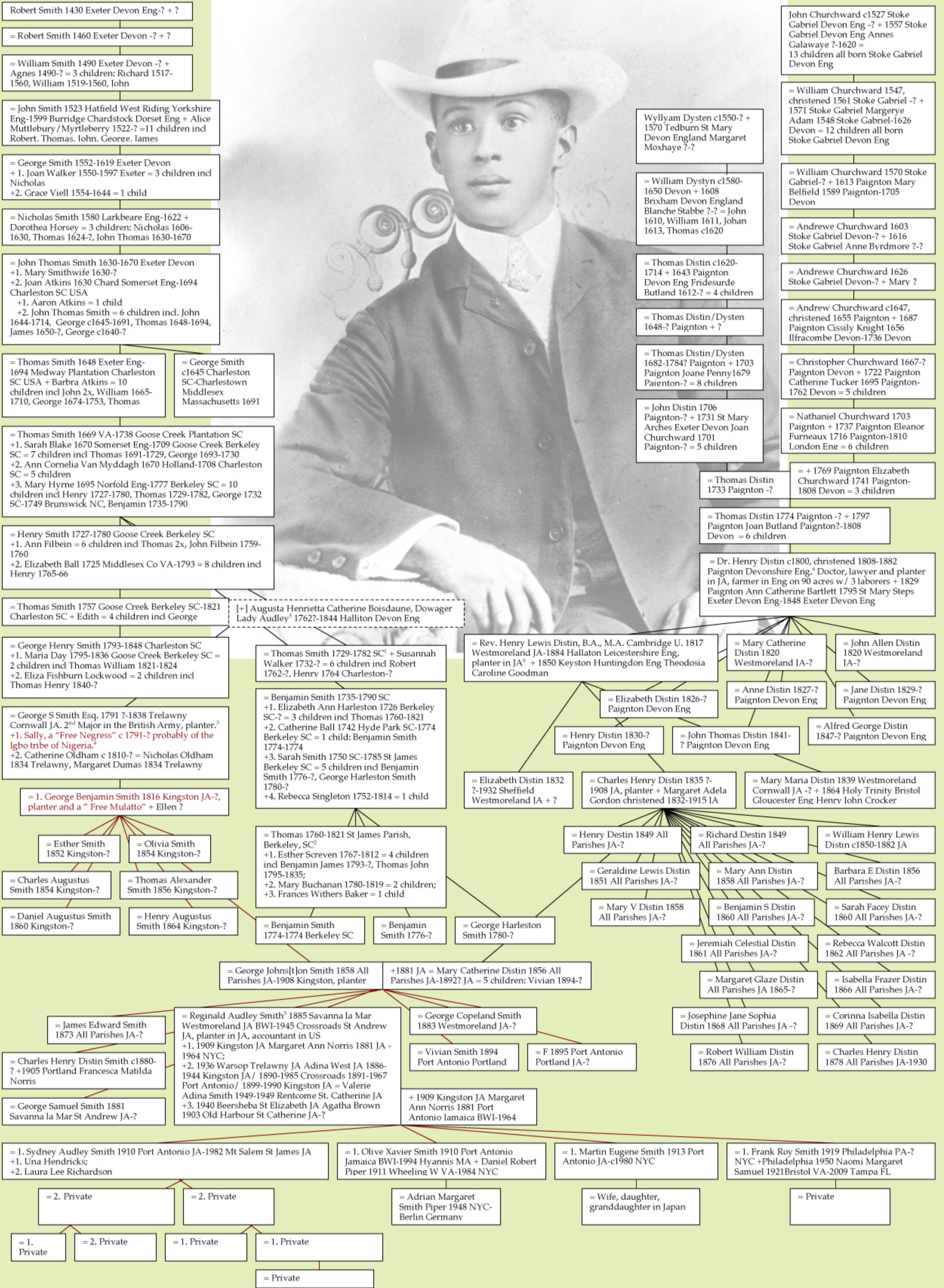


Reginald Audley Smith Family*



*"Smith" is the most common surname in the English language. "George," Reginald Audley Smith's father's name, is a popular chosen name among American slaves who earned their freedom by fighting for the British in the American Revolutionary War under King George III. In 1778 the South Carolina Rangers, which included many freed slaves, formed to fight on the British side. After the War the Rangers were sent to Fort Augusta in Jamaica. Both Jamaica and South Carolina were major hubs of the slave trade in the U.S., with considerable traffic between them. So travel and commerce between these two branches of the Smith family is highly likely. More research is needed to establish specifics.
¹Thomas Smith (1729-1782), scion of a large slave-holding family in South Carolina, is listed in Jamaica's *Quit Rent Books in the Year 1754* as a planter owning 75 slaves in St. George parish, Jamaica. In the *1817 Jamaica Almanac: Clarendon and Vere Slave-owners*, his estate owns an additional 62 slaves.
²Thomas [Benjamin] Smith (1757-1821 SC) is listed in the *1817 Jamaica Almanac: St. Catherine, St. John, St. Dorothy, St. Thomas in the Vale Slave-owners* as a planter owning 20 slaves, and 32 slaves in the Blue Mountain region of St. John's parish. He freed Mary Bouthron in 1820, shortly before his death.
³George Smith (1791-1838) is listed in the *1820 Jamaica Almanac: St. Elizabeth Slave-owners* as a planter owning 41 slaves. In the *1829 Jamaica Almanac: County of Surrey, Parish of St. Andrew*, he owns an additional 20 slaves.
⁴Most African-born slaves in Jamaica were Igbo. More Igbo ran away, more often, than any other African ethnic group, and committed suicide by drowning before reaching the shores of the United States more often. Sydney Audley Smith (1910-1982) referred to the family's Igbo ancestor as male, but I could find no evidence to confirm this.
⁵Reginald (1885-1945)'s second forename, "Audley," probably originates in the custom among female Audleys in the English line of passing on that name as a forename to their offspring (thanks to Alex Audley for this insight). Augusta Henrietta Catherine Boisdaune, Dowager Lady Audley (1762-1844) was the only female Audley in Jamaica at that time whose influence might also explain the prevalence of "Augustus" among Reginald Audley Smith's paternal uncles, and of "Henry" and "Catherine" among many of his other forebears. Her first husband, Lt. Col. Joseph Moorhouse (1744-1791), was stationed in Jamaica with the Coastal Artillery of the Royal 14th Regiment in 1782-85, 1786-88 and 1790-91, before removing to Madras, India where he died in battle. She married George Thicknesse-Touchet, 19th Baron Lord Audley of Heleigh (1758-1818) the following year. The available historical records suggest but do not prove her maternal relationship to George S. Smith 1791-1838.
⁶The Distin family is much easier to trace because Dr. Henry Distin (c1800-1882) was the first to leave his family seat in the Paignton area of Devon, England for Jamaica, and the first Distin in Jamaica. There he practiced medicine and law between 1817 and the early 1820s, in addition to owning the Pool's Rock plantation in Westmoreland with just under 60 slaves. Administration of his holdings was assumed first by his son (Henry Lewis Distin 1817-1884), and then by his grandson (Charles Henry Distin (1835-1908), Reginald Audley Smith's maternal grandfather). The family was less involved in governance than other large Jamaica slaveholding clans. Planter in Jamaica and, on his return to England, Curate of Bythorpe, Huntingdonshire 1844-65, and Vicar of Horninghold, Leicestershire 1869-84. For Henry Lewis Distin (1817-1884)'s feelings about Jamaica, see his "Letter from H. [Henry] Distin to Sir William Jackson Hooker; from Savannalamar [Jamaica]; 14 Mar 1840," at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew Archives.