

More on Bartlett Hawkins Fitzgerald

As I began compiling information about Bartlett, starting with Buck Harris's Revolutionary War records, other pertinent family history began to emerge. Betty McAlister Johns of Waynesboro wrote a book on several of her family lines called "Family Lore" that records her genealogical ties to Bartlett and she has given permission to include this information in the Bartlett Hawkins Fitzgerald article for the Nelson County Historical Society blog. Her writing below gives valuable information on who Bartlett's parents were, which has always been a cloudy subject. I would also like to thank Betty Haines for bringing these writings to my attention and sending them for inclusion. There is no telling how much family history is out there waiting to be brought to the surface for everyone's genealogy enjoyment. Many thanks to these two ladies who generously added more pieces to the puzzle of Bartlett Fitzgerald's remarkable life.

Joseph Fitzgerald and Mary Hawkins Bartlett Fitzgerald

(Taken from Chapter twenty-eight in the "Family Lore" book by Betty Gray McAlister Johns)

I, Betty Johns, descend from the above couple through three different lines. I believe Joseph was the progenitor, through his son Bartlett, of all the Montebello area Fitzgeralds.

Joseph Fitzgerald, my 5th great-grandfather in three lines, was born in Ireland circa 1735. He came to America c. 1755 and settled in Orange County, Virginia. Around 1757 he married Mary Hawkins Bartlett, my 5th great-grandmother in three lines. She was born c. 1735 in Orange County, Virginia, daughter of Col. Benjamin Bartlett and Mary Hawkins Bartlett, my 6th great-grandparents in three lines.

My 5th great-grandmother Mary, obviously named after her mother, and the names Hawkins and Bartlett were handed down through our Fitzgeralds for several generations.

There has been a great deal of controversy among Fitzgerald researchers on Joseph Fitzgerald's given name. Some say it is John, some say it is Joseph. There is some speculation that his name was both; "John Joseph Fitzgerald". I will present what I accept at this point in time (2011) and why I accept it.

The subject of this chapter is listed as Joseph Fitzgerald, great-great-grandfather of Milton Hitt Fitzgerald, on Mormon Proxy Baptism For The Dead records of November 1891 in Manti Temple in Idaho. The lineage used by Milton Hitt Fitzgerald on the Mormon records is now generally accepted: Milton Hitt Fitzgerald was a son of William Davidson Fitzgerald; grandson of James Fitzgerald; great-grandson of Bartlett Fitzgerald; great-great-grandson of Joseph Fitzgerald. Milton was also baptized-by-proxy for the men on his wife's side, noted as son-in-law, grandson-in-law, etc. Milton's wife, Victoria Carr Fitzgerald was baptized for the women on both sides. The Mormons (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints) took their religious obligation very seriously and wanted everyone to be saved by baptism. It was, and maybe still is, their belief that

if a person died without being baptized, someone could be baptized for that dead person, thereby saving his/her soul.

William Boyd Fitzgerald, born c. 1901 in this line of Fitzgerald's, wrote as part of a letter dated April 24, 1979 to Kermit Fitzgerald of California: "*An earlier Joseph Fitzgerald in our line of descendants was born, as I recall, in 1730, in America, probably in Amherst County.*" Other research has him born in Ireland.

I think the confusion about Joseph's first name came from records of a John Fitzgerald in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. Luretta Calhoun, a meticulous researcher, ruled out this John as being our ancestor since she did not find Bartlett, who was still living when John of Pittsylvania County died, among his heirs in John's will. Nor was Bartlett listed in another document naming John's heirs. Nor were Bartlett's two known brothers listed as heirs of John. The confusion probably came from the fact that Joseph moved to Pittsylvania County. Perhaps John was related to our Joseph; uncle, brother cousin?

Joseph and Mary Hawkins Bartlett Fitzgerald had the following known children:

1. Bartlett Hawkins Fitzgerald - b. circa 1759
2. Benjamin Hawkins Fitzgerald - b. c. 1761
3. Abigail Fitzgerald – b. c. 1762
4. John Fitzgerald, Jr.
5. Joseph Hawkins Fitzgerald

There are at least two or three other children from this marriage

It appears the mother of this family was determined that her maiden name, Bartlett, and her mother's maiden name, Hawkins, were not going to die out. So here begins the mystery of the use of Hawkins and/or Fitzgerald as the last name.

About the age of 37 years, our Joseph Fitzgerald (subject of this chapter) enlisted in the Virginia Militia in 1722. His first wife, Mary, died about that time; sometime between 1722 and 1775. He married again c. 1775 to Susannah Massie of Amherst County, Virginia (this marriage is unproven.) He had children by his second wife. One of the daughters was named Susannah Massie Fitzgerald, lending strong support to the belief that the above-mentioned Susannah Massie was, indeed, the second wife.

Our Joseph, along with at least two of his sons, Bartlett and Benjamin, was a soldier in the Revolutionary War. I do not have details of his service but he did survive the War. Apparently, a vigorous man, he returned to ordinary life, probably that of a farmer, and had an impressive total of 21 or 23 children.

Apparently his second wife died sometime around 1790. On September 17, 1792 he took a third wife, Jane Holloway of Pittsylvania County, Virginia. Joseph was around 57 years old by this time and it is not known how old his third wife, Jane, was at the time of their marriage. Some of his 21 or 23 children may have been from this marriage if Jane was much younger than Joseph.

Late in life, Joseph applied for a military pension for his service in the Revolutionary War. The information on his three marriages and 21 children is taken from his pension papers.

Apparently, he lived the last part of his life in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, where his third wife was from. He died there c. 1824 at about 89 years of age and is buried there.

It seems he was a remarkable man and lived a most interesting life. I would truly love to have more details on his life and times but so many intervening years and scarce records make the task difficult. His time is too far past to find any surviving family oral traditions about him. It would be especially interesting to know about his life in Ireland and his reasons for coming to America. What personal, economic or political situations caused him to cross the ocean? Did he come with his father? Did he come alone as a young man? If so, did he ever see his family back in Ireland again? He certainly created a prolific family of his own in America!

Three Lines of Descent to Betty Johns

1. **Joseph** Fitzgerald married Bartlett; **Bartlett Hawkins** Fitzgerald married Coleman; **James** Fitzgerald married 1st Wales, m. 2nd Snead; **John H. “Big John”** Fitzgerald married Campbell; **Landon** Fitzgerald married Fitzgerald; **Sarah Eliza** Fitzgerald married Cash; **Eva Odessa** Cash married McAlister; **Betty Gray McAlister** married 1st Shields, m. 2nd Johns.
2. **Joseph** Fitzgerald m. Bartlett; **Bartlett Hawkins** Fitzgerald m. Coleman; **James** Fitzgerald m. 1st Wales m. 2nd Snead; **Samuel S.** Fitzgerald m. Hight; **Sarah Jane** Fitzgerald m. Fitzgerald; **Sarah Eliza** Fitzgerald m. Cash; **Eva Odessa** Cash m. McAlister; **Betty Gray McAlister** m. 1st Shields m. 2nd Johns.
3. **Joseph** Fitzgerald m. Bartlett; **Bartlett Hawkins** Fitzgerald m. Coleman; **John Clarkson** Fitzgerald m. Carr; **John “Preston”** Fitzgerald m. Ramsey; **Elza Ann** Fitzgerald m. Cash; **Daniel Gleason** Cash m. Fitzgerald; **Eva Odessa** Cash m. McAlister; **Betty Gray McAlister** m. 1st Shields m. 2nd Johns.

James Jeremiah “Jerry” Coleman & Elizabeth Leake Coleman (Parents of Bartlett’s Wife, Maskie Coleman Fitzgerald)

In the previous article about Bartlett Hawkins Fitzgerald by Buck Harris, he refers to the spelling of Bartlett’s wife as “Maskey”. Betty Johns refers to the spelling as “Maskie” and for this article we will refer to her as such. The following information comes from Chapter 12 in the “Family Lore” book by Betty Johns. Maskie’s parents, James Jeremiah “Jerry” Coleman and Elizabeth Leake Coleman are Betty’s 5th great-grandparents.

James Jeremiah Coleman was born 1732- c. 1794 and his wife, Elizabeth Leake was born 1731-c. 1780’s. The Colemans were Betty Johns ancestors in two lines. Their great-grandson Landon Fitzgerald married their great-granddaughter Sarah Jane Fitzgerald who were half-first cousins.

James and Elizabeth lived in Albemarle County, Virginia. The part of Albemarle County where they lived might have later become Amherst then Nelson County. Sometimes it appears families moved, but in fact, a new county was created from the old; the family stayed put but the name of the county changed on records.

James was born in 1732 in Gloucester County, Virginia. He died in Gloucester County, Virginia before September 1796 (the time his will was proved in court and ordered to be recorded). In 1751 he married Elizabeth Leake, daughter of Walter Leake and Judith Mask; Elizabeth was born in 1731-32 in Amherst County, Virginia and probably died in or before 1788 as James made no provisions for a wife in his will written in 1788.

I, Betty Johns, recently received information on my 5th great-grandparents, James and Elizabeth Coleman and it solved a 30-year dilemma for me. I always found it hard to accept the given name of my 3rd great-grandmother, Maskie Coleman Fitzgerald, wife of my 3rd great-grandfather, Bartlett Hawkins Fitzgerald. Maskie just seemed too odd to be a girl's first name and I often wonder if researchers had misread it; but now I see that here maternal grandmother's maiden name was Mask. In one document, by which Bartlett and Maskie sold land, she was referred to as Mask Fitzgerald several times but signed (by mark) a "Maskie"; apparently Mask was her baptismal or legal given name and she was simply called Maskie. It also explains why the name Judith was used so often among her Coleman, Fitzgerald, and Campbell descendants.

I was also surprised to see the nickname "Jerry" used in the 1700's as it sounds so modern! Again, a reminder that we must not assume things and if we do, we must make sure to state it as such.

It appears that James Coleman was a prosperous man who owned over 1300 acres of land and owned slaves. He may have been a blacksmith or, if he chose the lifestyle of a gentleman farmer, by slaves who did his blacksmithing. James Coleman willed the plantation "on which I now live" and "my plantation tools" to two daughters but willed "my still and blacksmith tools" to be sold. I don't know if the still produced whiskey for personal use or to be sold for profit—or both. It appears James Coleman was possibly disposing of two income-producing holdings differently from land and personal property; possibly his heirs were already established with means of income. It was customary for owners of slaves with skills like blacksmithing to rent out those slaves for a fee. Sometimes the slaves themselves were paid for working for other farmers. That was one way a slave got enough money to buy freedom.

To sum up Bartlett's life, in Betty Johns' book "Family Lore" (page 62) she states that in 1833 William Massie from Tye River Mills, Nelson County, Virginia, testified by letter to the U. S. Government that "*Bartlett Hawkins, having been for many years past unable to perform much labor is very poor. He has an aged wife and a cabin full of fatherless grandchildren to take care of and would suffer for the coarsest necessities of life except for the charity of his neighbors. He is literally covered with large scars from his knees to his neck.*" In 1833, George Hight (also my 4th great grandfather and mentioned before) testified

to Bartlett's military service. On 26 November, 1833, Bartlett was placed on the pension role at \$100 per annum (year). He was about seventy-four years old at the time. One Fitzgerald researcher believes the "*cabin full of fatherless grandchildren*" were the children of his daughter, Elizabeth (Fitzgerald) Hatter, whose husband had died.

One researcher has the impression Bartlett had a cantankerous disposition as he grew older. There are a number of Nelson County Court records involving him for trespassing and other charges. I have not looked at them but the researcher says a lot of the arguments were with Campbells. I guess if I had been through all poor old 4th great-grandfather Bartlett Fitzgerald had been through, I would be cantankerous, too. Growing old is hard enough without putting up with the chronic results of old wounds. And then, too, there is the established fact that the Campbells, in general, enjoyed feuding with almost everyone.

One family tradition says that one night a member of Bartlett's family was very sick and old Bartlett left the cabin to get a doctor. It had been raining heavily and the Tye River was swollen. Bartlett drowned crossing the river at the spot where the North Fork and the South Fork meet. A sad end for an old man who had lived a hard life. I am guessing Bartlett died somewhere around 1835.