

John Hinton & John Smith

The following is just a **theory** on my part as to the meeting of these two gentlemen and how they came to know each other.

I am speaking here of **Major John Hinton**, (John Jr.), the first son of Col John Hinton and Grizelle Kimbrough. He was born in Johnston County, North Carolina on 14 March 1748 and soon learned the military ways from his father. A major in the Revolution and a representative from Wake County in the legislature both during and after the war.

I am also speaking here of **John Smith Sr.** who was born in Isle of Wight, Virginia on 13 April 1684. Smith Sr. is said to be about a 4th level grandson of Captain John Smith of Jamestown, Va. fame.

John Smith Sr. had moved into North Carolina in the 1740 time frame and soon began to purchase land. In 1762, he sold 288 acres of land to his son John, included were the ferry he had built, crossing the Neuse River. John Jr. proceeded to continue the operation of the ferry and to build a house for he and his wife. He also, with the help of some of his neighbors, began to layout and complete plans for the Town of Smithfield.

John Sr. seems to lack mention in this old area, but several early maps including the 1775 map by Mouzon, show a new Smith's Ferry located in the area just north of present day Highway 64 and the Neuse River. Realizing that some amount of time must go by before a map can contain all its historic information, I am guessing this to be John Sr. running another ferry after giving the first one to his son.

In the 1764 time frame, young John Hinton at the age of 16, was already building his plantation house to be known as "**Clay Hill**" and located on today's Highway 64 and the river.

Popular legend and Hinton descendants say that young John would at times also be riding his horse to the Smithfield area¹ to look for a date. The road to Smithfield began in front of the Hinton family "**Beaver Dam House**" located 2 ³/₄ mile to the east northeast. At about 8 mph on the horse this would have been a 3+ hour trip one way for young John.

On June 27, 1765, at the early age of seventeen, John Hinton Jr. married Pherebee, daughter of John Smith Sr. and wife Elizabeth Whitfield. The bride was but sixteen, having been born October 16, 1748, and childish even for her years. They settled at "**Clay Hill**," where they lived happily till the war-cloud overshadowed the colonies.

Hypothesis:

It is unproven that John Smith Sr. was the operator of the ferry across the Neuse River at Hwy 64, **but:**

If: we **assume** this to be true, and

If: we **assume** that in those days a young girl of age 15 or 16 may be helping her father or at best just hanging around.

Then: It can be **assumed** that young Hinton met Pherebee in his very **backyard** for he or his father owned all of the land along the river on which he was constructing the house including the location of the ferry. It is only about 500 to 600 yards from the house he was building to the location of the ferry on the river. (sure beats a 6 hour ride on horseback)

I also assume that at this time and place is where Hinton Jr. came to know Smith Sr.

I hope this explains a thought that has been bugging me for some time in my study of the history and genealogy of this area.

1. Smithfield not a town until 1777.

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