

Pedigree of the Smythies Family.

In March 1869, Part XI., p. 96 of the "Miscellanea Genealogica et Heraldica," a reproduction was published of the Exemplification of Arms and Grant of Crest to George Smithes of the Court of Wike in the Countie of Somerset, gent., dated 1602, and in a footnote it was stated that the original exemplification was then in possession of Francis Smythies, Esq., of Colchester. This document is still in possession of the family, and an effort has been made by Major Raymond Smythies, the present representative of the eldest branch, with the assistance of the late Dr. George Marshall, York Herald, to draw up a complete pedigree of the Smythies family from the time of the above-mentioned grant, and earlier, to the present day.

Unfortunately, before the completion of the pedigree, Dr. Marshall died, and one link in the chain of ancestry at the end of the sixteenth century still remains to be found. The link required is one connecting Rev. William Smythies, M.A., Vicar of Walter-Belchamp, Essex, in 1623, with his elder contemporary George Smythes* the grantee above mentioned, Alderman and Sheriff of London. Dr. Marshall was engaged in making researches with a view to establishing this link when his illness and lamented death put an end, for the time being, to the investigation of the matter.

In a letter written in 1904 he says, "No doubt we shall get the missing link sooner or later," and in another letter written about the same time, he writes, "I should think William the brother of the Alderman is our man." This William was a younger brother of the grantee, and is referred to in his father's will, dated 1584 (8, Windsor), as then under age. Since, however, George the elder brother was at this date 21, it is probable that William was not much under age, but even if we allow for a large difference in the age of the brothers there would still be ample time for the younger one to marry and become the father of William Smythies who was appointed Vicar of Belchamp in 1623. Unfortunately the will of William, brother of the Alderman, cannot be found, and that of William, Vicar of Belchamp, makes no mention of his parents, who were probably dead at the time it was made (1652). It may be, however, that the father of the Vicar of Belchamp was not William brother of the Alderman. He may have been the son of John, another and elder brother, or of Thomas, John, or George of the Ubley branch of the family, or of one of the sons of George of Wrington. In the absence of documentary proof the matter for the present must remain uncertain, but it has been thought desirable not to delay any longer placing on record the pedigree of the Smythies family, which has been satisfactorily established from the present day to William Smythies who was Vicar of Belchamp in 1623, and in addition to give that earlier portion which is known, but which at present requires a connecting link to combine it with the rest.

* In the grant the name is spelt Smithes, but the grantee in his will signs his name Smythes, and this is the spelling evidently usually used at the time, though the name is often found spelt in different ways in the same document. From the time of William Smythies of Gosfields he and his descendants, so far as is known, have themselves always spelt the family name Smythies, though in print and in early documents it is frequently misspelt.