

FIRST GENERATION

+1 COL. WILLIAM SMITH, ancestor of the "Tangier" Smith family of L.I., b. Newton Bromswold, Northamptonshire, Engl. 2/2/1654/5, d. Manor of St. George, Setauket, L.I. 2/18/1704/5 and bur. with his wife in the "Tangier" Smith cem., son of JOHN SMITH and MARY _____.

Nothing except the record of his baptism 2/15/1654/5 in St. Peter's Church, Newton Bromswold (also that of his bro. John 1/3/1651/2, bur. 4/7/1652, and sis. Elizabeth bap. 6/9/1653) is definitely known about his parents or early life, though Thompson (3) started unauthenticated rumors of court connections which have been copied more or less verbatim by subsequent publications. Recent study of 17th century Northamptonshire records brought to light the will of John Smith, baker of Higham Ferrers near Newton Bromswold, written 8/19/1653 proved 7/27/1661, in which he mentioned wife Elizabeth and "son John of Newton" who had a wife and 2 children then. However no proof was found that this son was the f. of William Smith. The will of William Smith, mayor of Higham Ferrers, who d. 4/15/1661, also mentions a son John, but there is even less evidence here of any relationship to Col. Smith. No other even possibly related records were found except the baptism in St. Mary's Church, Higham Ferrers 6/9/1658 of Rebecca Smith, dau. of John Smith, schoolmaster, and his wife, Mary. Col. Smith, however, did have a sis. or sis.-in-law named Susannah since he recorded that "my sister Susannah Smith" was a god-mother of Mary Smith (1-6).

A possible but unconfirmed hint as to his mo's. family is the statement by Bolton (4) that there was originally a last line on Col. Smith's gravestone, "being grandson of Max Constammet." No authority for this is given, though the presence of a later-obliterated last line was confirmed by one of the Strong family. It was not mentioned in Thompson's earlier work but may have been obliterated by the time he wrote nearly 140 years after Col. Smith's death.

It is also questionable whether this was the correct reading of worn lettering. In his journal (8) now in the possession of the Strong family (see illustration facing this page), Col. Smith mentioned his uncle, William Staines (Staynes), and members of that family lived in Higham Ferrers and nearby Chelveston in the mid-17th century, including a William Staines in Chelveston. No connecting records could be found however.

Col. Smith's journal began with his marriage in Tangier, Africa 11/26/1675 to MARTHA TUNSTALL, bap. Putney, Surrey, Engl. 7/2/1652, d. Manor of St. George, Setauket, L.I. 9/1/1709, dau. of HENRY TUNSTALL, a glazier, and ELIZABETH HUTCHINSON, bur. Putney 1/9/1676/7, who were m. 1648 at St. Mary Abchurch, London, Engl. Col. William Smith and Martha Tunstall had 6 sons and 7 daus.

Col. Smith had apparently joined his uncle William Staines, a merchant, who was one of the first aldermen of the city of Tangier and was later mayor. Col. Smith was also a merchant there and was elected a Common Councilman of Tangier in 1677. In 1679 he was elected alderman, and he was the city's last mayor from 1682 through the evacuation of the city by the British in Oct. 1683. Thompson made the completely

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inaccurate statement that Col. Smith was "governor of Tangier," thus making his other unproved statements also of questionable accuracy. This association with the city of Tangier is the source of the distinguishing title of "Tangier" Smiths later given Col. Smith and his descendants.

The family returned to London in 1683, where Col. Smith engaged in trade while living in Long Acre. In July 1686 Col. Smith, his wife and 3 surviving children (one of whom died on the voyage) set sail from Youghal, co. Cork, Ireland for New York, where they stayed while Col. Smith made land purchases on Little Neck (now Strong's Neck) in the Township of Brookhaven, L.I. In 1689 he took up his permanent residence there on land which is still in the ownership of his descendants, the Strongs. On 10/9/1693 a tract of land, bounded roughly by Carman's River and Forge River (then called Connecticut River and Mastic River respectively) between Middle Country Road and the Atlantic Ocean, was combined with his previous property to create the Manor of St. George by patent from Gov. Fletcher (see Map and Appendix). All the unpurchased lands between his property and the bounds of Southampton and Southold were later purchased and added to the Manor by another patent from Gov. Fletcher in 1697. A second Manor house was built on Smith's Point, which still exists (though not the original building) as the Manor of St. George Museum on the William Floyd Parkway at Neighborhood Road.

Col. Smith was also active in the Provincial government, being appointed in Mar. 1691 a member of the Provincial Governor's Council and also one of the Commissioners of Oyer and Terminer which tried Leisler and his associates. On establishment of the Supreme Court of the Province in May 1691 he was appointed an Associate Justice and became Chief Justice the following year. He was removed from this position when Lord Bellomont became governor, but was reinstated by the new governor after Lord Bellomont's death in 1701, holding the position till Nov. 1703. He was Acting Governor of the Province in 1701 for a few months following the death of Lord Bellomont. In 1691 he was also appointed a judge of the Prerogative Court for Suffolk Co. and in 1693 he was commissioned commander of the Suffolk Co. militia, giving him his title of colonel. He continued a member of the Council until his death in 1705.

Among the items listed in the inventory of his estate was a coat of arms, still owned by the Strongs. These arms were used subsequently by family members, and were registered with the New England Historic Genealogical Society in 1932, being described as "Silver, a chevron between three griffins' heads coupé sable." No crest is given, but it was described in a letter in 1748 (14) by Margaret (Lloyd) Smith, Col. Smith's gdau.-in-law, as "one griffings head," this one ermine. Neither description lists the commonly used motto, "Semper Fidelis." The origin of the arms, like Col. Smith's family, is unknown, though it is first known to have been described in an MS. in the Harleian Collection in the British Museum.

References: 1 through 15, 19, 80, 95, 201 and 271.

The previous pages are an excerpt from the following text

THE TANGIER SMITH FAMILY:

**DESCENDANTS OF
COLONEL WILLIAM SMITH
OF
THE MANOR OF ST. GEORGE,
LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK**

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