

December 21, 1999

Wayne M. Smith
13325 Sherwood Forest Dr.
Silver Spring, MD 20904-1202

Reverend Dr. Robert E. H. Peebles
8 Moon Shell Road
Hilton Head, SC 29928

Dear Dr. Peebles,

I have been doing genealogical research on behalf of my family. It has been expressed by James Blain of Virginia, a generous kindred spirit, that you are the esteemed authority on the Smith family. It has been recommended by him that I contact you for clarifications of the research presented by Annie Elizabeth Miller. I have read the 1957 edition of her text, "Our Family Circle". In the text it is listed that the fifth child of George Savage Smith and Elizabeth Cuttino is Archar Benjamin Smith.

Should it be concluded that these individuals and my ancestor's family group are one in the same, then truth having been discovered, this would be a fine thing. If it is confirmed that these men are not one in the same, then the truth having been discovered, this would also be a fine thing. From our family's perspective, most are content with the knowledge and family history as it stands. I have done this research, without regard to outcome, and recently I have come to the point where I will have to rely on the advice and leads provided by others to continue the search further. For at this point, my leads point to Georgetown, S.C. as the next region of investigation.

Should George Savage Smith, Elizabeth Cuttino and Archar Benjamin Smith, each be one in the same as our Savage Smith, Elizabeth Cuttino and Archer Benjamin Smith, there exists a bit of discrepancy between what we have been told over the years and what has been published. Among the vast number of reasons as to why this exists, this may indicate erroneous information has been shared on one part, or the other, or both, or that these individuals in spite of all the correlations, supporting evidences, and documentation, are not one in the same.

My family is very confident of our relations to Rev. Archer Benjamin Smith, his birth location, the names of his parents, (Savage Smith, and Elizabeth Cuttino), the name of three of his brothers, the name of the business firm of one of his brothers. The confidence is thereafter extended to Archie B.'s and Mary's children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren, and with respect to each of their spouses, their war records, their occupations, their business ventures, their family's interrelations, their residences, and their burial locations. However, we acknowledge that the information on his parents (Savage Smith, and Elizabeth Cuttino), is yet to be fully researched, thus in part the inquiry to you.

To give some perspective, We began research of archived documentation to confirm the Bible Records and the stories of my family. One key lead story, is that our ancestor, the Rev. A.B. Smith named his children according to the tradition of an English Naming System. This in turn would provide leads for confirmation or dismissal based on what was revealed in public registries or authenticated documents.

The first born son was named for his father, the first born daughter was named for his wife's mother, the second born son was named for himself, the third born son was named for his eldest brother, the second born daughter was named for the wife's sister, the fourth born son was named for his next eldest brother, the fifth born son was named for an esteemed friend, the sixth born son was named for an esteemed historical figure, and the seventh born son was named for an esteemed friend.

It has been relayed by our family that Archer and his first wife held to the naming system fairly strictly at first, but obedience to this very British system became less important as the decades passed, and American society changed it's perspective on such a hierarchical system. In Archer's second marriage the order of the system is mostly forgotten, but the naming of the children is with regard and honor for family surnames, esteemed friends, or family members. The aforementioned discrepancy is further apparent in the naming of his first born son, Savage Smith. Who, according to our family stories was named for Archer's father. This son, through out his life, through all records and documentation researched thus far, indicate he goes by no other name and has no middle name. The marriage registry for Archie, among other key data, lists the names of his parents as Savage Smith and Elizabeth Cuttino.

Among possible explanations, it is reasonable that two people could be born in the same town and share the same name. It is even conceivable that they could share the same birth date, however it becomes improbable that the parents would share such similar names, and highly improbable that the siblings would share such a well fitted overlay, in the names and order of eldest to youngest.

Another situation to consider, which I shared with Mr. Blain, is that it seems that the spelling of names is a matter of source, whereby otherwise equally credible sources are apparently in conflict. As you already know, these various vital statistics, records, and so forth were usually recorded by an official Clerk whom recorded names and so forth based on how the particular Clerk believed a name should be spelled. My frustration is that it falls to these nameless Clerks, by whom, are the source of these built in errors of commission. Whereafter, humbly, all researchers are forced to represent the lack of knowledge and assumptions of these clerks, as historical truth. It is absurd that these clerks have been given so much power of credibility, that they would wield over the course of history. What an pathetic Irony!

Given these families are one in the same, then I suspect that an error in auditory-manuscriptive interpretation took place, with regards to Archar / Archer. As for the George Savage Smith / Savage Smith event, I suspect that this wasn't simply clerical misinterpretation, but was a deliberate choice and out of the necessity to provide some sort of distinction. After all, when your father is named George, and your brother is named George, and you've been named George, This is a Joke Looking for a Punchline. Well, most people would seize the opportunity of using the middle name. A most public example of this begs a question, "Which President has the first name Stephen?" The most common response is none, but in truth it is Stephan Grover Cleveland, a.k.a. Grover Cleveland, whereby that family used the middle name, to provide distinction for the son, from his father whom was named Stephan Cleveland.

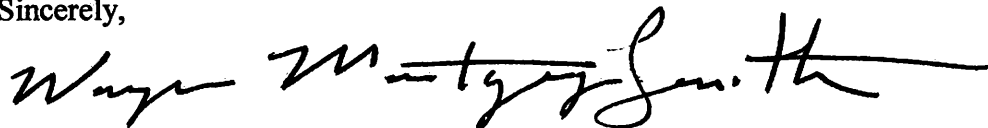
I am looking for a clarification, as to whether it is reasonable to declare these family groups as being one in the same. Perhaps you could direct me toward other published, archival text, or documentation, which may assist in this clarification. Please contact me by the following means with which you are most comfortable.

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Call me collect
0 301 384 7123

Call my cell
0 301 461 3073

Thank You for taking the time to read this inquirey and for your assistance.
Sincerely,



Wayne Montgomery Smith

P.S.

Have A Great Holiday
and Happy New Year!