



Austin Families Association of America Newsletter

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<http://www.afaofa.org/>

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John Samuel Austin, a Colorful Ancestor

by Donald Cody & Richard Landehrl

Robert Austin received land in the new settlement of Misquamicut (Westerly, Rhode Island) in 1661. Some of his descendants remained in Rhode Island for many generations. It was not until well into the 18th century and four generations later, for example, that Silas Austin, Sr. moved to the Beekman Patent in Dutchess County, New York and then by the beginning of the 19th century finally settled in Lewis County in upstate New York.

It was there in 1812 that his grandson, John Samuel Austin, son of Silas, Jr. and Susannah Albro, was born. Like his grandfather, he did not remain long in his birthplace, for by the 1840's we find him in New York City.

The two decades before the Civil War was a period of great turmoil in the city. The Gangs of New York, a recent popular movie, provided a vivid picture of the extreme violence in some parts of the city at that time. Bare-knuckled prizefighting, not surprisingly, was the most popular spectator sport in those areas. For almost twenty years, John Samuel Austin left his mark on that world in his role as a political agitator, gambler, and fight promoter. He was part of some of the well publicized events of the period.

For example, in 1844 he and the already notorious Isaiah Rynders co-founded the Empire Guards to protest the New York City mayor's decision to outlaw fireworks at Fourth of July celebrations. In a short time John Austin turned the Guards into the Empire Club, which would

become a potent political force in New York before the Civil War. In fact, by the end of its first year the Empire Club became particularly well known to New Yorkers and people throughout the country.

One well publicized incident took place at a popular Baltimore hotel during the Democratic convention when Isaiah Rynders took exception to negative remarks that some politicians made about his friend, Martin Van Buren. The New York Times reported that "Rynders' bowie knife and revolver flashed in the gaslight. Austin was at his side in an instant with a knife in one hand and a pistol in the other. A desperate fight ensued ... The odds were three to one against Rynders and Austin, but they cleared the barroom in a remarkably short time, and gave the country an evidence of the mettle of the two leading of-

ficers of the 'Empire Club'."

The presidential election later that year between Henry Clay and James Polk was a close one. New York State was the key to victory; whichever candidate took that state would win the election. Historians and the newspapers of the time agree that the strenuous efforts, including voter intimidation on behalf of Polk by the Empire Club, were responsible for convincing a sufficient number of New York voters to elect him president.

Austin was in the news again in 1848 accused of murdering a Tim Shea. Although witnesses testified that Austin was in the area from which the fatal shot was fired, the prosecution could not prove conclusively that he had actually fired the shot,

Please see "John S. Austin," page 5



Col. John S. Austin



Membership Corner

Membership News

New Members Welcomed

Karen (Smith) West

426 Newberry St., Grand Prairie, TX
75052

karenjwest@sbcglobal.net.

*William b 1705 Ireland; William b
1732; William b 1754; John b 1788
Orange Co., NC; William Green b
1806 NC; George W. b 1828 Dickson
Co., TN; John Franklin b 1854
Dickson Co., TN; Gertrude b 1894
Stewart Co., TN*

When you joined the AFAOA you were asked to name your earliest Austin ancestors and 3 spaces were provided. Some of you only named one ancestor and some added additional pages, naming your entire known Austin line. Since giving that information have you extended your line back a generation or more? If so, please send me the additional names to update your membership record.

Renewals

Please check your *Newsletter* mailing label for renewal date and instructions. Send renewals to the Treasurer - Bonnie Bigolin, 415 Wilkes Dr., Green River, WY 82935

Address Changes

Please send changes to the Membership Chairman - Alice Martin, 527 Front Beach Dr. #3, Ocean Springs, MS 39564.

Members - Share Your Hints and News

Please let us know of major family events, brief research stories, exciting research successes (and failures) and research hints so that they can be shared in the *Newsletter*.

Thanks to all members for your support of the AFAOA.

Alice Austin Martin
Membership Chairman

Good Advice from Art Sikes:

When you are in a new Library, always check for new (and old) sources.

I was in Houston, Texas in March for a Sikes/Sykes Family Association meeting. We went over to the Clayton Library Center for Genealogical Research the day before the meeting to check it out and do some research.

Like I usually do, I checked for any Sikes/Sykes books and any Austin books that might be in the library. There were not any Sikes/Sykes books, something that we will be fixing, but there were many Austin books, as could be expected with Stephen Austin being so prominent in the early history of Texas.

So I went through the Austin books. There was a Richard Austin book, an Austin Family Society Vol. 1, many books on Stephen Austin and one book labeled "Genealogical Record of Robert Austin and his Lineal Descendants", by Maude S. (Conrad) Baker, 1928.

I thought that this was probably a waste of time to look at, knowing how well Edith Austin Moore had canvassed all the libraries looking for Robert Austin data. But I opened the book, it was just 114 pages, and checked the first Austin that I came to near the back of the book.

Well, that Austin was not in my Robert database. I tried another name and

the same thing. So then I started to check earlier generations, thinking that someone had gotten another Austin family mixed up with Robert, but they had not. These Austins connected into the Robert data that I had.

How had this happened? How had Edith missed this data? It looks like I will be adding about 150 new names, 50 marriages and a lots of details to some of the families that I have already in our database.

I checked the Family History Library catalog and found that the book was there, but had not been microfilmed until 1991. One of the Austin lines in this book ended up in Texas, which is probably why the book was there. There must have been very limited distribution of the book for Edith not to have found it.

So what is the moral here? Never assume that what you see is something that you already have or that you have all of the data from that source. There could be treasures on the shelf right in front of you - so take a good look.

Also, if you are in Houston be sure to put the Clayton Library Center for Genealogical Research on your list of places to go. I highly recommend it.

Art Sikes

And this from Bill Minnick,
AFAOA Vice President

Just got a chance to cruise the AFAOA data bases on our web site. It all works so well, it is hard to believe there's all new software running behind the scenes.

I like the faster page displays, the master index (with the smart sorting on dates of same names), and the all new GEDCOM 5.x footnoted sources option.

I congratulate - -

Joy Davis on the successful development of this extensive software update;
Jim Carlin on having the vision and energy to pursue and manage this project to completion.

Thanks, Joy and Jim, for a great job well done.

Genealogist's Database Report

AFAOA Genealogist Liz Austin Carlin continues to receive corrections and updates to our existing databases. She also performs research to answer queries received from Austin researchers.

In the process, she has released updates to *Morris Austin of NY*, *Bartholomew Austin of VA*, *Hatteras Austins of NC*, *Thomas & Rebecca of VA*, *John Austin Sr., of VA*, and *William Austin of MD*.

Supporting Liz have been Carol R. Austin with updates to *Joseph Austin of NH*, *Jonah Austin of MA* and *Samuel Austin of MA*. Jim Carlin updated *Richard Austin of MA*, and worked closely with Walter Hartung to completely revise *Solomon & John of NC*.



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

The most exciting AFAOA current event is the upcoming Austin Convention, to be held in the Washington, DC area the first weekend in June. If you have not already registered it is not too late! Conventions are a wonderful opportunity to see old friends, meet new ones, and share information. AFGS President Mike Austin has been working hard on arrangements. The hotel is close to convenient transportation, eliminating the hassle of parking in DC.

Washington is an overwhelming source of information in its libraries and archives. It also has so many interesting museums and patriotic memorials. Our stay there is never long enough. Some of us will be arriving early to use those research facilities before the convention – some may be staying after. If you would like to join in a research trip into DC be sure to let us know when you will be there.

The DAR Library is of special interest to researchers. There is a small daily fee for non-members. The Library of Congress has a copy of just about everything. The National Archives should have all the “official records” that are available. These facilities have websites with special instructions for genealogists and much information available in on-line catalogs. I highly recommend that you visit those websites in advance, for help in planning a productive visit.

* * *

I continue to solicit your participation in the efforts of the Association, either in organization and leadership, in contributions to the newsletter or in our efforts to add to the data that is available, wonderfully organized and freely shared on our website. Your help is needed and appreciated!

* * *

On a sad note, we report the death of Joann Minnick, the wife of Bill Minnick, a leader and mentor of AFAOA. Our deepest sympathy goes out to Bill.

Gay G. Martin, Jr.
AFAOA President

TRANSLATION SERVICE FOR GENEALOGISTS.

There are many free translation services on the Web - just Google “free translation” and make your selection. One such source is bablefish at www.bablefish.com/.

Suggested Research Facilities in Washington D. C.

The DAR Library

1776 D Street, N.W.
Mon. – Fri., 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Sat., 9:00 a.m. – 5:00p.m.

Founded in 1896 as a collection of genealogical and historical publications for the use of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution staff genealogists, the growing collection was opened to the public shortly after 1900. The Library is one of the nation’s premier genealogical research centers, holding thousands of volumes of genealogical compilations, record abstracts, and other materials, covering all periods of American history.

The Library’s book collection numbers over 150,000 volumes. Approximately 15,000 volumes of Genealogical Records Committee Reports constitute a unique source for family histories, cemetery record transcriptions and Bible records.

www.dar.org/library.

The Library of Congress

Local History and Genealogy Reading Room
Thomas Jefferson Building
101 Independence Ave. SE
Mon. – Sat., 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

The Library of Congress is the nation’s oldest federal cultural institution and serves as the research arm of Congress. It is also the largest library in the world, with millions of books, recordings, photographs, maps and manuscripts in its collections.

The Library of Congress occupies three buildings on Capitol Hill. The Thomas Jefferson Building (1897) is the original separate Library of Congress building. The Library began in 1800 inside the U.S. Capitol. The Library’s genealogy collection began as early as 1815 with the purchase of Thomas Jefferson’s library. It also contains local history resources such as city directories from 1785 and newspapers from 18th to 20th century on microfilm.

www.loc.gov/rr/genealogy.

The National Archives

700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Mon., Tues., Sat., 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Wed., Thurs., Fri., 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.

The National Archives Building houses textual and microfilm records of all federal departments and agencies: U.S. Census Records 1790-1920, Federal Land Records for 30 states 1800-1974, Bounty Land Warrants application Files 1775-1855, Homestead applications, Military Pension application files 1775-1934, Military Service Records, Confederate and Union Service Records, Passenger lists, Customs and immigration records 1820-1954 and Native American records.

www.archives.gov/genealogy.

MY GRANDMA AMY

By Dwight E. Hurlbert
dhusker@comcast.net

My known ancestry in the Austin line begins and dead-ends with my paternal grandmother, who was known to all as Amy Adeline Austin. She died 46 days prior to my arrival, thus denying me the opportunity to gain any personal knowledge from her concerning her parentage. She lacked the ability to write; in legal documents I have reviewed that needed her signature her "x" had to suffice.

Grandma's obituary states that "She was married in 1841 to William Henry Hurlbert in New York". I find the first official record of Grandpa William and Grandma Amy on the 1850 federal census as residents of the Town of West Turin, Lewis County, New York with 4 children – daughters Elizabeth and Catherine, sons Frederick and Charles. Also a member of that household is Sarah Austin, age 60, whose place of birth is Rhode Island and whom I am inclined to accept as Grandma Amy's mother. According to census records her parents were both born in Rhode Island. However I have been unable to prove a connection to a Rhode Island family.

In 1855 the New York State census finds Grandpa William and his family residing in Rome, Oneida County, New York. By 1870 the family had grown to include Emily Madora, Chauncey E., William Henry, Silas Wellington, Ida May, Minnie Elizabeth and Elnora Mary.

Grandma's obituary states she was born 25 June 1825 in New York, which would indicate that she was 16 when she married. However her age in various census records would place her birth in 1827 or 1828. She had an older sister, Charlotte, who was born in New York 18 Feb 1820 and married Ambrose Burdick about 1840.

Grandma was known by the name of Amy Adeline Austin Hurlbert but my research has given me reason to question and actually reject Grandma's given name as Amy Adeline. In official documents related to her application for a homestead, and in a deed of land to her son, she states that her name is Amy M. Hurlbert. However the grave marker of her son Chauncey, who died in 1871, while his mother was still living, is engraved with "son of Wm H. and E. M. Hurlbert".

Her name was recorded as Mary in the 1850 census and Emma in 1860 and 1870, although it was Amy M. in 1855 and Amy in 1880 – 1910. She may have been christened Emma, or possibly Emily, and came to be known as Amy – names not

too dissimilar in sound. Nothing in the records gives her middle name but I believe that the M stands either for Madeline because it has a similar tone to Adeline, the name by which she was known) or for Madora (because her third daughter, commonly named after the mother, was Emily Madora). I have chosen to list Grandma's name in my records as E. M. "Amy" Austin.

Grandma accompanied her husband on his travels within the state of New York, into and out of Michigan and ultimately into the yet-to-be state of Nebraska in 1872. She applied for a homestead patent on September 30, 1874. No application has been found for Grandpa William and it is possible that he filed one but that he died before it was fully processed and approved. The 1880 census records Grandma as the head of a household which included Silas (my father) and his sisters Minnie and Elnora. The

other children and their families also made the trek to Nebraska, all except Chauncey, who died in Michigan the year prior to the move.

In her homestead application Grandma stated that "I have a good comfortable sod house, a well and have set out and cultivated about 100 forest trees and a few fruit trees." The house was probably built by Grandpa, who as a carpenter eked out a living that provided the necessities for his family. Following his death, however, it would appear that Grandma was not financially solvent, making it necessary to obtain numerous loans to meet expenses. Although Dad was the mainstay on her land until her death, he lost the property through foreclosure proceedings in 1935.

Grandma died on November 10, 1915 at her home in Ong, Nebraska at the stated age of 90 years, 4 months and 15 days. Preceding her in death, in addition to her husband, were her daughters Elizabeth, Catherine and Elnora and her sons Chauncey and Charles. Her remains were laid to rest in the Ong Cemetery. Her survivors included her sons Frederick, William and Silas and her daughters Emily, Ida and Minnie. Her obituary states that she had 71 grandchildren. I arrived too late to be included in the tally, as did my sisters Nadine and Lavena and little brother Claire, so tag us as Grandma's grandkids nos. 72, 73, 74 and 75. Of that "grand" army of 75 grandkids I lay claim to being the lone survivor.



Amy Austin Hurlbert



William Henry Hurlbert

John S. Austin, continued from page 1

particularly because he did not appear to have a motive for doing so. Austin was exonerated, but the case the People vs. John S. Austin, has been cited for having an effect on later cases in New York State regarding the distinction between murder and manslaughter.

In 1849 many city residents protested the appearance of



**Generals John H. H. and Gershon Mott (seated) with
Colnols William Brewster (standing with beard) & John
Austin (right)**

a famous Shakespearean actor at the Astor Opera House because he was British. In the ensuing riot National Guard troops killed 22 of the protesters. Because the Empire Club was accused of instigating the affair, John Austin and other club members were questioned by the police. Austin was not arrested because the authorities accepted his claim that he had not been at the Opera House at the time. He was not as fortunate in the Tammany Hall riot in 1853 when he was convicted of hitting another Tammany member with a chair. He had to serve prison time for this transgression.

John Austin's association with the Empire Club brought him into contact with many of the prominent prizefighters of the time. Champions such as Yankee Sullivan and Tom Hyer, for example, were members of the club. Austin attended and wagered on many fights; he was even a timekeeper and a referee on occasion. He and Yankee Sullivan were actually the promoters of a fight in nearby Hastings, New York, that attracted two thousand spectators where the winner literally killed his opponent after 119 rounds of fighting! In 1857 when another champion, John Morrissey, was arrested for injuring a number of waiters in a major hotel disturbance, it was John Austin who posted his bail.

In 1861, just after the beginning of the Civil War, Austin chose to leave civilian life and joined the newly-formed 72nd Infantry Regiment. This unit was part of the "Excelsior Brigade" led by Dan Sickles, whom Austin had known from Tammany Hall. Although he lacked any previous military experience, Austin was appointed captain of Company K of the 72nd. For a brief time he also served as the brigade quartermaster.

Two years into the war, Colonel Stevens, regimental

commander of the 72nd, was killed and General Sickles appointed John Austin to replace him. As a result, just a few weeks after this appointment he was the regimental commander as the Battle of Gettysburg began. During the second day of the engagement, as Colonel Austin rode toward the Confederate line, he was wounded and had to withdraw from the conflict.

Earlier on that second day of the battle General Sickles had moved his brigade forward from the more protected location it had occupied on the first day. General Meade, the Union commander, later claimed that Sickles' decision to move his troops was in direct violation of his orders. To this day, the Meade/Sickles controversy remains one of the most discussed decisions of the battle. In regard to John Austin: would he have been wounded had General Sickles followed orders? The New York monument at Gettysburg honors John Austin as the commander of the 72nd Regiment during that battle.

Austin returned to New York City after he left the service and died shortly thereafter in 1865. His funeral was held at City Hall on May 14th. He is buried in Greenwood Cemetery in Brooklyn.

Editor's Note: John Samuel Austin⁷ (Silas Jr.⁶, Silas⁵, Jedediah⁴, Edward Jr.³, Edward², Robert¹) is a great, great grandfather of Richard Landwehrle and Anne Landwehrle (Mrs. Donald) Cody.

An Example of a Query to the AFAOA Genealogist and Her Response:

Query:

"I am searching for any information about a William (Jerry) Austin, I know his father was William (Herschel) Austin and his mother was Helen Austin and a large portion of their family came from Alabama. William Jerry Austin was born in Alabama on April 6th around 1943-46 range and he served in the army, he had an older sister named Mary Austin."

Response:

"I found some evidence that your family is from the Jackson Co. Alabama, Trenton area.

Trenton Cemetery: William H. Austin, born 14 Sep 1917, no death date, and Helen E. Austin b 14 Sep 1913, d. 25 Jun 1989.

1920 census AL, Jackson, Trenton, p 111. Harvie D. Austin 28 yr AL AL AL; Lizzie 26 yr AL AL AL; Minnie L. 5 yr; William 2 yr; Gordon 4 yr. This is Harvey David Austin.

1900 same place p 192, Harvey Austin, b May 1893, nephew of John or Nellie Cochran.

The Social Security Death Index has a Harvey Austin b 8 Jun 1891, d. Jun 1972 in Jackson Co., AL.

Most of the many Austins in Jackson County are in the "John Austin of Southside VA" database on our website - www.afaoa.org. You can see it in Family Group Sheet style by going to Austin Research - Southern databases - VA John. Or to see it "book" style go to the Text Document Search - Descendancy Books."

"Unfortunately, I cannot do more research for you at this time. My priority research is for members of the Austin Families Association of America and for the databases being prepared for online publication. Please consider becoming a member of AFAOA."

Liz Austin Carlin

2010 NATIONAL AUSTIN CONVENTION
WASHINGTON D.C.
Friday, June 4 - Sunday, June 6, 2010

Jointly sponsored by
AUSTIN FAMILIES ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
AUSTIN FAMILIES GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Do you have an interest in your Austin heritage? Would you like to have help with your Austin research? Meet with others who are researching their Austin lines. Search the extensive Austin databases. Bring your Austin pictures to be scanned. Bring your charts and data to share.

Take advantage of research opportunities at the National Archives, the DAR Library and the Library of Congress and visit the many landmarks in our nation's capital.

The convention meetings will be held on Saturday and Sunday at the **Arlington-Fairfax Elks Lodge**, 8241 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax, Virginia.

The convention hotel is Marriot's **Courtyard Dunn Loring Fairfax**, 2722 Gallows Road, Vienna, Virginia. This is about 1 1/2 miles from the Elks Lodge and transportation between the hotel and the Elk's Lodge will be provided if needed. The hotel is located adjacent to the Dunn Loring Metro Station (on the Orange line). The Metro provides easy access to downtown Washington.

This hotel is recommended as an excellent location. However, no block of rooms has been reserved for convention attendees and there is no special convention rate. Hotel reservations may be made on the Marriot web site, www.marriot.com, for \$79/night (King bed), with a discounted Senior (62 +) rate of \$76-Thursday through Sunday nights only! The rates are higher on other nights. There is free parking and free internet access. Driving directions and information to and from the airport can be found on the hotel web site. **Please make your reservations early!!**

Schedule: A Friday excursion to research facilities and other places of interest in downtown Washington will be arranged for attendees who arrive early (indicate your interest on the registration form). There will be a "get acquainted" party at 6:00 PM on Friday at the Courtyard hotel. Attendees will pick up their nametags, enjoy some wine and cheese and meet with other Austin researchers, then break into smaller groups for dining at local restaurants. Saturday and Sunday activities will include speakers, workshop time and optional tours. There will be a cocktail hour with cash bar from 6:00 to 7:00 PM on Saturday at the Arlington-Fairfax Elks Lodge, followed by the convention banquet.

Registration: The convention registration fee is \$50 per person, which includes all meetings, materials and the banquet. The fee is \$30 per person for family or friends who wish to attend only the banquet. Please fill out the registration form (next page), indicating the number in your party and selecting the banquet meal each would like. Be sure to check the places you are most interested in visiting.

Or - you can register and pay your registration fee by credit card on-line on the AFGS web site: www.austins.org

Please mail your form as soon as possible to enable us to plan the best possible convention experience!

2010 NATIONAL AUSTIN CONVENTION

WASHINGTON D.C.

Friday, June 4 - Sunday, June 6, 2010

NAME: _____
[Please write names as you wish them to appear on name tags.]

ADDITIONAL REGISTRANT(S) [Note addresses if different from the address shown below]:

ADDRESS: (Street) _____

(City) _____ (State) _____ (Zip) _____

TELEPHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

EARLIEST KNOWN AUSTIN ANCESTORS (with place and year of birth if known):

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

The Registration Fee is \$50 per person. This fee covers convention meetings and materials and the Saturday banquet. There is a Banquet Fee of \$30 for family or friends who wish to attend only the banquet.

(# of persons) _____ x \$50 = \$ _____

(# of persons) _____ x \$30 = \$ _____

Enclosed is my check, payable to "Austin Convention" for \$ _____

Banquet meal choice [Indicate the number of each]:

Breast of Chicken Marsala _____ Stuffed Pork Chops _____ New York Strip Steak _____

I am planning to stay at Marriot's Courtyard Dunn Loring Fairfax Hotel ____ Yes ____ No
(Please make your reservations as soon as possible)

Arrival date & time _____ by: ____ car ____ plane ____ other

I am interested in visiting the following [check all that apply]: National Archives DAR Library

Smithsonian Institution American History Museum U. S. Capitol Lincoln Memorial

Library of Congress Air & Space Museum Natural History Museum Vietnam Memorial

Washington Monument Jefferson Memorial Roosevelt Memorial Iwo Jima Statue

Bureau Engraving & Printing Holocaust Museum World War II Memorial

Arlington National Cemetery Other [Please specify]: _____

**Please mail this form and your check, as soon as possible, to the Convention Registrar:
Cheryl Austin Riordan, 66 Gifford Lane, Concord, MA 01742-2235
<http://www.afoa.org>**

PLEASE NOTICE THE RENEWAL DATE ON YOUR ADDRESS LABEL. YOUR CHECK FOR DUES - \$15 PER YEAR. OR \$25 FOR 2 YEARS - MADE PAYABLE TO "AUSTIN FAMILIES ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA" SHOULD BE SENT TO BONNIE BIGOLIN, 415 Wilkes Dr., GREEN RIVER, WY 82935-1094

AUSTIN FAMILIES ASSOCIATION
OF AMERICA
527 Front Beach Dr. #3
Ocean Springs, MS 39564

Address Service Requested



See you there!

**2010
International
Austin
Convention**

**Washington, D.C.
Friday, June 4 to
Sunday, June 6, 2010**