

THE SOLOMON AUSTIN STORY

The Early Years Revisited

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PREFACE

I am not a direct descendant of Solomon Austin and often I'm asked why I have spent so much of my adult life working on his genealogy and family history. The answer is simple! When Solomon lived in North Carolina he was so closely associated with Philip Austin that it is difficult not to believe there was a family connection. Philip Austin was my 4th great-grandfather and he was from Maryland. Solomon Austin was also from Maryland and it seemed logical that if I delved deeply into Solomon's past I might at the same time gain knowledge of Philip's early years. Unfortunately, this objective did not come to pass but the journey with Solomon has been so enjoyable I felt it necessary to record the time we have spent together in this document.

The story of Solomon Austin early years is far from complete and there is much more to be done. I could spent many hours refining the text and perhaps adding a scrap of new information here and there. But, after years of research, I recognize that the official records contain little additional information that will provide a significant break through about Solomon's m or Philip's -- early years. After this exhaustive search, I reluctantly accept that I have gone about as far as one can go on the Solomon problem.

One never likes to quit until the job is done and for that reason it is hard to stop the research. But years ago I learned that Nirvana seldom arrives and in any endeavor there comes a time when one must say, "Enough is enough!" Hoarding the bulk of the data in hopes of adding an elusive thread here and there is unfair to the family members and the profession of genealogy alike. I believe that I have reached that point with Solomon Austin and this narrative is the final report.

The material is presented in two segments. The basis for the first part of the narrative is a review of Solomon Austin's early traditions in more or less chronological form. The family traditions are compared with extant official data and inferences and conclusions are developed to try to gain a plausible insight into Solomon's early years.

The second part of the narrative is a genealogical compilation of the early descendants of Solomon Austin's family. For this purpose I have used the latest version of the GenBook computer program to present the descendants of Solomon Austin in an indexed easily readable form. Because I am not a direct descendant of Solomon I have truncated the descent with the fifth generation. Family members can find their line and continue down to the present.

Despite the care taken, it is foolish to expect there will not be errors in a work such as this. This is still an open-ended project and I hope the readers will send corrections because we abhor erroneous information. I will also appreciate substantive input that would make a revision a more exact and better presentation. There are blanks in the records that may never be filled and for these I am truly disappointed. I know the truth is out there and hopefully some of Solomon's descendants may find the answers cached away in some attic, some old trunk, some scrap book, some old letter or some other secret place where genealogy likes to hide. Hope springs eternal!

Warm regards,
Harold Austin Steiner
June 1997

DISCLAIMER

This narrative document is a compilation of data from many sources including official records, generous input from other researchers, and personal research by the compiler. As far as known no copyrighted material is included in the narrative.

The family data in the second part of this document is also from many sources including family group sheets, the International Genealogical Index, personal communications with Solomon Austin's descendants, contributions from other researchers as well as vital statistics from censuses and other official records. Every effort has been made to insure all the material contains herein is as accurate as possible. But it is an inescapable fact that there is a 10% error rate when genealogical and historical data are transcribed between mediums and individuals. For this reason alone errors and inconsistencies can be expected..

We assume no responsibility for any parts considered slanderous or libelous to any individual, family or family member. Likewise, readers are given ample warning that some of the material is pure speculation and this material is identified as such. The compiler assumes no responsibility if this speculative material is extracted as factual and applied to any ongoing genealogical research or family genealogy. The reader should bear in mind that this is a research document and within that context should be considered an incentive to further research rather than *a fait accompli*.

PART ONE

THE NARRATIVE

I

INTRODUCTION

Solomon Austin's life was spent in three major geographical areas in Maryland and North Carolina in America and Ontario in Canada. Of these three areas, the most significant gaps in knowledge of his life occur during his early years in America, and even there there is an added discontinuity. Almost all researchers of Solomon's life have frustratingly observed how little information can be found about his early life in Maryland as compared to his relatively short sojourn in North Carolina. This inference of uncertainty occurs primarily because of gaps and inconsistencies in historical records that might provide insight into Solomon's early years. The purpose of this analysis is to review these available data and to try to merge deductive reasoning techniques with the preponderance of evidence to fill in the blanks and present a plausible scenario of Solomon Austin's early years.

The starting point for achieving the above stated objective was a thorough review of the literature pertaining to the Solomon Austin family. In Ontario, Solomon was a prominent pioneer in Norfolk County and his life and family have been well documented. For reference, some of the primary sources of the Solomon Austin family history are identified below:

1. Page, H. R.. 1877. *Historical Atlas of Haldimand and Norfolk Counties with Biographies of Prominent Citizens*, Published in Toronto.
2. Owen, E. A. 1898. *Pioneer Sketches of Long Point Settlement or Norfolk's Foundation Builders and Their Family Genealogies*. Toronto: William Briggs.
3. Charlton, John, M. P. 1900. "Some of the Norfolk Pioneers, Jonathan Austin, Esq. and His Father and Grandfather," published in *The Simcoe Reformer*, Thursday, 9 August 1900.
4. Briggs, William, editor. 1900. "The United Loyalist Settlement at Long Point, Lake Erie, " by L. H. Tasker, Collegiate Institute, Niagara Falls. Ontario Historical Society, Vol. II. pp. 78-79.
5. Yeager, William, editor. 1978. *Sources in Austin Genealogy*. Simcoe, Ontario: Norfolk County Historical Society. In LDS Library, US/Canada Section, Salt Lake City, Utah, Call No. 929.271.AU 76s.

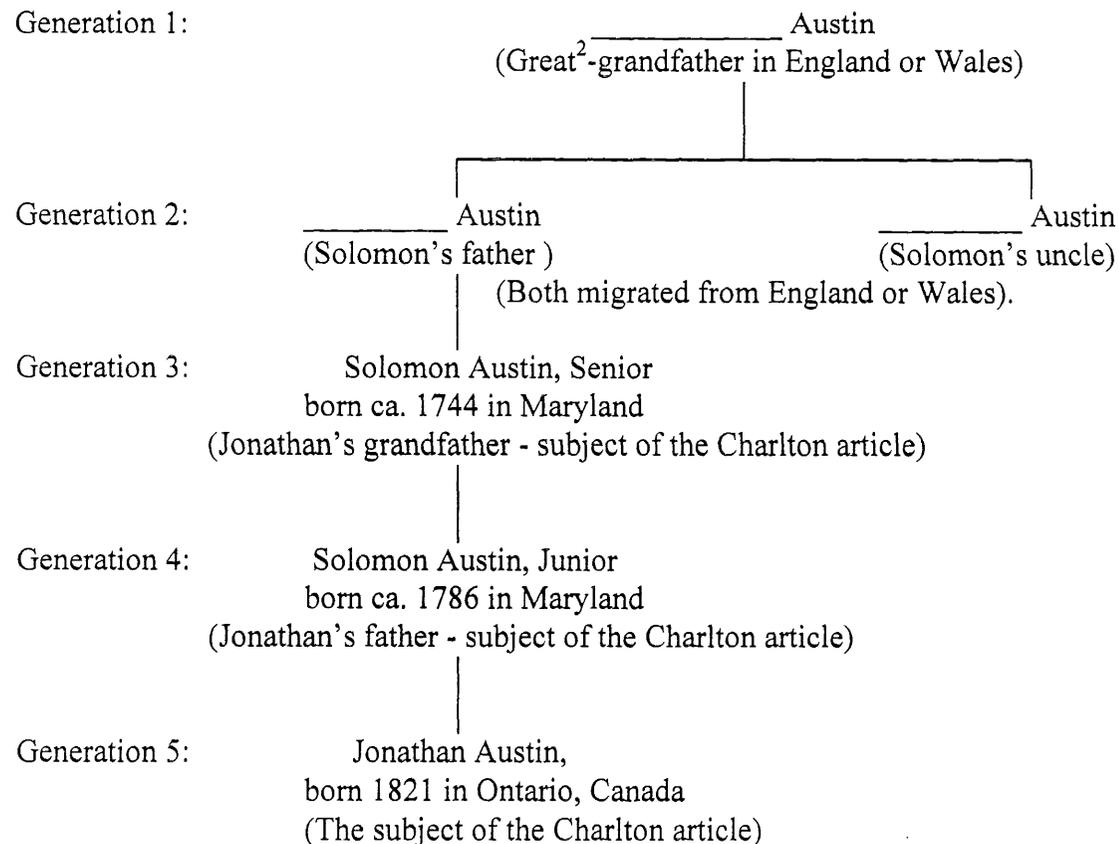
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6. Yeager, William. 1979. *History of the Austin Family*. Simcoe, Ont.: Norfolk County Historical Society.

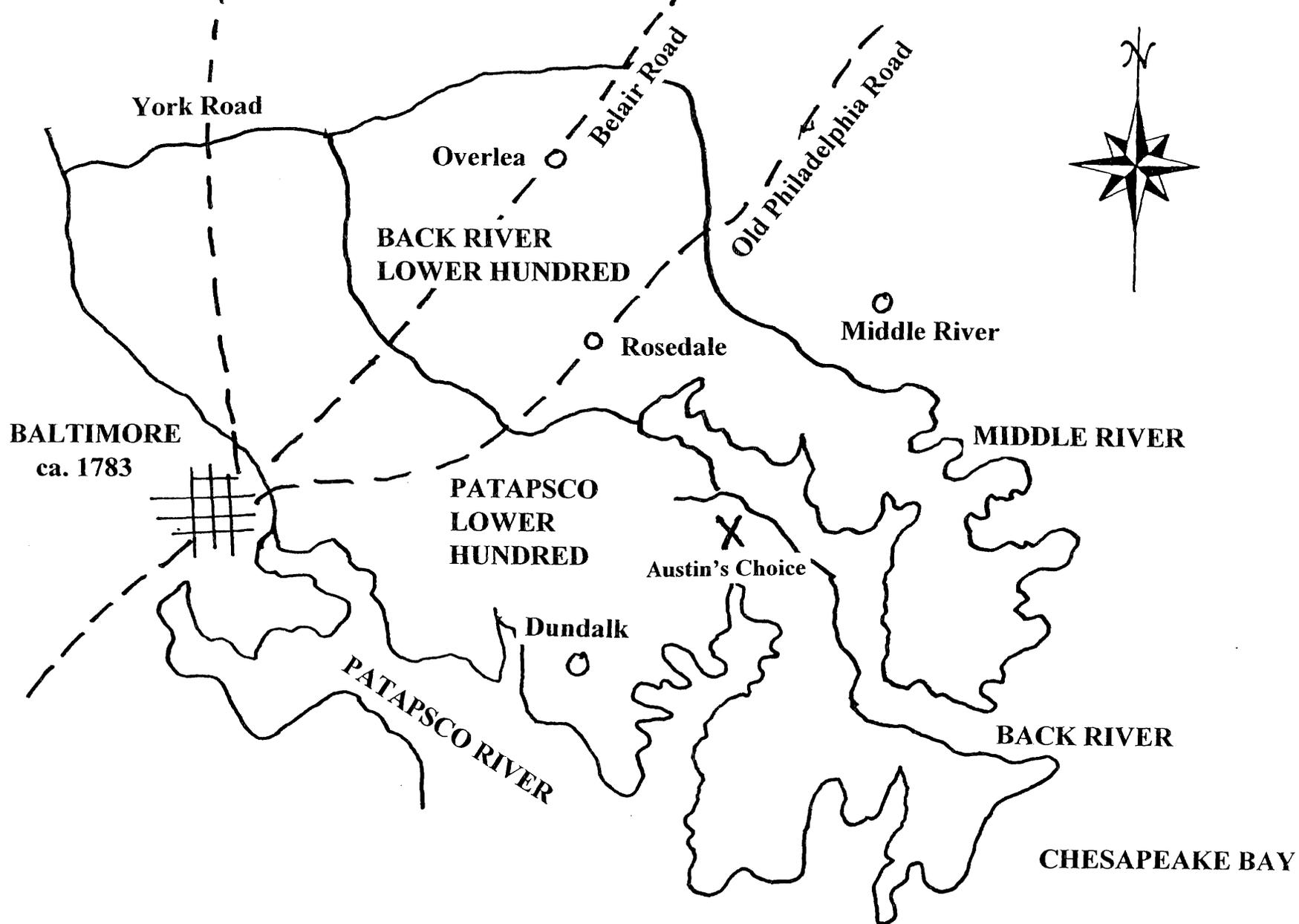
7. Wiley, Marian J. 1988. "Some Descendants of Solomon Austin and Joanna Thomas of Norfolk County, Ontario." *The Austins of America*. August 1988. Concord, Mass: The Austin Print, pp. 278-279

Undoubtedly, other documents exist that might shed light on the problem, but they have either not been discovered or are not in the public domain. Until more data becomes available, the above cited documents must serve as the framework for further research. There is one caveat, however. Much of the story contained therein is based on oral history — a medium whose veracity and historical accuracy are often difficult to confirm. Despite this caveat, the oral history of Solomon Austin's early life was promulgated by descendants who were only two generations removed from the major character— Solomon Austin himself. For this reason, neither documented nor oral family history can be wantonly discounted and both play such an important in this analysis.

The following descendant chart helps define the problem and can help the reader follow the discussions more easily. Note that the major task for researchers is to fill the blanks on this chart.



No effort such as this is done in a vacuum and we would be remiss if the contributions of other researchers and living descendants of Solomon Austin were not acknowledged. Within this context, we are gratefully indebted to David Avery, of Ontario, Canada, whose continuing enthusiasm and dedication have repeatedly motivated us to try to solve the Solomon Austin puzzle. Sally Austin Day, a professional genealogist from Livonia, Michigan, is a brilliant researcher who for years has served as a sounding board and contributor for some of the information discussed in this analysis. Pertinent information about Solomon Austin's military support for the Crown has been provided by Major Stewart Bull, of Ontario, who is historian for the Queens Rangers, the Loyalist regiment wherein Solomon served. Solomon's descendants have spread worldwide and over the years some have contributed information useful in this analysis. To them we extend our heartfelt thanks. Notably, these good people include Jerry and Irene Brimberry of Georgia, Mark Holland of California, Andrei and Karen Austin of Texas, Michael Ewing of Iowa and George O. Austin of Arizona. The staffs of the Maryland Archives, the North Carolina Archives and the Family History Center in Salt Lake City have all contributed and this analysis would not have been possible without their resources and assistance.



The Patapsco Lower Hundred and the Back River Lower Hundred political districts of Baltimore County, Maryland ca. 1783. The black X northeast of Dundalk is the approximate location of Austin's Choice patented by Henry Austin, 1755. (Schematic after George J. Horvath, Jr. 1978)

II

THE AUSTINS IN BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND

Although it was in newspaper format and based largely on family oral history and tradition, the most cogent documentation of the Austin family history was compiled in 1900 by the Honorable John Charlton, Member of Parliament, who authored an article for the *Simcoe Reformer*.¹ Because it is the most articulate documentation available, we draw heavily on the contents of this article in this analysis. The *modus operandi* will be to present pertinent segments of the Charlton history and then try to authenticate them with official records and other documents germane to the events and people in the geographical areas of interest. Where there are gaps or discrepancies in the comparisons, deductive reasoning techniques will be used to try to develop a plausible scenario of Solomon Austin's early years. The logical place to start is in Maryland and the following extract from the Charlton's article begins the early history of the Austin family in that state.

“... [The] great-grandfather [Solomon Austin, Sr. 's father] came from the border of England and Wales, and it is not certain which of these kingdoms he was a resident of He emigrated to America at an early date, the exact year cannot be given. He was accompanied by a brother. They landed at Baltimore, Maryland, then a mere landing place without commercial importance, and with a population of a few families only. The great-grandfather took up about 200 acres of land in two separate parcels, which were within what are now the corporate limits of the city of Baltimore.. The great-grandfather died without a will, and by the law of primogeniture, which was then in force, not only in Great Britain, but in all the colonies, Solomon, the eldest son, and the grandfather of the subject of this sketch, inherited the estate. Solomon had married a North Carolina woman, and he rented the property to the uncle, who was the companion of his father when they had emigrated to America; and moved to North Carolina where his wife's people lived. Solomon Austin,[Sr.], the grandfather of the subject of this sketch [Jonathan Austin], was born in Baltimore. Maryland about the year 1744 ...”

¹ Charlton, John, M. P. 1900. *Some of the Norfolk Pioneers, Jonathan Austin, Esq. and His Father and Grandfather,* published in *The Simcoe Reformer*, Thursday, 9 August 1900.

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The above extract appears straight forward and, on balance, presents a brief but cogent scenario of Solomon Austin's ancestors in America. Unfortunately, the actions identified in the traditions upon which the article is based are not fully substantiated by the official records and deductive reasoning is required to clear the picture.

In Colonial America land could be owned or occupied legally by a grant or patent from the proprietor or province, by purchase from another individual or by inheritance. In addition there were those who "squatted" illegally on vacant land. The key words in the above extract of the Charlton article are "...The *great-grandfather took up land* . ." This implies Solomon, Sr.'s father obtained the land by some legal instrument such as a deed, patent, certificate or similar method.. Maryland land records date from the early 17th century and are generally complete. Therefore, it was appropriate to review the records and isolate transactions that could help identify the Austins involved. Such a search of the Baltimore County land records reveals only one Austin who acquired lands that complement the criteria presented in the Charlton's article. His name was Henry Austin and the first of his land acquisitions pertinent to this analysis is transcribed below² (See page 4 for a map depicting the area of interest):

On 10 March 1737, Joseph Thurman conveyed to Henry Austin a parcel, of land called "Egypt" beginning at two bounded red oaks standing by the side of a glade called the Green Glade and on the north side of Back River, then running

N25°W 80 perches,

N62°W 60 perches,

N30°E 40 perches,

East 60 perches,

S47°E 146 perches,

then direct to the beginning, containing 75 acres more or less

*Witnesses: J. Theredino
Richard Caswell*

s/Joseph Thurman

The above conveyance is cited in the General Index of Baltimore County, Maryland Land Records, 1659-1800 in the names of Joseph Thurman and Henry AUSTIN. It is very important to note that the above citation is duplicated identically in the same general index in the names of Joseph Thurman and Henry OYSTON.³ In other words, there are two entries for the same land under two different surnames of the grantee -- AUSTIN and OYSTON. This brings a new dimension into the Solomon Austin scenario.

Professional genealogists concede that these variations in the spelling of surnames occurred because many of the first settlers of the western shore of Chesapeake Bay were from Wales or western Cornwall and their accents and dialects were hard for others to interpret and transcribe. Hence the official records of Baltimore County are replete with these variations in the spelling of the Austin surname. The following examples will illustrate.

² Baltimore County, Maryland Land Records, Liber AWS No. 1A, folio 56 Cited in the alphabetical A-G section of the General Index of Land Records, 1659-1800. Maryland Archives. Reel CR 46,989.

³ Baltimore County, Maryland Land Records, Liber AWS No. 1A, folio 56 Cited in the alphabetical H-O section of the General Index of Land Records, 1659-1800. Maryland Archives. Reel CR 46,989.

On 1 September 1744, Henry Oyston gave a deposition concerning a boundary dispute wherein Henry stated that sixteen years ago he was with Isaac Sampson and shown the boundary and John Bowen showed him the bounds and he believed that "Welcome" [the name of the plantation] had been escheated.⁴ In the deposition Henry's age was given as "...about forty." This implied that Henry was born about 1804.

In September 1763, Henry Austin gave a deposition concerning the boundary of land of owned by John Burgan. ~ Henry stated that "... he hath lived with Robert for about thirty seven years...and gave his age as sixty two years..."

his
s/Henry H Austin
mark

According to this deposition Henry was born 1801 instead of 1804.

In the above document there is no question that the surname affixed on the deposition was AUSTIN. However, other official records of the same period used the alternate spellings as shown in the following:⁶

A List of Taxables in the Patapsco Lower Hundred,
Taken in 1737 by Lloyd Harris, Constable

p. 25 Henry OSYTEN 1 white male over 16 years

1737 Bounties for Squirrel Heads, Baltimore County Levy Papers

p. 29 Henry OSTON

1739 Allowances, Baltimore County Levy Papers

p. 32 Henry OYSTON

In March 1754, a Mary AUSTIN was tried for bastardy in Baltimore County. Edward Bowen was tried as the father of her child.⁷

All these items lead to the conclusion that in the 18th century the surnames AUSTIN and OYSTON appeared alternatively in the public records, sometimes for the same person and the same event.

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Eighteen years passed before the next land transaction took place that is pertinent to this analysis. In 1755, Henry Austin/Oyston received a land grant in the region of Baltimore

4 Abstracts of the Baltimore County Land Commission, 1727-1762. Published by the Baltimore County Genealogical Society.

5 Baltimore County, Maryland Land Records, Liber B M, folio 90.

6 Wright, F. Edward. 1987. *Inhabitants of Baltimore County, Maryland, 1692-1763*. Family Line Publications.

7 Baltimore County, Maryland Court Proceedings, Liber BB#A, folio 35.

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County where Solomon's father and uncle were supposed to have settled. The metes and bounds of this tract are extracted below:⁸

... 10 September 1755, grant to Henry Austin of Baltimore County Maryland part of a tract of 1153 acres of and called Robert's Choice, originally granted to Thomas Roberts on 12 June 1688...Beginning at a bounded chestnut tree standing on the west side of a mountain called Long Mountain, 9 it being the original beginning tree of the whole tract and running thence

south 50 perches,

southeast 106 perches to a locust post and bounded red oak,

north-northeast 101 perches

northwest 74 perches to the land formerly granted to Nicholas Corbin

then with a straight line to the beginning containing 75 acres more or less,

And added to said 75 acres, 24 acres of vacant land entered as one entire tract, Lying in Baltimore County between Patapsco River and Back River beginning at a bounded chestnut tree, it being the original beginning tree of Robert's Choice on the west side of a hill called Long Mountain thence

N85°W 10 perches to the end

S55°E 100 perches to a line of a tract called Norwood's Range then with said line the two following courses S10°E 80 perches then southeast 120 perches thence,

north-northeast 17 perches to a locust post and a bound red oak and still north-northeast 101 perches, then

southeast 4 perches,

north 56 perches

west 56 perches onto the end of the northwest line of the original survey and then with a straight line to the beginning containing 97 acres more or less...

Surveyed 20 Jan 1756...

Thomas Roberts had forfeited the 75-acre tract Austin patented and when Henry Austin took possession of the land he changed the name to "Austin's Choice." He obligated himself to pay twice a year three shillings, eleven pence in sterling or gold to be paid at the Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and at the Feast of St. Michael the Archangel.

The documentation of the above land transactions in Baltimore County, Maryland were not the only times Henry Oyston/Austin appear in the public records. 1740 was an active year for Henry Oyston with regards to Baltimore County land transactions. In that year he conveyed a 75 acre "part of Egypt" to Francis Rider.¹⁰ In the same year, Francis Rider conveyed 75 acre "Robert's Choice" to Henry Oyston.¹¹ Finally, in 1740, Henry Oyston conveyed 48 acre "Rider's Inheritance" to Thomas Sligh.¹² These conveyances raise questions. For example, the action involving "Robert's Choice" does not mesh with the fact that Henry applied for and received a patent on this same tract 15 years later in 1755.

⁸ Baltimore County, Maryland Land Records, Index 114, Patent 414:

⁹ In the original document it is difficult to tell whether it is Long Mountain or Song Mountain. Regardless of interpretation the landmark is not identified on any modern map.

¹⁰ Baltimore County, Maryland Land Records, Liber AWS No. 1A, folio 430.

¹¹ Baltimore County, Maryland Land Records, Liber AWS No. 1A, folio 428.

¹² Baltimore County, Maryland Land Records, Liber AWS No. 1A, folio 436.

At first glance, these official records seem to provide corroborative evidence that supports the Solomon Austin family tradition reported by Charlton. There were two tracts of land involved and the combined tracts in "Egypt" and "Austin's Choice"-- contained 196 acres which is tantamount to the 200 acres noted in the tradition. The lands were located in Baltimore County near the Patapsco River and were the only tracts recorded that involved Austins or Oystons. The official records substantiate each other and lead to the inescapable conclusion that in Baltimore County in the 18th century Henry AUSTIN and Henry OYSTON were one and the same person.

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The continuation of the Charlton article defining the early life of Solomon Austin is extracted below:

"After Solomon Austin, Sr. rented his Baltimore property to his uncle, he moved to North Carolina. After a lapse of a year or two, the uncle failed to remit the rent and Solomon Austin, Sr. went to Baltimore to see about it. The uncle claimed that he had as good a right to the property as his nephew had. Solomon, Sr. put the matter into the hands of a lawyer to collect the rent and eject his uncle from the property. About this time Solomon Sr. had a severe attack of typhoid fever which delayed institutional proceedings. After his recovery, he returned to North Carolina, leaving a lawyer to proceed with collecting the rent and ejecting the tenant.... In a short time the Revolutionary War broke out. Solomon Austin, Sr. was a Loyalist, and identified himself with the Loyalists' cause and in consequence of the disturbance and of the interruption of communications between the different sections of the country. He naturally lost sight of the ejectment proceedings at Baltimore..."

"... No proceedings were ever taken to recover the Austin family property in Baltimore. It would, at the present time [ca. 1900], be worth many millions of dollars. An investigation was made and the facts as above stated were elicited in the course of this investigation, which was made before a High Court Justice, but the lapse of time was so great as to bar, in the opinion of the Court, the claim of the Austin family for the possession of this property..."

Ejectment is a legal process and court records should provide primary evidence that confirms this part of the Austin family tradition. Fortunately, Maryland court records are almost complete from early in the 17th century. From 1636 to 1777, ejectment cases were adjudicated by the Maryland Provisional Court. For the period, 1778-1815, ejectment cases were adjudicated by either the Maryland General Court for the Western Shore or the Maryland General Court of the Eastern Shore depending on the location of the property. County Circuit Courts heard cases for ejectment from 1777 to the present.

The extract from the above family tradition does not give a specific date when Solomon Austin, Sr. made an attempt to eject his uncle but the inference is that it took place just prior to the beginning of the War. A search of the court records for that period does not show any ejectment action by an Austin in Baltimore County.¹³ This is understandable because a record would exist only if a case was actually presented in court. Apparently, attorneys were con-

13. Maryland Provisional Court Judgments, vols. 63a-64. Reel 0012968, Salt Lake City FHC.

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sued in the two attempts by Solomon Austin and his family to reacquire rights to the Baltimore County land but, if the cases never got to court, there is no way to substantiate the claims made in the segment of the Charlton family tradition quoted above.

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Even if the search for ejectment papers was not productive, there were other official records that give insight into the Baltimore County Austin/Oystons. The following extract of Henry Oyston's will dated 1782 is a case in point.¹⁴

. . .and my body I recommend to the Earth from whence it came to be buried by my son John Austin Imprimis - I give and bequeath unto my son John Austin thirty-five acres of land being a part of a tract of land where the said John now lives by the name of Oyston's Choice to be laid off at the lands where as the said John now dwells with the house, orchard and all the improvements thereunto...

*his
Henry H Oyston
mark*

*Witnesses: William Symit
Henry Clansborn*

From this we see that Henry had a son named John and that the family still possessed "Oyston's (Austin's) Choice." Unfortunately, no other family members were identified.

Maryland conducted a census in 1783 to help assess resources required to fund the war. The following individuals were enumerated for the Patapsco Lower Hundred.¹⁵ A schematic map showing the location of the Patapsco Lower Hundred is shown on page 4.

Patapsco Lower Hundred

Page 85 "Oyston's Choice"

<i>Part 15 acres</i>	<i>Oyston, John</i>	<i>7 white inhabitants</i>
<i>Part 82 acres</i>	<i>Oyston, Lawrence</i>	<i>5 white inhabitants</i>

This record raises some interesting points. Note that the total acreage is 97 acres. This is the same acreage and location of the 97 acres conveyed to Henry Austin in the 1755 patent. Note also that in 1783 "Oyston's Choice" was occupied by two families and this brings a new player into the scene. Who was Lawrence Oyston? Where does he fit into the picture?

In 1785, Lawrence Oyston gave a deposition stating that he was 48 years old.¹⁶ This indicates his year of birth was circa 1737. On 29 July 1788, Lawrence Austin married Rebecca Pi-

14 Baltimore County Wills, Liber 3, folio 479. Original in Box 17, folder 54.

15 Maryland Historical Society. 1970. *Baltimore County, Maryland Tax List, 1783* From the original tax list in the collection of the Society. Philadelphia: Rhistorice publications. Also see: Carothers, Bettie S. and Robert W. Barnes. 1978. *1783 Tax List of Baltimore County, Maryland, Vol. 2*. Privately published by the authors. Republished in 1995 by Family Line Publications.

errigo in Baltimore County. ~7 Lawrence Oyston wrote his will on 11 October 1799 and it was probated in 1800. He left all his possessions to his son Benjamin Austin. No land description or any other family members were identified.¹⁸

Another Oyston appeared at the turn of the century. On 4 May 1800, William Oyston married Ann Ham in Baltimore County.¹⁹ William Oyston signed his will on 28 January 1802 and it was probated on 15 March 1802. William left all his possessions to his wife, Ann. No land description was given and no additional family members were identified?²⁰

John Oyston, son of Henry, signed his will on 8 January 1803. He left all his land and possession to his wife Sarah. No land description or acreage was given. No other family members were designated.²¹

On 2 January 1795, a Gabriel Austin of Patapsco Neck made his will?² The will was probated on 2 April 1796 and he gave his son, Sabrit Austin, his personal estate and George and John Kelso were designated guardians of Sabrit.

On 27 November 1840, a Charles C. Austin (bom 31 July 1793) made his will in Baltimore County. ²³ His will was probated on 13 April 1849 and mentions his wife, Ann H. Austin, but does not identify any children. The will was written at the personage house of the St. Thomas Church in Baltimore County and the witnesses were Emily and Henrietta Austin.

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There is another action involving an Austin in Baltimore County that has a bearing on what has been discussed above. The case came before the Chancery Court of 1848 when Agnes Austin brought suit against Isaac Wood to whom she had previously sold a tract of land. The said Isaac Wood died after having paid only \$16.00 and the judgment enabled Agnes Austin to resell the land at public auction?⁴ The following is an extract of the auctioneers advertisement of sale in the Baltimore newspaper, dated March 15, 1848. The land was finally sold to George Prestman for \$11.25 per acre.

A valuable farm, 4 miles from Baltimore in Patapsco Neck which by indenture dated the 8th day of April 1847, and recorded among the land records of Baltimore County in Liber A. W. B. No. 378, folio containing 94 acres of land more or less, the same being part of a tract of land called "Austin's Choice."

The property is on the Trap or Canton Road and adjoins the lands of Jefferson Rusk, the Canton Company, Patrick Lynch and others and fronts on the above named road nearly half a mile.

16 Cregar, William F. 1928. "Index to Chancery Depositions, 1668-1789,". *Maryland Historical Magazine*, Vol. 23, 1928, pages 101-154, 197-242 and 293-343.

17 Barnes, Robert. 1979. *Maryland Marriages, 1778-1800*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., page 8.

18 Baltimore County, Maryland Wills, Liber 6, folio 241.

19 Barnes, Robert. 1979. *Maryland Marriages, 1778-1800*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., page 171.

20 Baltimore County, Maryland Wills, Liber 6, folio 532.

21 Baltimore County, Maryland Wills, Liber 7, folio 134.

22 Baltimore County, Maryland Wills, Liber 5, folio 369.

23 Baltimore County, Maryland Wills, Liber 23, folio 89.

24 Chancery Court Records, Baltimore County, Maryland, 1848, Folder 3654, Series No. C208. Maryland Archives Accession No. 40,200-3654, Location: 2-15-14-8

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About one half the land is in wood, principally Pine, suitable to now being cut into wood, with some oak and chestnut, the remainder of the land is cleared and under cultivation, a part of which is good meadow land.

The improvements consist of a Log and Frame Dwelling House, Stable, Spring house all of which are in good repair. There is also an Apple and Peach orchard as well as several large never failing springs of water on the place. It has an elevated situation with a commanding view of the River and Bay, and is reputed be perfectly healthy. The distance from the city, location, soil and quantity of wood upon it, makes it a very valuable and desirable property, being admirably adapted for a marketfarm or grazing farm for butchers.

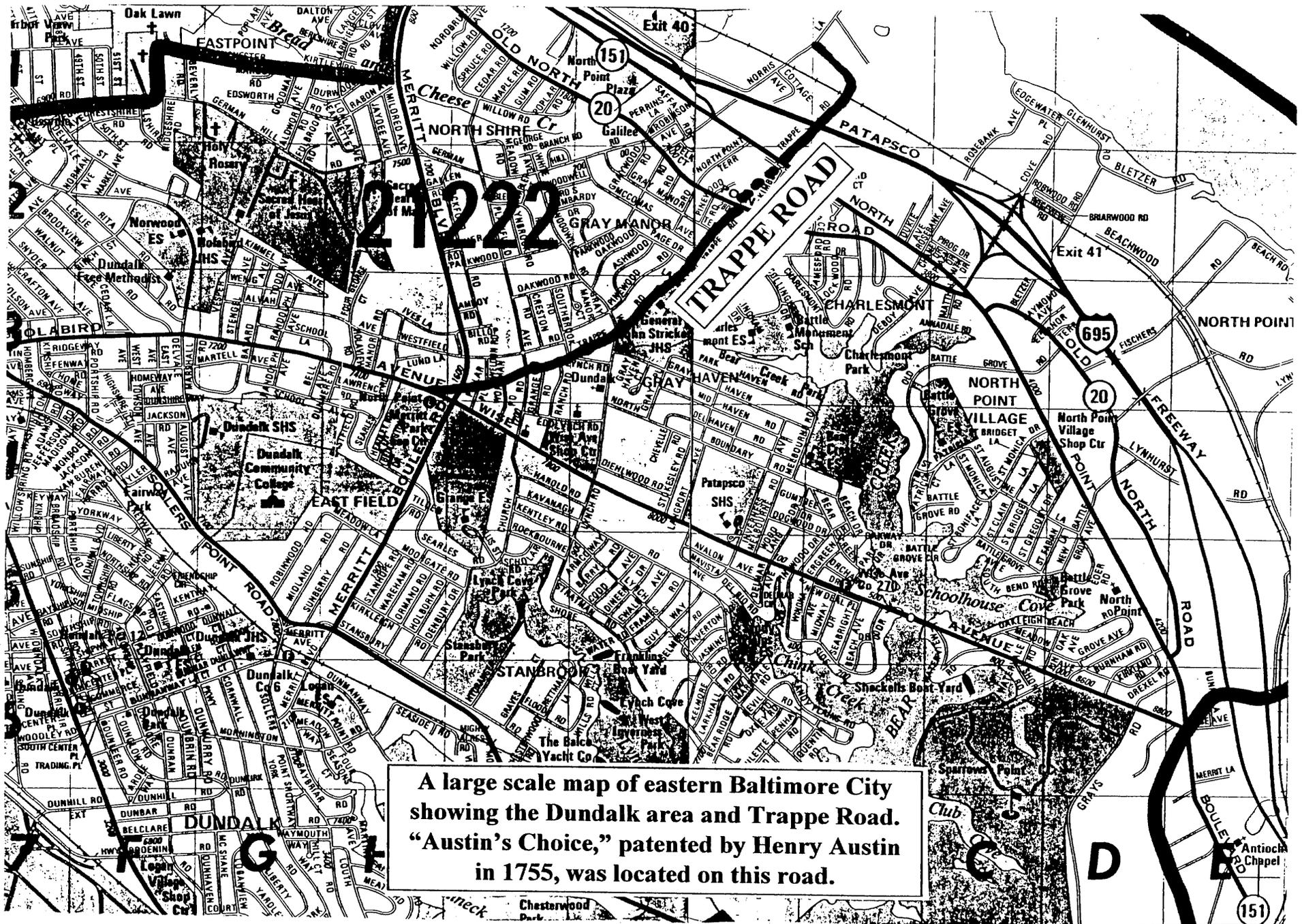
By 1848, the acreage had apparently shrunk to 94 acres but the name "Austin's Choice" had endured. And it was still owned by an Austin. The description for the auction provides an excellent tool to help locate where the ancestral home of these Austins stood. A segment of a Baltimore City map is extracted on page 13 and Trap[pe] Road in the Dundalk area is identified by a heavy line. The Austin land was apparently on that road.

————— 0 —————

In this section it has been shown unequivocally that there was a family of Austins active in Baltimore County, Maryland in the 18th century. The patriarch of this family was Henry Austin. It has also been shown that the surname appears in the records alternately as AUSTIN or OYSTON. This is disconcerting but is understandable because the spoken names sound almost identical and the variations in spelling were obviously a local perturbation. The analyses of the official data leads to the inescapable conclusion that Henry AUSTIN and Henry OYSTON were the same person.

Also it has been shown conclusively that the facts derived from the official records of Baltimore County do not substantiate the Solomon Austin oral history and tradition reported by Charlton and others. For Solomon Austin's descendants this boils down to two choices. If the family tradition is deemed credible, the following syllogism applies. The Henry Austin/Oyston family was the *only* Austin family recorded in Baltimore County in the mid-18th century. Solomon Austin was born in Baltimore County in 1744. Therefore, Solomon Austin was related in some way to the Henry Austin family.

If this syllogism is rejected the alternative is to accept the irrefutable conclusion that the family tradition is suspect and *does not* present a picture of Solomon's early life. If Solomon Austin's ancestors and place of birth cannot be confirmed in Baltimore County then he must have been born elsewhere in Maryland. This requires a major reevaluation of *where* Solomon was born and to *whom*. As will be noted in future sections, there are plausible alternatives but at this time they are unproved.



A large scale map of eastern Baltimore City showing the Dundalk area and Trappe Road. "Austin's Choice," patented by Henry Austin in 1755, was located on this road.