

Wheeling, Wi\n Parish, La.,)
 December 20, 1858. J
 J. J IToopEB, Esq.

Dear Sir: " A few days back I wrote you a letter, in which I promised, as early as possible, to give you a little sketch of my family, my age, and also the little wars that I was engaged in in my younger days. My name is not as common as Smith, but it is to be met with in all the States of this Union, as well as in many parts of Europe. "Whether the name is Norman, Saxon, or German, originally, I do not know. But the name seems to have been derived from the occupation followed by those who bore it, at an early day. Woodward, one who protects the forest. My early ancestors of the name came from England, and settled in Maryland, under George Calverton, Baron of Baltimore. And near Annapolis, my great grandfather, Thomas Woodward, was born, and raised in Maryland. He raised a family of children by a first wife " she died, and he went into Fairfax county, Virginia, and married my great grandmother, Elizabeth Simpson, the descendant of a Scotch family " and Simpson is my middle name. Thomas Woodward and Elizabeth Simpson had one son, and called him Thomas who was my grandfather. The old man returned to Maryland to move his other children to Virginia; he died on his visit to Maryland, and never returned, nor did his Maryland children ever get to Fairfax but some years after their father's death, some of them went to Dinwiddie county, Virginia, and some to North Carolina ; the North Carolina branch of the family has lost one letter in the name " they spell the name with one W, instead of two. I could name many of the older ones of most of the branches of the family, but it would take up too much time, as well as room, for a paper of this sort. My great grandmother remained a widow for some years, when she married a man by the name of Robinson, and raised two sons, William and John, both of whom I have seen, as well as their mother. My mother carried me and my sister to South Carolina when we were small children ; the old lady was then living, and from what I have learned since, she was then about 112 years of age " she died two years after. It has been said that Robinson neglected my grandfather's education, and he was suffered to grow up very much in the way that one of his grandsons has since. At an early age he showed some inclination to become a soldier, and was in the French war, and a part of the time with Gen. Washington, who was then a Major or a Colonel. My grandfather was a Captain in that service, and was a much older man than Gen. Washington, and from what I have been able to learn from Parson Weems and others, the old man was looked upon as a good fighter. He married at an early age, a woman by the name of Jemima Collins, and they had four daughters and two sons, John and William. His wife died while he was in the service. At the close of the French war he was ordered on the frontier of South Carolina, leaving his

cliiKlren m Virginia. W)ile in Sonfli Carolina, he became acquainted

witli my grandmother, who was his second wife. And it is the blood of that grandwother which comses through my veins, that ia early life tempted me to quit what the world terms civilized and christian man.

I will now give you as accurately as I can the true history of that branch of my family. At the very earliest settlement of South Carolina by Europeans, and at the time those tribes of Indians that inhabited the lower parts of the Carolinas and Georgia, viz: the Sowanokas, Uchees, Yemacraws and others, a European, either of French or Spanish origin, by the name of Silves, (I think the name was originally spelled Silvester, but pronounced Silves,) came to Beaufort^ S. C, took an Indian woman for a wife, and raised a family of children. About the time Silves's eldest daughter arrived to womanhood, an Englishman by the name of Thomas Stokes came to the country and turned Indian t'-ader. Stokes took the daughter of Silves for a wife and raised four children by her, two sons and two daughters, and one of them was my grandmoier â€” her name was Elizabeth. She married one John May. The other daughter, whose name I have forgotten? (though I was much better acquainted with her than I was with ray grandmother.) married a man by the name of Joiner.

The two sons were Thomas and Silvester. They were both Whigs in the American Revolution, and in a skirmish with some British and Tories, at the old ridge, not far fiom the line of Edgefield and Lexington Districts, S. C, they were both badly wounded, and escaped at the time, but were necessarily forced, from their wounds, to go to a settlement to have them dressed. They were betrayed and taken prisoners by the British, and if not hanged at the same time with Col. Hayue, they were just before or after.

My grandmother raised three cliildien by John M^iy, two sons and a daughter, when May died. She then married my grandfather, and settled in Fairfield District â€” they raised thi-ee sons and three daugh. ters â€” my father was the oldest of the j'oung set of children. My grandfather, after marr^'ing my grandmother, moved his mother and two half brothers from Virginia to South Carolina. When the Revolution commenced, he raised among the first companies, if not the first that was raised in South Carolina. He was killed on Dutchman's Creek, in a fight with the British and Tories, on the 12th of May, 1779-

My half uncle, Ben. May, took command of his company. My half uncle, John Woodward, raised another company. My father, who was rather young at the commencement of the war to take tlie field, after his father was killed entered tlie service â€” his two own brothers being too young.

As m'Ji.ny of the children and grand children of these men are now living, and know but little of the old stock, I will here give a list of

the names of my father's family that served in the Revolution, and to a man I believe, were at the battle of Eitaw, except my grandfather and two grand uncles, Tom and Sil. Stokes, who were then dead.

My two half uncles, John and William Woodward ; my half uncle, Ben. May (my half uncle, Tom May, was a cripple, and never served.) Now for the son-in-laws, or those that married my aunts. The oldest first: James Nelson, Phillip Raiford, Robert Rabb, James Andrews, Phillip Riley, William Morris, William J. Augustin, Reeves Freeman, and Thomas Woodward, who was the youngest of the crowd, and my father. I have seen many of my grandfather's old company ; they were said to be good fighters. But I have heard the old ones say that my uncle Ben. May and uncle William Woodward were looked on as being the most daring men of that day.

My uncle William Woodward represented Fairfield District in Congress for several years, and the same District has been represented by his son Joseph, since, and it is his son William that represents Sumter county, in the Alabama Legislature. My mother was a Howard ; her father was Nehemiah Howard, a Virginian by birth, and of an English family. My grandmother Howard was Edith Smith, and descended from a Welch family ; it is said her father settled Smithfield, on Neuse River, in Johnson county. North Carolina. My grandmother Howard died in Milledgeville, Ga., very near one hundred years of age. I remember to have seen her mother when I was a small boy ; it was said she was over a hundred years old ; she was then a widow Edmonson. There were nine brothers of the Howard family, and five sisters ; they all lived to be grown and raise a family of children, except three - two uncles, one of whom was killed by a horse, and the other was drowned. My youngest aunt of that family was accidentally burned to death. My mother was the ninth child, and the first of the family that died a natural death. Maj. James Howard, late of Macon county, Alabama, was the next child to my mother, and was the last of the fourteen children to die, which was some two or three years back.

I think I have wrote enough to satisfy you that I have had, and yet have, some relatives, though I seldom see any of them ; the balance I write now will be little things pertaining pretty much to myself.

Not long after the close of the Revolution, my father left Fairfield District, S, C, and went into Union District, and taught school ; several of the Howard family went to the school ; among them was my mother, and the children younger than herself. The school continued for some ten years, and at the close of the school my father gave my grandfather Howard to understand that he wished to marry his daughter Mary. It was objected to by the whole Howard family, except John and Ben. Howard. My father returned to Fairfield, and my grandfather Howard moved to Georgia. My grandfather Woodward

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had a large property in land and negroes for the time in which he

lived, and after his death and the close of the war, the heirs set about a division. There was soon a split between the white and Indian children. My father took a few negroes and left for the Cherokee nation. On his route he called at ni}' grandfather Howard's who had then settled in what is now called Elbert county, Georgia, and within six miles of the head of Savannah River. My father tried a second time to get the consent of my grandfather, and through the influence of the two brothers, John and Ben, the matter was arranged. My father settled on Savannah River, between the mouths of' two creeks, Lightwood Log and Powder Log, and in Elbert county. There had been at a very early day a stockade fort erected at the place by Gen. Perkins and Col. Cleveland " it was at the old Cherokee crossing, when that tribe Avas in the habit of trading to Ninety-Six, (96) or Cambridge, as it is now called. This old work stood near what was known in ray time as Shocklcy's Ferry " the block-houses had been converted into dwelling hauses " in fact, they had been put up first as dwelling houses and picketed in. In one of these houses I was born ,â€¢ an old lady by the name of Black was present " I have made mention of her before. I was born between the 22d of February, 1794, and the 22d of Feb., 1797, but it is impossible for me to know which, as there have been so many conflicting statements about it, for I rely nothing on any record that I have ever seen, and if I am to judge from what I can recollect of my father (who died in March, 1800) and other things, I am satisfied that I will be sixty-five years of age on the 22d February next. I do not claim to be born on that day, because the greatest man that our country ever had happened to be born on that day. All the old ones that I have talked to agree as to the day and month, but many of them differ as to the year. But there is one thing sure, I was born at some time and at some place, and if I don't find some time and place to die at, before a great while, it may be looked ujion as a miracle.