

Revolutionary War Record of Bartlett Hawkins Fitzgerald

By L. T. "Buck" Harris



If you can trace your Fitzgerald/Gerrald/Jarrell heritage back to Amherst or Nelson County, Virginia, it is more than likely you can trace your heritage to either Bartlett Hawkins Fitzgerald, or, to brother Benjamin Hawkins Fitzgerald.

By his own affidavit, Bartlett was a native of Orange County, Virginia; born there in 1759. His brother Benjamin indicated he was born there in 1761. Both brothers served in the Revolutionary War with distinction. There exists another "Hawkins Fitzgerald," a Joseph Hawkins Fitzgerald, born in Amherst County in 1722, and died in Ripley, Indiana, in 1854. According to his war record, in the war of 1812, Joseph came from Amherst to Staunton in 1792, and joined the military. He eventually wound up in Shelby County, Kentucky, where he married Ketura Parkhurst, from New Jersey had 13 children and moved to and settled in Ripley, Indiana, the location of his descendants today. Although Joseph may somehow be related to Bartlett

and Benjamin, such connection cannot be confirmed as the parents have not been identified.

Bartlett, at the early age of 18, joined the Continental Army in the summer of 1777, at Fredericksburg, Virginia, under a Captain Barrett. He used the surname Hawkins throughout his military career and when discharged on May 1, 1782. He was discharged as a Private from the 3rd Regiment of Light Dragoons, Continental Line of the United States. Although he applied for and received an "invalid" pension (disabled due to wounds of service connected) on December 5, 1786, as Bartlett Hawkins, his marriage bond dated the 3rd day of February 1785, specified Bartlett Fitzjerall. Signing several land deeds in Albemarle County in the late 1780's, he used the name Bartlett Hawkins Alias: Fitzgerald. Not until December 27, 1904, was his name officially changed to Bartlett H. Fitzgerald, according to his military pension records. Did both Bartlett and Benjamin merely use the Hawkins nomenclature during their military service and then return to the "Fitzgerald Name?" I leave this subject with you to ponder.

Now back to Bartlett's military career. Bartlett remained in Fredericksburg with Capt. Barrett's outfit until the spring of 1778. Then the company marched to the north by way of Alexandria, Baltimore, and Philadelphia to Hackensack, New Jersey, where his company joined the regiment of Col. George Baylor. Reference the Baylor Massacre, by Edward O. Mills of New York City, published by K-S Publishers, Saddle River, New Jersey. Quote in part:

"Colonel George Baylor was only 26 years old in the summer of 1778. He had no military experience other than his short service as an aide to General Washington before he was given command of a regiment. As his second in command, Washington assigned Major Alexander Clough, a seasoned soldier who was one of Washington's intelligence officers. The regiment, the 3rd Light Dragoons, the 3rd Continental Dragoons, or Lady Washington's Guards, was assigned light duties; reconnaissance and escort. It was lightly armed. The men carried sabers and there were a few pistols, but no muskets at this early date.

September of 1778, Dragoons were stationed at New Bridge where Maj. Clough was instructed by Col. Baylor to set up a point to question any and all going into New York City and recruit spies to gather information in New York. The area between the Hackensack River and the Hudson River was selected since it offered the opportunity of keeping both flanks covered by a river.

Five thousand Red Coat troops under Cornwallis were sent from New York on the 22nd. They took up entrenched positions from New Bridge (River Edge) to Liberty Poke (Englewood) and began sending out foraging parties.

On September 27, Col. Baylor moved his outfit to Haringtown where he felt he could better watch the British. He took quarters with Clough in the home of Cornelius Haring, a known Tory, while his men with their mounts were quartered in six buildings and barns along the road. He posted a guard at the bridge across the Hackensack and sent out a small patrol, but posted no sentries to the west. He allowed his men to remove the saddles from their mounts and to undress; hardly the sort of security measures to take in enemy territory. The son of the farmer also warned Col. Baylor of the proximity of the British, but Baylor paid no further heed.

General Gray ordered his light infantry to attack from two sides and Maj. John Maitlard and six companies to continue along the road to kill or capture the entire patrol stationed at the bridge. At 2:00 a.m. the attack was launched. The cry of "kill him, kill him" and "skiver him" went up as the light infantry surrounded the barns and went to work. A few shots were fired from the pistols and a feeble defense with sabers was made. Some of the Dragoons attempted to hide under the hay in the barns but were bayoneted and bayoneted until the blood was said to have run through the floorboards and collected in puddles on the ground below. Some men were taken prisoners, some escaped. Many were wounded, some as many as sixteen times. Accounts indicate that about fifteen were killed on the spot and some died later. The British clubbed their prisoners and bayoneted them but few of the wounds were fatal." Unquote.

Quoting in part now from Bartlett's military pension: "He was attached to this company when the regiment was surprised in the barn at Herrington by Gen. Gray's corps of the British Army. He there received 18 stabs with the bayonet, with such wounds he was closely confined for about five weeks. In February or March of 1779, he joined the regiment of his company at Frederick Town, Maryland. They marched to Fredericksburg, Virginia when the effects of his wounds again for a time disabled him. He obtained a furlough to go to his friends in Orange County where he continued until he was once again able to march. (Note: he stayed with friends, not family, while recuperating from his wounds). Col. Baylor and Maj. Clough were backed into the chimney of the farmhouse in which they were billeted and eventually cut down with bayonets. Clough died of wounds several days later and Baylor died two years later.

The following October (1779), Bartlett marched to the south and joined his company at Providence in South Carolina in November of 1779. The regiment was then under Col. William Washington. He was with his company at the Battle of Cowpens in January 1780 and during Gen. Green's retreat through North Carolina into Virginia when pursued by Cornwallis and at the Battle of Gilford in March 1780, and where Capt. Barrett was wounded. (Remember, Bartlett joined with Capt. Barrett at Fredericksburg in the summer of 1777). A Capt. Swan took command of the company. He was at the Battle of Eutaw in September 1781 and in many skirmishes during 1780 and 1781, in one of which about the high hills of Santee he was wounded in the foot by a musket shot which disabled him for a short time. He was discharged at Camp Bakins (Bacon's) Bridge near Dorchester, South Carolina on May 1, 1782". Unquote.

Other reference to Bartlett's military career:

April 18, 1782. Camp near Bacon's Bridge in South Carolina, Nath Greene certifies that Maj. Call of the 3rd Regiment Dragoons having certified that Bartlett Hawkins is incapable of discharging his duty from the wounds he had received, he is hereby discharged April 27, 1782. Ambrose Gordon, Lieutenant and Paymaster of the 3rd Regiment Light Dragoons, certifies Bartlett Hawkins was discharged on April 18, 1782 and his wages remain due since December 12, 1779. March 26, 1784, Bartlett Hawkins, soldier of cavalry, settled his depreciation, 67.10 lb. (Had not been paid for five years).

If one had access to the World Wide Web, by searching "Battle of Cowpens" will give you the history of Dragoons in South Carolina (Bartlett's outfit).

On November 12, 1833, a statement was made by William Massie of Massies Mill, Virginia, in support of Bartlett's compassionate need for a government pension, stated Quote: "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 expect for the charity of neighbors. He is literally covered with large scars from his knees to neck."

A statement in this partition by a Dr. W. Foushee in 1810, states: "The person within mentioned has scars, none of which appear to have been very dangerous or injurious except one in the abdomen, said to be from a bayonet, and that in any extraordinary exertion the bowels force out the teguments to a great size. This may be, as there appears a sufficient injury done that parts to admit to this occasional rupture. The protrusion being at present, am obliged to that the man's word that it actually does happen." This Dr. Foushee must have been a military doctor.

George Hight, born in King and Queen County in 1755, moved to Albemarle County at eight years old, thence to Amherst, enlisted under Capt. Gilmore of Botetourt County to go against the Indians and then enlisted in Col. Baylor's Regiment with Maj. Clough and Col. William Washington, Maj. Call and Bartlett Hawkins. Extracted from the original court records of August County 1745-1800, Virginia Militia in the Revolutionary War, Part I, page 482, and Part II, page 114. After the surrender of Cornwallis, he was discharged in South Carolina in the fall of 1782. Bartlett Fitzgerald, a comrade certifies that in Gray's surprise attack in Hackensack, New Jersey, Hight was cut down and left as dead. This is the same George Hight that was given a land grant on the west side of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Rockbridge County and the same George Hight that donated land for the construction of Haines Chapel and Cemetery in Rockbridge County. It is rumored that George Hight and Bartlett Fitzgerald were buddies and no wonder, as both men served together for many years and suffered mightily from the hands of the enemy. To walk from Orange County, Virginia to Providence, South Carolina and back, with one's guts protruding and

battle, in times, hand to hand, would require the fortitude of a mule. One must admire such men and praise them for their efforts.

In September 1796, the state of Virginia issued a land warrant LO4705 for 134 acres of land to Bartlett that was situated on the North Fork of the Tye River, and joining or adjacent to the Tye River Proper.

Bartlett married Mary Maskey Coleman, daughter of James and Elizabeth Coleman in Albemarle County on February 3, 1785. A Samuel Coleman signed the marriage bond as the father of Maskey. However, this is in error as she had a brother named Samuel as well and a grandfather named Samuel Coleman, and it is assumed that one of these signed the marriage bond. In James Coleman's will, ordered to record in June 1797, he listed his heirs and Maskey Jarral, a daughter, was listed. However, even at this point, Bartlett's name was not mentioned as if the relationship had gone sour at this point. (See Will Book #3, page 323), Albemarle County. Shortly after Maskey and Bartlett were married, they purchased two major pieces of property in Albemarle; one from James Coleman for pennies, and the other with the support of the Colemans at minimum cost, both in the neighborhood of 160 acres each. Yet, by 1833, Bartlett Hawkins Fitzgerald was a pauper. Bartlett died on July 3, 1836 and Maskey in 1865. Their final resting place is unknown but the search goes on. No doubt, both are buried in a private cemetery somewhere on the North Fork of the Tye River.

Bartlett may have had a marriage previous to Maskey or, son John Clarkson was born prior to their marriage. John Clarkson was born in 1782 (marriage was in 1785). At a court held in Nelson County on the 22nd of May, 1854, it is documented: "Satisfactory evidence was adduced in court to prove that Samuel Fitzgerald, Benjamin Fitzgerald, Mary Forbes, John Fitzgerald, Elizabeth Hatter, and Judith Campbell are the only surviving children and heirs at law in fee of Bartlett Hawkins alias: Fitzgerald, who was a Revolutionary War soldier in the United States Service." You will see that son James Fitzgerald, born in 1788, is not listed. Was he deceased by 1854? At this time, we have not been able to prove his death date.

It has been my privilege to visit inside Bartlett's family and I have come away completely fulfilled; excited and impressed. My connection to this Fitzgerald family is through the marriage of Bartlett and Maskey's daughter, Judith, who married my great-great uncle, James Campbell, Jr. on December 31, 1823. Unfortunately, James, Jr., and Judith were not blessed with children. However, some will remember that they did raise Walter D. Snead, son of Mary Snead and "Big" John Campbell. Both were working for the Campbells when Walter D. was born.

I would hope that other members of this Fitzgerald family would take up the effort and continue the research into the history of other members of this Fitzgerald family such as John Clarkson, Alfred McElroy, William Davidson, Milton Hitt, Henry Ruffner, and other members.

Lynn's Note: Although Bartlett's grave site is not documented, an earlier interview by Preacher Billy Morris with Teressie Coffey in her 98th year, mentioned that perhaps he is buried in the Fitzgerald family cemetery on the North Fork that contains the graves of his descendants. Readable tombstones include Bartlett's grandson, Reuben Pendleton Fitzgerald and his son Marshall Hill Fitzgerald. Perhaps, in graves marked with plain fieldstones, are Reuben's father Robert Woodson Fitzgerald and Robert's father, Bartlett Hawkins Fitzgerald. Many mistakenly think Bartlett is buried in the Haines Chapel Cemetery because of a memorial stone placed there. Once again, we may never know the exact location of Bartlett's grave but there is a strong possibility he lays sleeping along the Tye River with members of his family.



Reuben Pendleton Fitzgerald



Amelia Hatter Campbell Fitzgerald



A view of the mountainside Fitzgerald Cemetery on the North Fork



Marshall Hill and Cora Bell Fitzgerald Fitzgerald



Ann Eliza Fitzgerald



Henry E. Fitzgerald

Two other readable graves are in the Fitzgerald cemetery; Henry Elverson was only thirty years old when he died and Ann Eliza was a young twenty. Kris Gembara has done research on them and I am including her findings on how they fit into Bartlett's family below. Many thanks, Kris!

Henry Elverson Fitzgerald – May 1, 1880 – August 10, 1910

s/o Cyrus M. Fitzgerald and Rebecca Jane Hatter Fitzgerald

s/o Henry R. Fitzgerald and Sophia B. Campbell Fitzgerald

s/o William Davidson Fitzgerald and Sarah Fitzgerald

Married June 3, 1900

Georgia A. Fitzgerald – December 13, 1881 – December 27, 1960 (Thorn Rose Cem. Staunton)

d/o Daniel Brown Fitzgerald and Ellen J. Carr

Note: Georgia A. Fitzgerald is also noted as Georgianna or Ana

Ann Eliza "Ana" Fitzgerald – July 21, 1881 – August 4, 1901

d/o Ellis Robert Fitzgerald (1857-1942) and Sally Henry Fitzgerald (1860-1934)

s/o Rueben Pendelton (1829-1916) and Amelia Campbell Fitzgerald

s/o Robert Woodson (c. 1807-1886) and Mary Carr Fitzgerald

s/o John Clarkson (1782-1877) and Nancy Carr Fitzgerald

s/o Bartlett Hawkins and Maskey Coleman Fitzgerald

The old graveyard sits high on a ridge above the property where the Fitzgerald families made their home. The gently sloping land surrounding it had three huge rockpiles located at the head of the graves and a large rock wall climbing the ridge just south of it.

The last two generations of the same family that lived on the property before it was sold to Billy Morris was Mitchell Wayne and his wife Ella Fitzgerald Fitzgerald and their daughter, Lois Alma. Mitchell and his wife Ella are buried in Jonesboro Cemetery and Lois Alma and her husband, Wilson Elwood Fitzgerald are buried in Evington, Virginia.



The large rockpiles at the head of the Fitzgerald Cemetery

Six generations of Fitzgeralds who lived on the North Fork

Bartlett Hawkins Fitzgerald: b. 1759 in Orange Co. - d. July 3, 1836 in Nelson Co.

Wife, Mary Maskey Coleman Fitzgerald: b. around 1760 – d. 1865 - married Feb. 3, 1785 in Fredericksburg Parish, Albemarle Co. (possibly buried Fitzgerald cemetery on N. Fork)

Robert Woodson Fitzgerald: (son of Bartlett) b. 1782 in Amherst Co. – d. June 7, 1886 in Nelson Co.

Wife, Mary “Polly” Carr Fitzgerald: b. 1795 – d. Mar. 1830 (possibly buried in Fitzgerald cemetery on N. Fork)

Reuben Pendleton Fitzgerald: (son of Robt. Woodson) b. Aug. 16, 1820 – d. Mar. 30, 1916

Wife, Amelia Hatter Campbell Fitzgerald: b. June 26, 1831 – d. Dec. 14, 1909
married on May 11, 1852. (both buried Fitzgerald cemetery on N. Fork)

Marshall Hill Fitzgerald: (son of Reuben) b. Apr. 29, 1875 – d. Apr. 19, 1957

Wife, Cora Bell Fitzgerald Fitzgerald: b. 1803 - d. 1964 (both buried Fitzgerald cemetery)

Mitchell Wayne Fitzgerald: (son of Marshall) b. Jul. 10, 1902 – d. Feb. 19, 1986

Wife, Ella Fitzgerald Fitzgerald: b. 1909 – d. 1978 (both buried at Jonesboro)

Lois Alma Fitzgerald Fitzgerald: (dau. of Mitchell) b. April 29, 1929 - d. Jan. 24, 2013

Husband, Wilson Elwood Fitzgerald: b. Sep. 24, 1927 – d. Oct. 11, 2001