

December 28, 1985

Dear Cousin Dr. Peeples:

I hope that 1986 finds you and Miss Cora in good health and that you both have a happy and prosperous new year. Since I last wrote (about this time last year) I have discovered some interesting information about the Platts family which I want to share with you and about which I want your opinions.

First, I spent several days last May in Nagold, a town in the rural district of Calw, in West Germany. Nagold is at the edge of the Black Forest and near both Stuttgart and the old university town of Tübingen, all in Württemberg. Nagold includes in its suburbs Emmingen, where Johann Jacob and Christina Rentz Platz emmigrated from; Pföndorf, where Christina's mother Roller Rentz was born and married; Schietingen, where Johann Jacob Platz was baptized; and Hochdorf, where he grew up. To my delight, both the church in Schietingen and the church in Hochdorf are named Nickolauskapelle--before they became protestant churches, they were St. Nickolaus. Surely that's how the St. Nicholas Lutheran Church in the Saltketchers got its name!

Christina

My request to the archivist in Stuttgart for information on these towns resulted in a response from a family in Emmingen who offered to show my two daughters, my American friend who lives in Nürnberg, and me around. We visited all the churches, were entertained by the Burgermeister of each village, and met some of the Renz family. The Renz family now in Emmingen is not Christina's family however. Interestingly, the Renz family in Germany came to be "four or five hundred years ago when an Italian Renzi Family Circus came to Emmingen. One of the Renzi brothers fell in love with a local girl, married her, and stayed on." The Renz Family Circus is still in Germany, and my American friend has since enjoyed a performance.

The Nagold countryside is lovely and the four villages are charming. All the churches and many of the houses were there in 1750. The church records in Emmingen include a page on which Jacob and Christina's marriage is recorded and all of the children's baptisms are recorded, except those of Johann Jacob, Johannes, and Johann Christopher. Their names are there, however, listed in proper sequence, and my hosts explained that some pastors were "lazy and didn't bother to keep records properly." At the end of the page is written "Jacob and Christina Platz and their 8 children have left for the New World." I attended Pentecost services in the church in Emmingen where Christina was baptized, married, and her children baptized. It was truly a mountain top experience.

BOND

40% COTTON CONTENT

My hosts had requested the archivist in Nagold to trace my lineage which he did and a copy of which I include. It is probably taken from the same source used by the Hiers Genealogy archivist which appears to be the same source for the ships' passenger lists which I consulted. The church record is verification enough for me, however, that this is the right family. By the way, the Nagold archivist thinks the "Blatz" in the Rubicam report for the Hiers Genealogy is a misprint. He says we're "Platz" all the way back! *

Second, I have been investigating the settlement of the Estate of John Platts, Sr. and have three pieces of information for you to check against your Platts records and determine how it fits with other evidence you have.

1. Hannah Platts was the wife of John Coone/Cone.
- ? 2. The George Platts who bought the Platts land was probably a son of John and Sophie's.
3. John's brother Christopher lived to his majority, bought land, and left heirs.

All of the above is documented in the enclosed material.

Third, I am including some correspondence from Mrs. Ralph Scott. On her way to visit me, my mother had car trouble between Edgefield and Clarks Hill and was befriended by the Scotts. Col. Scott (ret.) and his wife were struck by how much my mother looked like a photo of a great aunt of his. It turned out that his mother was a Cone, he was from Brunson, and his wife was interested in family history, so of course I wrote to ask what she knew about Hannah and John Cone or about my husband's ^{not} ~~man~~ great grandmother Harriett Simpson Cone who married Allen Cornelius (Nick) Williams. Her reply is included. Do you think that her John Cone who died in 1824 could be Hannah's widower? Could Hannah have had a child born as early as 1791? I had assumed that Hannah was one of John Platts' 7 females in the 1790 census and ^{one} of Sophie Platts' 5 females between 10 and 16 in the 1800 census, my reasoning being that Catherine wasn't born until after 1790 and that Christina was already married to George Howard by 1800. We'll be interested in hearing your reaction to this speculation.

I will continue my search for earlier Platts' wills and deeds and will continue work on land grants on the Barnwell side of the Saltketcher. My intention is to reconstruct the land holdings on our side of the River such as the Hiers Genealogy folks did on their side and to describe what I believe will turn out to be a "dense web of reiterated kinship" among the first four generations of German/Lutheran settlers.

So far I've found nothing to identify Sophia Platts, but I'm looking at Creech (as you suggested), Varn, and Miley: (1) Varn because I can think of no reason John Varn would post bond for John Platts, Jr. (see enclosed material) unless Platts was Varn's sister's son. The other bondsman was Jacob Mole, probably John Platts, Jr.'s father-in-law. (2) Miley because I can think of no reason John, Sr. and Sophia could possibly have for naming a daughter "Miley" (the Miley family lived up around Midway--east of Bamberg--until after 1790 and in Craven County before that) unless a family connection existed.

John Platts, Jr. is revealing himself as a fascinating character. I have copies of his estate papers and his land transactions in Barnwell County--they are extensive. But I have to put him on hold until I finish up his father's generation as I badly need to get an article on the origins of St. Nicholas Lutheran Church out of all of this!

I hope to visit Beaufort for a long weekend sometime in the next couple of months and would like to come see you and Miss Cora and bring my photographs of Germany for you to see. I also have for you a reprint of a 1773 map of South Carolina by John Cook that shows the Platts homeplace on the Great Salt-Ketcher.

Regards,

Rose-Marie

*Please for give both the paper and the
typewritten, but if I wait until I get
back to my word processor at the office,
I'll never get this off to you. send*

Rose-Marie Williams
112 Woodland Way
Abbeville, South Carolina 29620
Telephone (803) 459-5079 (home) 229-8335 (work)
October 6, 1986

Dear Dr. Peeples:

I need your professional services to certify my eligibility for DAR membership. Several of my friends here in Abbeville are interested in re-establishing the local chapter and want me to join as a charter member. I said I would if (1) you thought Johannes Platz cum John Platts cum John Platts, Sr. a "recognized patriot [who] rendered material aid"; (2) you could verify my being descended from him; and (3) I'd not have to attend meetings!

I have (or am in the process of acquiring) the following:

- my birth certificate documenting that I am the daughter of Sara Carolina Platts Eltzroth
- Mamma's birth certificate documenting that she is the daughter of Carl Shelton Platts
- Granddaddy's ~~birth~~ (or death) certificate documenting that he was the son of David Holbrook Platts
- pages from the Miley Family History documenting that David Holbrook Platts was the son of John J. Platts (enclosed)
- the will of John Platts documenting that John J. Platts was his son (enclosed)
- the warrant for appraisal of "the goods and chattels of the Estate of John Platts, Sr." documenting that John Platts, Jr., the Administrator, was his son (enclosed)

I need for you to establish the services of John Platts, Sr. during the Revolutionary War. I hope you have time to do this before the end of the year. I can fill out the forms if you send me the information ALONG WITH YOUR BILL. Please charge me what you charge everyone else!

And now, on to more important and interesting information:

I have enclosed a copy of the bond John Platts, Jr. and the other heirs made before he distributed the proceeds (thus far) of his father's estate to the heirs. This bond shows that his deceased sister's name was Hannah Cone. I have attached a tentative birth order of John Platts, Sr.'s children. (I agree with you that Sophia was probably not his only wife nor the mother of all of his children, but I have no proof, yet.) I continue to believe that if I can trace whom these children and their children married, I will have a clue to whom John Sr.'s brothers and sisters were married, since I believe that, by and large, the third generation (John's children) married their cousins (John's brothers' and sisters' children). I will send you more when I have it.

By the way, the "Brant Cemetery" is also called "Old St. Nicholas" by my mother's family. Local tradition has it that it is the site of the earliest St. Nicholas Church. I have a copy of a deed from John Platts (Jr.) to St. Nicholas Church for 3 acres on "Cowpen Branch NE and SE and SW by lands of the said John Platts and NW by land of the Estate of Charles Gray" dated 28 August 1844. John's first wife, Susannah, died in April of that year, and her marker appears to be the earliest still standing.

Regards to you and Miss Cora both,

Rose-Marie

Enclosed:

Excerpt from Miley Family History

John Platts, Jr.'s Will

Warrant for Appraisal of John Platts, Sr.'s Estate

Bond among John Platts, Jr. and the other heirs

Draft "Birth Order of the Children of John Platts, Sr."