

Bayard, Elizabeth Cornell ^[1]

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By Eva Burbank Murphy, 1979

1761/62–17 Jan. 1854

Elizabeth Cornell Bayard, the plaintiff in the North Carolina Superior Court case *Bayard v. Singleton* ^[2] (1787), was the daughter of Samuel Cornell ^[3] (1731–81) and Susannah Mabson (1736/37–10 Feb. 1778). The Cornell family lived in New Bern, where Samuel Cornell was a member of Christ Church. After 1777, however, most of the family resided in Flushing, N.Y. The family included four other daughters: Susannah, who married Captain Henry Chad (or Chads) in 1783; Sarah (1761–2 June 1803), who married Matthew Clarkson on 14 Feb. 1792; Hannah (d. 1818), who married New Yorker Herman LeRoy on 19 Oct. 1786 at William Bayard's house; and Mary (d. 1813), who married Isaac Edwards ^[4], Governor William Tryon ^[5]'s secretary and aide-de-camp. In 1783, Elizabeth married William Bayard, Jr. (1761–18 Sept. 1826), a New York merchant and Herman LeRoy's business partner. Elizabeth died at the age of ninety-two in Albany, N.Y., at the home of one of her sons-in-law, Stephen Van Rensselaer. It was at the Bayards' home in New York City that Alexander Hamilton died, on 12 July 1804.

The court case involving the Bayards concerned the property of Loyalist Samuel Cornell. Cornell transferred a share of the property to his daughter Elizabeth when in December 1777 he refused to take the oath of allegiance to the state. Cornell then removed his family to New York. By an act of the legislature passed in 1779 and considered retroactive to 1776, all of his property was confiscated. Elizabeth's portion was acquired by Spyres Singleton. She filed suit against him in November 1784, but it was three years before the case came to trial. In 1787 the court upheld the Confiscation Acts of 1779 and 1785 and awarded the property to the defendant.

The children of Elizabeth and William Bayard numbered seven. Catharine (1786–1813) married Duncan P. Campbell. Susan (1787–11 Oct. 1814) married Benjamin Woolsey Rogers on 10 Dec. 1807. William (1788–9 Mar. 1875) married Catharine Hammond in 1812. Maria (1789–23 Oct. 1875) married Duncan P. Campbell, her brother-in-law, in 1817. Justine (b. 1793) married Joseph Blackwell in 1811. Robert (b. 1797) married Elizabeth McEvers in 1820. On 2 Jan. 1817, Harriet Elizabeth (12 Feb. 1799–19 July 1875) married General Stephen Van Rensselaer, eldest son of Stephen Van Rensselaer (the last Patroon) and Margaret Schuyler.

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Image Sources:

Bayard vs. Singleton NCMarker. Photo courtesy of the North Carolina Archives & History. Available from https://www.ncdcr.gov/about/history/division-historical-resources/nc-highway-historical-marker-program/marker_photo.aspx?sf=a&id=C-20 ^[6] (accessed April 5, 2012).

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