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Gay G. Martin, Jr.
PRESIDENT
527 Front Beach Dr. #3
Ocean Springs, MS
39564
apresident@afaao.org

Patricia Korach
VICE PRESIDENT
9776 NE 134th St.
Kirkland, WA 98034
avpresident1@afaao.org

Bill Minnick
VICE PRESIDENT
20237 Bollinger Rd.
Cupertino, CA 95014
avpresident2@afaao.org

Kathi Koble
VICE-PRESIDENT
6132 Oliva Ave.
Lakewood, CA 90712
avpresident3@afaao.org

Lois W. Cody
SECY-TREASURER
336 Pleasant Hill Drive
Cincinnati, OH 45215
asec.treasurer@afaao.org

Liz Austin Carlin
AFAOA
GENEALOGIST
23725 Community St.
West Hills, CA 91304
asgenealogist@afaao.org

Bonnie Bigolin
ASSISTANT
GENEALOGIST
415 Wilkes Dr.
Green River, WY 82935
angenealogist@afaao.org

NEWSLETTER
EDITOR

anewsletter@afaao.org

Jim Carlin
DATABASE CHAIR
adatabase.chair@afaao.org

Alice Austin Martin
MEMBERSHIP CHAIR
527 Front Beach Dr. #3
Ocean Springs, MS
amembership@afaao.org

Elizabeth Austin of Fairfield County, South Carolina American Patriot, 1718 -1803

By Jane Austin Bruckner

Elizabeth Austin is a daughter of South Carolina, strong as the palmetto tree on the State Seal and as visionary as the figure of Hope carrying a laurel branch for an independent America.

During her life Elizabeth Austin was the proverbial woman of noble character: strong, wise, getting up early to read and pray before baking bread and making breakfast. She knew the value of bread and of sharing it with others. Her husband Bartholomew Austin, son of William and Elizabeth Austin, had full confidence in her; she bought property and oversaw their home and grist mill. She could spin wool and weave cloth. She opened her arms to the poor and extended her hands to the needy.

She kept the books for the family grist mill on Austin Mill Creek in Craven Co. (now Fairfield Co.), South Carolina and at home; she was known for her gardening, good food and hospitality. Grist mills were the center of community activity; some even had post offices. People liked doing business while catching up on the latest news and visiting with neighbors. Her sons and daughters worked at the grist mill before the American Revolution.

During the Revolution, October 1780 to January 1781, Lord Cornwallis and his British troops occupied the area, with headquarters in Winnsboro, later the county seat of Fairfield Co. However, Elizabeth Austin, then a widow, gave food and provisions to the Revolutionary soldiers. Her patriotic service, recorded in SC Stubs, Indents, N. 69, Book W, was honored by the U.S. Government and the Daughters of the American Revolution.

As she went about her work, helping the Revolu-

tionary cause in her home area, four of her sons were off fighting on the Loyalist side of the conflict. Bartholomew, Drury, Joseph, and John Austen were on Colonel Richard Winn's list of soldiers who had joined the British (Tory/Loyalist) forces. [Whig Militia Commanders' Enemies Lists of 1783]

Born in 1718 in King and Queen Co., Virginia, Elizabeth Pigg was the daughter of Paul and Elizabeth Osborne Pigg. She had two brothers, Paul Pigg Jr. and John Ghent Pigg, born between 1714 and 1718. After Elizabeth's mother died, her father married Sarah Osborne, had more children and moved to Amelia Co., Va., where William Austin and his son Bartholomew Austin lived.

The Pigg families of Virginia were known as large landowners and for their successful grist mills. The Pigg River in Virginia was named for them. Elizabeth's father, Paul Pigg, was born 1698 in King and Queen Co., Va. to John and Elizabeth Mott Pigg. In his will, recorded in Antrim Parish, Halifax Co., Va. 1 Sept 1766, Paul Pigg named his wife and children, one of whom is his daughter, Elizabeth Osten.

Bartholomew Austin and Elizabeth Pigg met and married about 1736 in Amelia Co., Va., where they lived before moving to Craven Co., SC in 1764. Bartholomew served in the Cherokee War, in Captain James Leslie's Company, under the command of Col. Richard Richardson, from 8 Oct 1759 to 8 Jan 1760.

Land records show where the Austins lived in Virginia: On 5 June 1736 in Amelia Co., Va. William Austin of Hanover Co., Va. paid 40 shillings for a tract of 98 acres in Amelia Co., on upper side of Flatt Creek, on both sides of Fergusons Horse-pen branch. The 1737 Amelia Co. Tithable List records

Please see "Elizabeth Austin" on page 5



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Elizabeth Austin, continued from page 1

Bartholomew Austin, 1 tithable. The 1738 Amelia Co. Tithable List "above Flatt Creek" includes Bartholomew Austin 1 tithable and Richard Austin 1 tithable.

Two documents show when Bartholomew and Elizabeth Austin settled in South Carolina. On 27 Aug 1764, Bartholomew received a Colonial Plat for 200 acres in Craven Co. SC. on Jackson's Creek, branch of Little River. On 14 June 1766, Bartholomew received another Colonial Plat for 200 acres in Craven Co. (which became Fairfield Co. in 1785). Bartholomew died on 27 Mar 1771, in St Marks Parish, Craven Co., SC. The will of Bartholomew Austin, a miller, of St Marks Parish, Craven Co., SC, dated 6 Oct 1768, states: "I give my Old Plantation between Broad River and Little River, a tract of one hundred fifty acres on the Austin Mill Creek and Runs to my Mill for my son Joseph Austin and his heirs, if he dies, then to the next youngest, that is Edith. I give and bequeath the hundred acres on Mill Creek to the three executors to be sold to pay debts. I also give and bequeath to my most Dearly Beloved wife Elizabeth Austin, a tract of one hundred fifty acres on the Mill Creek that runs to my Mill for and to her own disposal. I also leave my most loving wife Elizabeth Austin, my son Drury Austin and my son John Austin whom I constitute my only executors of my last will and testament."

[Bartholomew does not mention some of his adult children in his Will, although he had others who were of age at this time. He also had several minor children who are not mentioned.] On 2 May 1803, Elizabeth, age 85, died in Fairfield Co., SC, beloved by family. The will of Elizabeth Austin of Fairfield Co., SC, dated 4 Aug 1802 and recorded in Will Book #4, page 170-173, names her children: John, Edith Hatcher, William, Drury, Davis, Bartholomew, Mary Newman, James and Joseph; and grandchildren Elizabeth Ferrel and Bartholomew Austin Busby. [Researchers think there may have been another son Paul.]

Read about Elizabeth in *History of Fairfield County, South Carolina*, by F.H. McMasters, page 194. Bartholomew and Elizabeth Austin can be found on the Austin Families Association of American website. Follow the links for Research: Southern Databases: William Austin of Craven Co., South Carolina.

Jane Austin Bruckner
jane@janebruckner.com

Jane Austin Bruckner is indebted to Austin family researchers who collect and share information through the Austin Families Genealogical Society and the Austin Families Association of America. She is interested in learning where Bartholomew and Elizabeth are buried, and invites additions and corrections.

Jane also appeals to a male Austin in this Craven/Fairfield Co. line to participate in the Austin DNA Project, to discover possible connections with other Southern Austin lines. To participate go to the Family Tree DNA website (familytreedna.com) and search for the Austin-Austen project. Test results and more information can be found on the AFGS website (austins.org/DNA).

Historical Note: In 1664, when the new colony of Carolina was established and divided into three counties by the Lord

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Proprietors, Craven County was considered to be the southern part of the colony, extending below the Cape Fear River to include present-day Georgia and northern Florida and extending to the west as far as the Pacific Ocean!!! It can be argued that all of the existing counties within the state of South Carolina were derived from Craven County. In 1706 the "Parish System" was established, under jurisdiction of the Church of England (Anglican), not only to administer the church's day-to-day activities but also the governmental activities within South Carolina. All courts and records were held in Charles Town (Charleston) until 1768, when seven "Districts", with governmental seats in each district, were established and all counties were eliminated. After the American Revolution, in 1785, South Carolina re-established the concept of counties and 34 "new" counties were established. The area where the Austins lived became Fairfield County.



An old water powered grist mill typical of the type owned by Bartholomew

Robert Wilson Austin (continued from previous page).

Mississippi City, Harrison County, Mississippi U. S. Census of 1920 lists the inmates of Beauvoir Soldiers Home. Included are Robert W. Austin, 74, married, born in Tennessee, parents both born in Alabama, and his wife, Mary M. Austin, age 81, born in Alabama. Her parents were both born in North Carolina.

The Beauvoir Cemetery records on Findagrave.com show photos of the memorial markers for the graves of Robert W. and Mary Austin. Robert W. died on January 19, 1925 and his wife died almost three years later on December 3, 1927.

Sources:

- Website for Beauvoir Confederate Soldiers Home
<http://www.beauvoir.org-vetshome.htm/>
- Website for Sons of Confederate Veterans
http://www.mississippiscv.org/ms_Units/11th_MS_cav.htm
- Beauvoir Cemetery photos and listings
<http://www.Findagrave.com>
- "Descendants of John Austin of Southside Virginia"
<http://www.AFAOA.org>

Helen Cook Austin
AustinART@bellsouth.net

