



THOMAS D. WARD
PRINCIPAL

SOCASTEE HIGH SCHOOL

HIGHWAY 707, BOX 90
MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA 29577

W. RICHARD GARRETT, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
LARRY C. CECILE, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
JAMES E. NOLAN, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

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Dear Robert,

I have about an hour between tutoring sessions, so I thought I would use the time to answer your letter, which arrived yesterday.

First, thank you for the compliment on my "Commentary." In all, I spent over 100 hours on it, so I naturally want it to be as accurate and complete as possible, as we continue our research on Capt. William Lawton. If you notice any errors in my research, or can think of anything that needs to be added to it, please do not hesitate to let me know.

As for your question about where Capt. William Lawton lived from c. 1735-1744, when he was fathering his first family, I wish I knew. Tommy called last night, and I asked him what he thought, and he said that he did not know. Wouldn't you suppose that CWL lived with the Clarks for at least a little while after his marriage to Mary? My guess is that he would have--either in their home, or perhaps in some sort of temporary dwelling on the Clark land. It seems likely to me that William really did not have a great deal of wealth until 1744, when he bought the Tilly property--or am I mistaken? If he had had money before then, wouldn't he have bought land sooner? So far as I am aware, the only land he ever owned was what he possessed at the time of his death. I wonder how much he paid for the 200 acres from Tilly's estate? Do you know? Also, where did he get the money to buy this land? Like you, I am inclined to believe he might have obtained the money from his father-in-law, Thomas Winborn, but it is also possible that Mary Clark had inherited from her father, and that this inheritance in turn passed on to William when she died. Since William married Mary Winborn shortly after Mary Clark's death, and purchased Tilly's 200 acres in the same period, it's possible that his money could have come from either wife--or both. I also entertain the possibility that William was a pirate, but that's a can of worms, so I will keep this theory on a back burner for the time being.

I believe your question about William Tilly's estate sale can be answered easily: This was the sale of his personal property, not his real estate. Since William bought the 200 acres of land some two weeks before the estate sale, I am inclined to believe that he had some sort of close Tilly connection that enabled him to have an "early advantage" over other potential purchasers. Too, there could have been a Lawton-Grimball connection in

this purchase of Tilly's property: Remember that William bought this land from (among others) Paul Grimball, Mary Stone's husband at that time. I have thus far been unable to establish a specific Lawton-Grimball connection for this early period, but there easily could have been one.

Concerning the identities of the people buried in William's plantation cemetery before 1774, these are the ones that I can think of: (1) Mary Clark, possibly, IF, as Tommy thinks, there was an early Lawton-Tilly connection (2) William and Mary Gibbs Tilly--again, IF there was that Lawton-Tilly connection (3) Definitely Josiah, William, Jr., Jeremiah, Mary Winborn, Thomas Grimball, and Capt. William Lawton (4) Very possibly some as yet unknown children of William and all three of his wives--children who died young, and (5) Possibly that other, older, "loving brother" Isaac Rippon I have been attempting to research. As for who built the wall around the cemetery, and when, the only logical answer I can come up with is that Joseph might have had this done before selling the land to Hanahan, to ensure that the stipulation in the deed was carried out. If I were going to sell land on which my father and "other near kindred" were buried--especially if I were about to move pretty far away--I would definitely build such a wall in order better to rest assured that my people's graves would not be disturbed. Of course, the wall might easily have been built much earlier--when Tilly or William owned the land--but I know of no way to resolve the question. What do you think? Question: How do we KNOW that Mary Clark died before April of 1744, and that she would not have been buried in this cemetery? All I know is that Winborn Lawton, CWL's first child by the second wife, was born in 1745. That's cutting it pretty close, but many men with a "young brood" went looking for a new wife within days after the death of a former wife, especially if the former wife had died in childbirth, leaving a surviving baby behind. I just wish there were some way to find the "missing pages" from that Grimball Journal. Do you suppose they might be among those papers Tommy went through in Savannah?

I am inclined to agree with the late Mrs. Leila Miles that the name RIPPON was spelled originally with one "p," since the place name in England (just a few miles from Snape, by the way) is spelled RIPON. While on the Rippons/Ripons, NO--I have not personally looked at any of the files at the Society, but Mrs. Moore did, and "found nothing of interest to Lawton research," as she put it. Still, these files need to be re-examined, because at the time Mrs. Moore was doing her research, my interest in the Rippons was merely casual--just a vague curiosity about Isaac. Question: Where did you get the data on Edward RIPPIN, the immigrant? I have no knowledge of him, and neither does Tommy. Where did he originate? This information could be of great help to us, especially if he came from Ripon in England. I wish I had asked Mrs. Moore to run off a copy of the Rippon emigration information in that source in which she found Thomas Lawton, but the idea did not occur to me at the time. Perhaps Price can check on this item for us. In the meantime, you, Mrs. Brownlee, and I concur that we MUST resolve the riddle of William's "loving brother Isaac Rippon." Mrs. Brownlee says that she would go no further until she had the answer to this mystery--and

she agrees with me completely that there simply HAD to be another, older Isaac. We're just going to have to find him--somehow.

In response to your question about Hannah Rippon, widow, I do not know the name of her Rippon husband. The only information I have on a Hannah Rippon is as follows: Hannah, a daughter of Abraham Staples, married first John Sealy, and second, Isaac Rippon. Sealy's will (witnessed by CWL) was probated 08/31/1741, recorded 10/15/1741, so Hannah married Isaac Rippon after this date. Now comes the curiosity: According to your information, Hannah Rippon, widow, married on 10/29/1765, someone else, whose name you did not include. Now look at the last paragraph on page 15 of my "Commentary": AN Isaac Rippon witnessed the will of Charles Mitchell on 09/01/1786! Is this--or is this not--proof of my theory that there were two Isaac Rippsons? I shall eagerly await your response. I believe that your question might well have resolved the riddle. What do you think? I just hope that I am not misreading all this information. My mind becomes scrambled at times, with all of these intermarriages among and between families, and so many of the folks' having the same names.

In response to your comment that you did not note an Isaac Rippon's signature on the 1716 petition, I would not expect his signature to be there, since I speculate that Isaac would have been a child in 1716--as would Capt. William Lawton. The Edward Rippon who signed this petition was obviously the father of the Edward Rippon whose will was probated on the same day as CWL's and Josiah's wills; this emigrant Edward was also (I think) the father of my "older Isaac." How do we unscramble all this?

Thank you so much for FINALLY resolving the mystery of where Bess obtained that data on CWL, his father, and his grandfather! That scrap of paper has been bothering me for years. I know that Tommy will be happy to be able to lay that matter to rest.

As for the matter of CWL's age, I agree completely with you--that we must be flexible, in view of the possibility that he could have been as young as 17 or 18 when he signed the will of John Sealy. I still think that he was born before 1710, but I will of course be eager to accept any evidence to the contrary, should it present itself.

As promised, I will forward you a copy of Price's report as soon as it arrives.

It's about time for my next student to arrive for tutoring, so I will close for now. Please give my love to Miss Cora, and stay in touch.

As ever,