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Dear Robert:

Following your suggestion in your last letter, I reviewed all of my papers from the SCH&G Mag and elsewhere that relate to the first Landgrave Smith, and I asked my brother North to review his. (He says that he has a transcript of every Ref. to the Landgrave that has appeared in the Magazine.) I reviewed the Index of the Magazine down to 1980, and I had the Hist. Soc. send me a copy of every reference to the Atkins family. I also obtained copies of the references that you have mentioned in your letters. And I reviewed my rather extensive notes on George Monck, who is something of a favorite character of mine.

First, with regard to the Atkinses:

I observe the following in the Atkins wills, as transcribed in SCH&G XXVIII p169 ff:

That Joan Atkins, in her will of 11 July 1684 refers to "my sonne Thomas Smith", "my Two Grand Children Thomas Smith and George Smith" and "my Two Daughters Joanna Atkins and Ellen Atkins". She does not mention any daughter "Barbara"; nor does she mention Mrs. Mary Atkins, the wife of her son Aaron.

That Aaron Atkins, in his will of Sept 17, 1684, refers to "my brother John Atkins" and "my sister Joanna Atkins", but to "my brother in Law Mr. Thomas Smith".

Now if we take the statements in these two wills at their face value, it appears that Thomas Smith was the son of Joan Atkins, and that he was the brother-in-law of of Aaron Atkins. Since Thomas was married to Barbara Atkins, she could not have been his blood relative of any near degree -- certainly not his half-sister. And if Thomas Smith was the Brother-in-law of Aaron Atkins, Barbara must have been Aaron's half-sister, because Joan Atkins could not have been the mother of Barbara as well as Thomas. Joan's failure to mention Barbara as one of her daughters in her own will is consistent with this.

I also observe a feature of the Baptismal records of Chard, as recorded in SCH&G XXX p 255, which Salley has commented upon: That the last four children, Aaron, Richard, Joanna, and a second Richard, born between July 1656 and August 1666, are listed as the children of Aaron and Joane Atkins; but the first two children, Barbara (b 1650), and John, (b 1653) are listed as the children of Aaron Atkins only. This is quite consistent with the statements in the Atkins wills of 1684.

There can be a very simple explanation for this: About 1654-55, Aaron Atkins Senior, a widower with two children, Barbara (about age 4) and John (an infant) married Joane Smith, a widow with a son Thomas who was about the age of eight. Thomas Smith would then have become the step-brother of Barbara Atkins, and no kin to her at all. They would then have grown up together in the same household, and they would have been quite free to marry each other if they wished.

Now I know that terms such as "brother-in-law" and "son" might be used loosely in the seventeenth century, but they could be used quite exactly also, especially in wills. Occam's razor suggests that we should consider that the people who wrote the wills and recorded the baptisms knew what they were talking about and meant what they said. If we do this, we come up with a very simple and, in fact, mundane, solution to our problem: a widower with two young children marries a widow with a young child of her own. This happened with very great frequency, both in England and in the American Colonies, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It was an expected outcome, so to speak. He needed a wife, and she needed a husband. They married, raised their children together in their new household, and, to seal the bargain, as you might say, they had additional children as a joint enterprise. And it usually turned out very well for all concerned.

With regard to the date of birth of Thomas Smith II, the second Landgrave: neither my brother nor I have been able to locate any reference that gives his date of birth as other than as some time between June 1663 and May 1664.

The date of birth of their eldest son has implications for the date of the marriage of Thomas Smith I and Barbara Atkins, the circumstances under which it occurred, and the age of the participants. It implies that Thomas was sixteen or seventeen years old when Thomas II was born, and that Barbara was thirteen or fourteen, and this in turn leads to the guess that Thomas was fifteen or sixteen when they were married, and that Barbara was twelve or thirteen.

Barbara's age at the probable time of their marriage creates less of a problem than Thomas's. It was very rare for girls to marry at that early age, but it did actually occur, and they did actually marry with their parents' evident prior consent. I know of at least two instances, one involving a contemporary girl of Chard, no less. But in these instances, and the others that I have heard of, the man in the case was always in a position to set up a household of his own. Either he was very wealthy, as in the case of the first marriage of Anthony Ashley-Cooper, or he was an older man with an established household. The English, by all accounts, and the Colonials also, were not prepared to have the young couple live with their parents. And Thomas Smith I, at age 16, was clearly not prepared to set up a household of his own. Whatever inheritance he might have hoped to receive from his father when he came of age would have gone to his mother because he was a minor when she was widowed, and it would have fallen into the hands of his stepfather Aaron Atkins when she re-married.

All of which leads one to conjecture that Thomas and Barbara did not marry at their young ages with their parents prior consent, but with their parents' awareness that Barbara was pregnant. At the risk of outraging those

such as o Vice President Quayle who consider out-of-wedlock pregnancy to be scandalous, I will say that the available sociological literature, as I am aware of it, indicates that a significant proportion of brides, past and present, have been pregnant at the time of the wedding, and that many happy marriages have resulted result from this. So I do not think that it is any blot on the escutcheon of our family if Barbara was pregnant at the time of her wedding. I dare say that if the sacrament of marriage had been denied to all of the women among our forebears who were pregnant when they came to the altar the number of bastards in the family be much greater than it is now.

With regard to George Monck:

He was the quintessential professional military man. A rather rough-and-ready man without a great deal of education. The son of a rural knight who left home rather hurriedly at the age of seventeen after a brush with the local under-sheriff and became, for many years, a soldier in one or another of the English units that were serving as mercenaries in the current European wars. Turned out to be a brave, able, reliable and judicious officer, with an uncanny ability to make the right decision at the right time. In the Civil War served both Cromwell and the King, was trusted and liked by both of them, and did not betray the trust of either. Served also as a General-at-Sea along with Robert Blake.

In 1660 Monck, more than any other one man, was responsible for restoring Charles II to the throne. Charles made him the Duke of Albemarle and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with an estate yielding 40,000 *li* a year, making him the Bill Gates of his time. He was undoubtedly the great national hero of the first ten years of the Restoration -- the one who fended off the Dutch in the Second Dutch War, stayed in London during the plague year and managed the place, and later helped to deal with the effects of the Great Fire. When Ashley-Cooper and Hyde organized Charles's colonial reward for the politicians who had helped restore him, they included Monck among the Lords Proprietors of Carolina. If they had left him out they probably would not have received the grant.

So far as I can see there is no evidence that the the new Duke of Albemarle took any interest in Carolina. I am sure that he was glad to be a Proprietor, but he was busy with many other matters, he had no interest in colonial affairs, and he did not need any money from Carolina, even if there had been any to be had. And he died in 1670, fourteen years before George Smith I went to Carolina, and twenty-three years before ^{George} George was made a Landgrave. I know of no evidence that Monck, personally, or his son, had anything to do with the advancement or career of Thomas Smith I in Carolina.

Now I do believe that George Monck, the Duke of Albemarle, was probably a second cousin of the Smith of unknown first name who was the father of Thomas Smith I, the first Landgrave. I think that both of them were great-grandsons of John Smithe "of Borage", a merchant of Exeter, who lived from about 1500 to 1560, married Alice Muttleberrie, and purchased a farm at Thornecombe, near Chard. In my earlier letters I have stated my reasons for believing this. I think that the Duke and the Landgrave's father may have known each other if, as family tradition has held, the Landgrave's father was a seafaring man; but it is quite possible that they did not know each other at all.

I do hope that I have not bored you with all of this detail. And I do trust that you will let me know of any errors, omissions, or inconsistencies you may find in it.

I am sending a copy of this letter to my brother, North Smith Hinkle, who has helped me greatly in matters such as these, and is a far more exacting genealogist than I am.

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "J. Lewis".