

November 22, 1998

Dear Robert,

After talking to you last night on the phone about the order of birth of CWL's seven known children, I took another look at my "specufactual time line" and attempted to re-align it with my miscellaneous "support stuff," in order to determine whether I might need to "modify and adjust," as we refer to it here in Horry County, in the seemingly ever-changing arena of education. As you are well aware, I can't stand flawed, slipshod research, since there is more than enough of it "out there" already, so I want whatever I leave behind for future generations to be as accurate as I can possibly make it. With all of this in mind, please let me run some ideas by you for your thoughts and suggestions.

First, when you and Tommy pored through the papers and various files at the Fireproof Building in Charleston some thirty years ago, I'm certain that no leaf was left unturned, and that between the two of you, nothing that was there at the time escaped your attention. I am wondering, however, whether we need to see whether someone might have donated any papers or other records since then--material that no one on CWL's "trail" is aware of, or has ever researched? Who knows what may have been added to the files in the past thirty years? There are all sorts of possibilities--family collections on not only the Lawtons, but also the Clarks, Rippons, Winborns, and goodness knows who else. This is why I want to have someone go back through everything down there, and I plan to begin working on that project right away.

Next, in re-reading CWL's will--the "real copy" from the State Archives--I see, of course, what I already knew: "my loving wife, Mary Lawton, executrix... and my loving son, Josiah, my loving brother, Isaac Rippon, and my loving friend, William Maxwell, executors."

Please correct me if I am mistaken, but does it not seem logical to assume from these "appointments" that Josiah was CWL's oldest child--of age in 1757, so born no later than 1736? Is it also not very logical to assume that William, Jr. was not of age at the time, since CWL surely would have named him an executor as well, had William, Jr. been of age? I'm a "groper" in this realm of research, so please guide me, for I really need assistance.

Then, also in his will, CWL goes on to say toward the end that "...it is my desire...that my sons Josiah and William should take the charge of the parts of my other four children [no daughter Beulah named], whose names are as follows, To Wit, Sarah, Jeremiah, Winborn, and Mary Lawton, until they arrive at the age of Nineteen years or day of marriage, which shall first happen."

Again, please correct me if I am mistaken, but the way I read the above is as follows:

1. CWL named his children in their order of birth.
2. Since CWL appointed him as an executor, Josiah was of age in 1757, so born in 1736 or before.
3. William, Jr. probably was about 20 years old in 1757--not quite of age, but old enough to help "take the charge of the parts of [the] other four children," so born in about 1737.
4. Despite the fact that the year of birth on her headstone is 1739, Sarah was not yet 19 years old in October of 1757, so she was born in 1738 or before, instead of in 1739.
5. Jeremiah, Winborn, and Mary obviously were minors in 1757, all born well after the above three children--as was Joseph, of course, whose exact date of birth we know--October 18, 1753.

I plan to work out a new chronology on CWL, but with the above data, I can see no way that Sarah could have been his oldest child. No matter which way I "do my dates," she comes out being the third of the four known children of CWL and his first wife, Mary Clark--and you know they had a child or two to die young.

Of course, none of this has anything at all to do with our ultimate goal, which is to determine who the parents of CWL might have been, and as I told you last night, my thinking at the moment is as follows:

1. He was born in South Carolina.
- No!* 2. His mother was a Rippon
3. Thomas probably was not his father.
4. He was a direct descendant of Pythagoras, with all of whose "abstrusities" he was infinitely imbued.
5. His birthday was July 23.
6. He drives me crazy.

One last thing--where in England did the Reeve family originate? Do you have any "early information" on this family--like from the mid-1600's to early 1700's?

It's late, so there are all of my "flying leaps into the unknown" for now. I will be eager to hear your responses to same.

*As ever -
Paul*