

### Lost Creek Austin Cemetery - General Information

<http://www.danielhaston.com/places/cemeteries/austin/austin%2Dcem%2Dinfo.htm>

<http://www.danielhaston.com/index.htm>

*The Heritage of Daniel Haston & Austin family*

John Austin moved into Tennessee and located a plantation in Hickory Valley around 1807 or 1808. John's first recorded property tax occurred in 1811. John's brother, Nathaniel Austin, moved into Tennessee sometime prior to 1817. Nathaniel paid taxes on 175 acres in 1817 and, through the next few years, accumulated 1200 acres in an area known as Lost Creek, which is located approximately seven miles southeast of the city of Sparta, Tennessee.

A cemetery for the John and Nathaniel Austin families was established and located on the Nathaniel Austin plantation on a knoll, approximately 150 yards west of the plantation home of Nathaniel. The first family member buried in the cemetery was probably Rachael / Rachel Denny, first wife of John Austin. Rachel was believed to have died in 1818. In 1823, Jackson Austin, 5-years-old son of Nathaniel Austin, was the first documented family member to be buried in the cemetery. The last family member to be buried in the cemetery was James Frazier, son of Susan Austin and grandson of Nathaniel. James was buried in 1916.

Eleven-years-old Clifford Holman was the last person to be buried in the cemetery. He was of no relation to the Austins, but was living on the remaining acreage of the plantation at the time of his accidental death in 1939. Clifford's parents were given permission to bury their son on the grounds.

Perhaps the most tragic time for the Austin family was the loss of three of Nathaniel Glenn Austin's children within a thirteen-month time period. Nathaniel Glenn was the last and youngest son of Nathaniel Austin. Four-years-old Nathan was buried on July 7, 1854, followed by 6-months-old Susan on September 7, 1854. On August 27, 1855, another daughter, 3-year-old Isabelle, was buried in the family cemetery. A typhoid epidemic devastated the population in the area during this time frame, but it is not known whether or not these children died of this disease.

Upon his death, Nathaniel Austin willed the remaining plantation property to his daughters, Susan Frazier and Elizabeth Austin (who never married). His will also stipulated that his grandson, James Frazier and wife Catherine, remain and manage the property and that the plantation was to support both his daughters and the James Frazier family.

On April 18, 1888, Susan and Elizabeth conveyed the title for the one acre cemetery tract to a committee of Austins for the perpetuation of the cemetery "to be used forever as a family grave yard." Susan Frazier died in 1889. It is assumed that Elizabeth Austin willed the remaining plantation property to her nephew, James Frazier, upon her death in 1916, since he was living there at the time. Since James had no heirs, he must have

willed the property to another Austin line upon his death in 1916, if indeed he was the owner. The plantation, with the exception of the cemetery, was sold out of the Austin family in 1924.

The Lost Creek Austin Cemetery Association was formed in 1964 by a group of Austin descendants in order to preserve the cemetery. The State of Tennessee granted the association a charter to operate as a perpetual and nonprofit association on August 16, 1978. On August 21, 1978, a trust fund was set up at the First National Bank of Sparta, Tennessee to be used solely for the maintenance and beautification of the Austin cemetery. The fund is administered by the executive committee of the association. An annual reunion, at the cemetery, and business meetings, conducted at the Lost Creek Methodist Church, are held on the last Sundays in September. The business meetings are for election of officers, approval of maintenance costs for the cemetery, and any other association business.

Recognition must be given to the late Bess Austin Machtley, who was the prime mover in 1964 to restore the cemetery, and in forming the association. Only through her drive and dedication to the preservation of the Austin heritage would the cemetery have been saved.

Ralph Austin  
October 1991

Annual Austin Family Reunion - Last Sunday in September

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