

On seeing this I felt sure that the name Smyther (*sic*) was either a clerical error or a mistake in the inscription, and I accordingly wrote to the Municipal Authorities of the City of Bristol, who most courteously searched their records for me and sent me extracts from them, which I think it will be admitted amply prove that I was right.

In the will of George Smythes, Alderman of London, made in the year 1614, proved 1615, and preserved at Somerset House under the reference number "67, Rudd," the following occurs:—

"Item. I give and bequeath to the City of Bristoll one guilt cup of the value of twenty pounds."

This extract, with many others from the will, I have amongst my family papers, the testator being an ancestor of mine, and hence I formed the conclusion that the original cup, which the "Monteith" bowl of 1709 represents, was given by George Smythes, not Smyther. This view the following extracts, kindly sent me by the City Treasurer of Bristol, fully confirm:—

"Extracts from the Minutes of the Bristol Common Council 20<sup>th</sup> January 1708.

"It is thought fitt that Mr George Smythies, Ald<sup>r</sup> of London giuft to this City (1615) being a large Cupp and Cover wt 66 ounces be exchanged for a Monteath and yt 20 ounces be added."

"A Monteth in weight one hundred and five ounces seaven pennyweights exchanged for a Cupp and Cover weight sixty-six ounces, being the giuft of Mr George Smithies to wh. is added 39 ounces and seaven pennyweights att the City Charges."

It would be foolish, as it would be profitless, to criticise now the action of the Bristol City Fathers of two hundred years ago, but it is impossible to repress a sigh of regret that such an extremely valuable piece of plate as a cup with cover weighing 66 ounces of the year 1615 has been lost to the City of Bristol through the doubtless well-intentioned but mistaken action of its former representatives. It has, however, occurred to me that it is just possible the cup may still be in existence, and traceable, for the records do not state that it was melted down, but only exchanged, and in all probability the arms of George Smythes were engraved on the original cup, though the City arms only appear on the Monteith. In case this should have been so, I give the arms, the original exemplification of which, and the grant of crest (dated 1602), is still in possession of the family: *Argent, a chevron azure between three oak-leaves vert, on each an acorn or. Crest: A demi-arm azure and hand proper holding a branch of oak-leaves with acorns or, set on a wreath of the colours.*

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

R. H. RAYMOND SMYTHIES.

30 March 1909.

The result of the correspondence with the Civic Authorities of Bristol was that a courteous letter was received from the City Treasurer, in which he said:—

"I propose (when properly authorised) to have the name on the Monteith changed from Smyther to Smythes. It will then agree with the name of the George Smythes who left the cup and cover by will to the City in 1615. And I shall be glad to know that this will meet with your approval."

Needless to say a reply was sent stating that this would be entirely satisfactory. It is to be regretted, however, that the publication of the above letter has not so far led to the discovery of the original cup.—R. H. R. S.