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Dear Robert:

Thank you very much for your very prompt and kind response to my recent telephone call. I am sorry that I could not be equally prompt in replying to you. Several of my children and grandchildren have been visiting us over Christmas, and the opportunity to write a suitable letter has not presented itself before today.

So that you may know who I am and my relation to our common ancestor, Landgrave Thomas Smith, let me give you this information, briefly:

I am a retired Professor of Medicine, formerly a member of the faculty and Head of the Division of Human Ecology at Cornell University Medical College in New York City, and formerly an Attending Physician at the New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center. History, and especially family history, has been an avocation of mine for a long time. I have pursued it rather actively since I retired.

I am the eldest son of Lawrence Earl Hinkle and Mary Simons Smith. My mother, Mary Simons Smith (b 11/26/1887 at Charleston) was the daughter of John North Smith (b 5/27/1854 at Pendleton, m Margaret Ballantyne Sinkler); he was the son of Josiah Edward Smith (b 12/6/1813 at Columbia, m Elizabeth Meggett Seabrook); he was the son of Dr. Edward Darrell Smith (b 1777 at Charles Town, m Sarah Tucker North); he was the son of Josiah Smith II (b 9/15/1731 at Cainhoy, m Mary Elizabeth Stevens); he was the son of Rev. Josiah Smith (b 12/25/1704 at Charles Town, m Elizabeth Darrell); he was the son of George Smith (b 1674 in England, m Dorothy Archer); and he was the son of Thomas Smith "the first Landgrave Smith" (b 1648 in England, m Barbara Atkins)

I am grateful to you for giving me more information about the convoluted relation between the Smiths and the Atkinses at Chard. I have viewed this rather as I think you do. Landgrave Thomas Smith's first wife was Barbara Atkins, born ca. 1650. The woman who came to Carolina with Thomas Smith was "Joan" Atkins, the mother of Aaron Atkins Jr. By the account of Aaron Jr. Thomas Smith was his "brother in law". I take this to mean that Aaron Jr. regarded Barbara as his "sister". But Barbara, as you say, is not listed among the children of Aaron Atkins and "Joane" in the Baptismal records of Chard. This suggests that Barbara was Aaron Jr.'s half-sister, as you say also -- in short, that she was the daughter of Aaron Sr by a previous marriage. Aaron Atkins Senior appears to have been a widower with a daughter named "Barbara" who married "Joane" as a second wife. Since Barbara is said to have been born about 1650 and Aaron Jr. is known to have been baptized in 1656, we can guess that the marriage of Aaron Atkins and "Joane" took place about 1655.

But who was "Joane", and what was her relation to Thomas Smith? She was, I believe, a widow who married Aaron Atkins after her first husband, ---- Smith, the father of Thomas Smith, died about 1652. She was, then, the mother of the First Landgrave, who seems to have been her first and only Smith child. Bearing in mind that women of that time and place usually married at about the age of twenty and usually had their first children within two years after they married, we can guess that Joanne was born about 1625. We do not know her surname, where she was born, or where she was married, but we can guess that she was born and married at Chard or somewhere nearby, since both the Smith whom she married first and the Atkins whom she married second were from families that lived in Chard and the parishes nearby.

And who was ---- Smith, the father of our Thomas Smith? I think that we can reasonably guess that he was about five years older than his wife, and that he was born about 1620. Since his first and only child was born in 1648 and his widow married again about 1655, we can guess also that he died at some time around 1650-1652. It seems quite possible that ---- Smith was a merchant, a shipowner, and a seafaring man like his forebears and his relatives. And since his son, the First Landgrave, and his grandson the second Landgrave, dissented strongly from the Church of England, and since the contemporary Smiths in the parishes around Chard were strong supporters of the Puritan and Parliamentary cause, we can guess that ---- Smith was a supporter of the Parliamentary cause also. He died in the period when the Commonwealth was being established, when Cromwell was leading armies against the Irish and then the Scots, and when the English Navy was becoming involved in the first Dutch War. English commercial voyages to America, to the Caribbean, and to the Far East were continuing at the same time. All of this suggests that this young man may have died quite far away from Chard, in some place and under some circumstances such that his death would not be recorded in England, and no will would be found there.

If this is in general what what happened it could explain much. It could explain how Thomas Smith, fatherless, may have grown up in an Atkins household in Chard, as family tradition has held. It could explain how Barbara Atkins, who grew up in the same household with him and may have been called his "sister", was not actually a blood relative. And this would make the marriage of Thomas and Barbara credible. The Church of England in the middle of the seventeenth century would accede to marriages between first cousins, but hardly to a marriage of half-siblings aged sixteen and fourteen, even though the young lady was pregnant at the time, as Barbara probably was. To put the best face on it, teen-agers in that day, like teen-agers today, were liable to become involved in love affairs and unexpected pregnancies.

But what was the first name of ---- Smith, the father of Thomas? As you have pointed out, Arthur M. Smith has proposed that the father of our Landgrave was one John Smith, a son of Sir Nicholas Smith of Larkbeare, in central Devon. But I do not find this at all convincing. Several years ago when I was at the Library of Congress I obtained copies of the relevant parts of Arthur Smith's book, and also of the delightful essay of Compton Reade. I have studied both rather carefully, and I find that Arthur Smith's evidence leaves a lot to be desired. Like many Victorian English gentlemen, he had an ignorance of American history and geography that was abysmal. He confused

Charles Town Massachusetts with Charles Towne South Carolina; he confused the Massachusetts Smiths with the South Carolina Smiths; he clearly did not know when Carolina was founded; and he did not seem to know anything about our Landgrave beyond the fact that he was Governor of Carolina in 1694. His information about the Landgrave appears to have been derived from Mrs. Poyas's confessions, which were apparently passed on to him by E. Lowndes Rhett. He suggests that the first Duke of Albemarle might have helped the Landgrave receive his appointment as Governor when the appointment was made some twenty years after the Duke had died. And quite beyond that, he presents no evidence at all concerning Sir Nicholas's son "John" beyond a statement that he was said to have been alive in 1666. If "John" did exist and if had a son (for which we have no evidence) and if this son was our Thomas, then John would have been thirty-seven years old when Thomas was born in 1648 -- quite old for an Englishman of that time to be having a first and only son. More important, if John was indeed alive in 1666, and if he were Thomas's father, this would fly in the face of all of the evidence that we have about when the father of Thomas Smith died, and about his son's relation to Joane and Barbara Atkins.

Admittedly, if one does not accept Arthur Smith's statements, one has to conjecture about just who the immediate forebears of Thomas Smith may have been. My own conjectures have lead me to guess that Thomas was a descendant of Thomas Smithe of Burridge, the fourth son of John Smithe "of Borage", merchant of Exeter, who lived from ca 1510 to ca 1560.

It is quite credible that Thomas Smith, the first Landgrave, was directly descended from this John Smithe "of Borage" and his wife Alice Muttleberrie. The "documentary evidence" for this (if you wish to call it that) is the Coat of Arms of that Thomas Smith used on his signet ring and on his silverware, which is preserved in the Charleston Museum. These are the Arms that were assigned to John Smithe "of Borage" by the Heralds at their visit to Devon in 1620. The assignment was made on the basis of "immemorial use", which means, as I understand it, that John and his forebears had been using them from "time immemorial". Landgrave Thomas Smith's contemporaries in Carolina who had known his family in England -- the Blakes, the Mortons, and William Dunlop, among others -- clearly accepted him for the person he purported to be, and did not question his right to use these arms. His remote ancestry therefore does not seem to be in doubt. But the question remains, who were the Smiths between John Smithe, b. ca 1510, and Thomas the Landgrave, b ca 1648?

John Smithe had six sons. All of them were merchants, primarily of Exeter, who purchased land in the middle of the sixteenth century and aspired to become members of the landed gentry. John himself and five of his sons purchased farms in the parishes around Chard, the ancient seat of the family. George, his fourth son, who became the grandfather of both the Duke of Albemarle and Sir Nicholas Smith, purchased land at "Madford" or "Mudford", in nearby Somerset. The descendants of George Smithe remained Anglican and supported the King in the Civil War. The other sons became Puritans and ardent supporters of the Parliament.

All of the Smiths around Chard were in a position to become involved with the Atkinses, who were a local family engaged in overseas ventures as the

Smiths were. However, only one branch of the Smiths appears to have done so. These were Thomas Smithe (1532 -- 1602) and his sons, who lived at "Borage" in Chardstock -- or "Burrige" as they called it. Thomas Smithe married an Atkins about 1560, just as the future Landgrave did several generations later. And the Smiths in this line named their sons "Thomas" and "George" over the generations, while none of the other branches -- including the Smiths of Madford and at Larkbeare -- did so. Furthermore, the Smiths of Burrige became especially strong Puritans and supporters of Parliament. And they had offspring who lived at about the right time and in the right place to become the forbears of Thomas Smith, the first Landgrave. For all of these reasons I suspect that he was one of their descendants.

I wish that I could say that "this is the Smith who was the great-grandfather of Landgrave Thomas Smith", but I cannot. One who might have been is George Smith, the second son of Thomas Smithe, who was born about 1565; but, unfortunately, Arthur Smith says George "ob s. p." Possibly Arthur was mistaken, but I don't think we can count on it. Until someone uncovers some more records of the Burrige Smiths and the Atkinses of Chard I am afraid that the names of the grandfather and father of our Landgrave will remain hidden. Possibly they will always be hidden, in the mists of the destroyed records and the destroyed lives that were a part of the English Civil War and the overseas ventures that took place in the years of the early Stuarts.

Feeling as I do about Arthur Smith's evidence relating to the First Landgrave's father, I do not wish to put myself forward as a candidate for membership in the Magna Charta Barons on the basis of his pedigree. I do believe that you and I and all of the other descendants of the Landgrave are direct descendants of John Smithe and Alice Muttleberrie, and that we have as much right to Alice's alleged ancestors as she did; but I cannot prove this by evidence that satisfies me. Possibly you have other evidence bearing on this matter that I am not aware of. If you do I shall be greatly indebted to you if you will let me have it. In any case, I am very grateful to you for putting my name forward for this organization..

And, on the other hand, I have no doubt about my qualifications to become a member of the Huguenot Society and the First Families of South Carolina --except, of course, for the fact that I am not actually a South Carolinian! If this is no bar I shall take advantage of your very kind offer to sponsor me for these societies, and will get in touch with them as you have suggested. South Carolina is a great state. It made an immense contribution to the establishment of our nation, and I shall be proud to be associated with it.

With many thanks for your courtesy and consideration,

sincerely,

