

Grimball

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November 30, 1994

The Rev. Dr. Robert E. H. Peeples  
8 Moon Shell Road  
Hilton Head, SC 29928

Dear Reverend Peeples,

I understand from several sources that you are considered "the" expert on the families presented in Annie Elizabeth Miller's Our Family Circle, particularly the Lawton and Smith lines. The Lawton line is the reason I'm writing, but before I get into my questions, let me explain how I fit into the picture. My full name is James Nelson Blain, and my relationship to OFC, to the best of my knowledge, is strictly confined to my marriage to Mariana Maner Coleman, the first child of Mae Taber Maner and Captain James Pagaud Coleman, USN. Of course, our children are "potential future OFC entries", and Mariana is a descendant of the Smith, Jaudon, Robert, Bostick, Maner, and Stafford lines. I have, I suppose, become the *de facto* genealogist for our branch of the family, having adopted computer genealogy as my principal method (supported by printed records, of course).

The problem I'd like your opinion on is this:

My wife is descended from Joseph Lawton, the youngest child of Captain William Lawton, by his third wife. The 1975 edition of OFC, p. 551, shows her to be the widow of Paul Grimball and daughter of Susannah Winborn (Mrs. Thomas Winborn) by a prior marriage. Referring to page 393, I found that this person was identified as Mary Samms, daughter of Susannah Winborn, widow of Thomas Winborn by a former marriage.

"The Lawton Family of Robertville, S.C.", by E. L. Rabinett (paper delivered to the Lawton Family Reunion June 8, 1963, and annotated by yourself, on page III, identifies her as Mary Sams, widow of Paul Grimball and daughter of William Sams and Susannah Harrison. It further identifies her as granddaughter of Bonham Sams & Enstis Blake, and great-granddaughter of Thomas and Mary Bagge Sam.

Your "Tales of Ante Bellum Island Families" (1970), on page 1, identifies her as Mary Sams, daughter of William Sams.

I find all of the foregoing to be relatively consistent, spelling aside, and would consider that, based solely on these three works, Joseph Lawton's mother was Mary Sams, daughter of William Sams and Susannah Harrison. However, the latest work I have addressing this family is Transactions of the Huguenot Society of South Carolina No. 88 (1983), in an article entitled "Jaudons of Carolina" by yourself and Sarah Nichols Pinckney, continued from Transactions No. 87. On page 127, Joseph Lawton, husband of Sarah Robert, is described as the son of Captain William Lawton and his third wife, Mary Stone, widow of Paul Grimball, daughter of John Stone and his wife Susannah Carriere, who was the daughter of immigrant Huguenot Jean Carriere.

Is the 1983 work a correction or a mistake? Comparing it to OFC, it appears that this article addresses the wrong Paul Grimball, the father of the Paul Grimball addressed in both OFC and "The Lawton Family ... ." OFC, on p. 391, says "he married Mary Stoney in England prior to coming to America ... His wife was still living in 1711 ... but was dead by 1720." However, the dates given for Mary Stone and Susannah Carriere would tend to support Mary Stone as stated in the Transactions article, and Mary Stone is further indicated on p. 122 as the 2nd wife of Paul Grimball (Jr.), as opposed to Mary Barnwell (from OFC, p. 393). All I can say is, I'm confused.

By the way, all the materials I cited above were provided me by my mother-in-law, Mae Coleman. As I said before, I only fit into the "Circle" by marriage; however, I do have early SC ancestry. My 4th great-grandfather, Thomas Commander Russell, born in or near Charleston in 1755, enlisted in the First Regiment between 5 and 9 September 1775, and was a Lieutenant in SC under Capt. John Williamson & Col. Charles Cotesworth Pinckney during the Revolution.

I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Jim Blain