", but with a lighter colored ink.

At any rate, Hannah was now alone and apparently moved to

Dracut to live with her parents. On Mar. 13, 1756, she gave birth to her fifth child, named Hannah, after the little girl who had died two years previously. This baby was baptized in Methuen three weeks later. Mrs. Moore did not notice the record of birth of this child, probably because she believed that Nathan had died in 1755 and not 1756.

For reasons I cannot imagine, Hannah's 55 year old father volunteered for militia duty at Lake George and marched from Dracut on Apr. 22, 1756 in Capt. Jonathan Butterfield's Co., leaving his own wife with six children and his recently widowed daughter with her four kids. The two women and all those kids lived together in Dracut that summer, and on Sep. 2, Hannah wrote to the governor, asking for financial help due to her reduced circumstances and her expenses in retrieving Nathan's belongings from Leicester. What she didn't know, and wouldn't know until a week later, was that her father had also died at Lake George on Sep. 1, the day before she wrote her letter to the Governor.

It is hard to imagine how Hannah and her mother survived the coming years. Apparently, Hannah sent Nathan Jr., now 8 years old, to live with an uncle in Pehjam, NH. She took the three smallest kids with her, and must have moved back to Methuen, as she and the children were warned out of town in March 1759. By 1769, she had saved or borrowed enough money to buy a small piece of land in Methuen and lived there until her death in 1804. She was so poor when she died that the Town had to pay someone to dig her grave and a doctor was presenting bills to the Town for her medicine and care.

As far as the four Austin children are concerned, Mrs. Moore did not include many details. Nathan Jr. moved to New Hampshire, saw some Revolutionary War service, moved to Rochester, VT and was a very successful farmer when his mother died in poverty. He and his wife are buried there.

Abijah had married and moved into New Hampshire with his brother, but died in 1780 at the age of 27. His sister Phebe married her own second cousin, John Tippets. They lived in Wilton, NH for a long time, then in about 1813 they moved to Lewis, in Essex Co., NY. Some of their children were among the first converts to the Mormon religion and moved into Utah. I don't know where Phebe is buried, but I believe that she died somewhere along the trail to Utah.

As for Hannah, the baby born after the death of Nathan, she married Asa Morse on Dec. 16, 1733. Asa's father Benjamin had also died in the 1750's as a result of military duty, so he never really got to know his father either. Together they had at least 14 children in the Methuen-Haverhill-Salem, NH area and moved to the northern part of New Hampshire near Lisbon in the late 1790's. Asa and several of his children died in 1815 during an epidemic and Hannah died some time after 1835. They are both buried in Salmon Hole Cemetery near Lisbon, NH.

I hope that this information will be of use to some of Nathan and Hannah's descendants.

Please see References on page 8.

REFERENCES (for John Austin of Methuen, Massachusetts)

Continued from page 7

1. Vital records of Methuen, MA to 1850.
2. Vital records of Dracut, MA to 1850.
3. Essex County MA deeds.
4. Essex County MA probate records.
5. Town of Methuen records - original manuscript and microfilm.
6. Essex County MA court records.
7. Methuen Congregational Church records.
8. Middlesex County MA probate records.
9. Rockingham County NH probate records in the NH State Archives Vol. C, p 308, Concord NH.
10. MA Military Archives Vol. 76 & 94.
11. Mr. Ernest Mack, Methuen MA town historian.
12. Personal list of marriages performed by Rev. Christopher Sargent, in the MA Hist. Soc. Lib. Boston, MA.

Jerry

Continued from page 1

The year was 1834 and the refugee was being pursued by his master, a Baptist Deacon who had enlisted the local sheriff to recover his legally and rightfully owned chattel. Austin invited the pair to search the 2 dozen rooms and the cellar of Sycamore Hall, and so they did.

In spite of being urged to search Mrs. Austin's bedroom, propriety of the day prevented the pair from a lady's private bed chamber. Austin was counting on such a courtesy, and betting Jerry's life on it. The refugee had been hidden away under the lady's bed, hidden from view by voluminous bed clothes.

Later, the Deacon discovered the trickery, but the people of Austinburg again outwitted the slave owner and raised \$350 to purchase the refugee and grant him his freedom. This was the first and only slave ever purchased in Ashtabula County.

Colonial Virginia Births

Until 1786, all children born in Virginia, regardless of religious affiliation, were required to be baptized in the Episcopal Church, which was "The State Church." Parish registers can be found in the Virginia State Archives at Richmond, Virginia, giving names, births by dates, and parent's names.

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As of December, 132 of the recently published book on the descendants of Richard Austin of Charlestown have been delivered to expectant Austin researchers. Many of these are serving as Christmas gifts to Austin family members to assure that they will have a permanent record of their ancestry.

The distribution is being handled from 4 sites: for the north-east by Lois Cody in Cincinnati, OH, for the south-east by Laura Johnson in Tazewell, TN, for the north-west by Margaret Hoffman in Salem, OR and for the south-west by Jim & Liz Carlin in West Hills, CA.

A number of libraries have requested the book, and books have been mailed

to the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, the New England Historical and Genealogical Society in Boston, the Wisconsin Historical Society, and Everton Publishers in Logan, Utah.

Some books were delivered personally by the compilers, Jim & Liz Carlin during their vacation trip down the West Coast. Recipients were Marjorie Elmore of San Jose, CA and William Austin of Roseburg, OR.

The AFAOA web site has now been updated in a number of places, and links from the Richard database page enable the web browser to order the book on-line (URL: http://www.rahul.net/afaoa/Richard_book.html). The alternative method is to use the order blank below.



(l to r) Liz Austin Carlin, Marjorie Elmore, and Jim Carlin (Photo by Dana Elmore)

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