

## Douglas Shipley Becomes American Genealogy Society 2000 Scholar

It started with the following query sent to this *Newsletter* in May of 1999:

*My great grandmother Pearl told the story of her great grandmother Fanny Austin, born about 1817 in or around Fluvanna County, VA, who had noticed an Indian slave as he ran in a footrace, and asked her father to buy him for her. He was Frank Peebley and in the 1860 census, they are living in Fishing River Township, Clay County, MO with some of their 13 children..*

In his research, Douglas Shipley found a Thomas Austin who had bought land in 1831 in Fishing River, Clay County, MO. Thomas had no family, but he had a number of mulatto slaves. Thomas died in 1853, and his will names a Fanny and her oldest children, Peter, Marie, Jack, Riley and Frank. Thomas's will also directed that his slaves were to be freed and that his estate's proceeds were to be divided equally among the freed adults. Fanny received \$800 as part of her inheritance.

Adjoining Thomas. property was a Thomas Peebly who died in 1858. His slave Frank Peebly was sold at auction to Fanny Austin.

Douglas attended the 1999 National Austin Convention in Washington, DC, and was welcomed as a new member. He discussed his research strategy: that of finding a link between a Thomas he found in Albemarle County, VA records with the Thomas of Fishing River.

After returning from the convention, Doug continued his research, eventually preparing a paper, "Frank and Fanny Austin: Oral and Documentary Research of a Formerly Enslaved Family."

Upon submitting the paper for publication in the National Genealogy Society Quarterly, he was asked by the Society if he was interested in their annual writing contest, as well as the American Genealogy Society's contest. Doug agreed and submitted his manuscript to both organizations. A couple of weeks ago, Doug was informed that he had been named AGS 2000 Scholar, and was awarded a \$500 stipend to study genealogy at their course in Birmingham, AL. Doug writes that he hasn't heard from the NGS as yet.