9-02 *Ilex* [(*cornuta* 'Burfordii') x *latifolia*] 'Bessie Smith' Female

Registered: November 10, 2008

Mr. David S. Smith

1202 Jossie Lane

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Discovered and selected as a chance seedling in the spring of 1985 by Mrs. P.B.C. (Bessie) Smith, at her home at 3941 Topside Road in Knoxville, Tennessee. Several seedlings were found when the mother plant, *Ilex cornuta* 'Burfordii' was killed by a -24 F cold wave on January 21, 1985. In June 1995, Bessie Smith and Mr. Harold Elmore named this female clone for Mrs. Smith, as well as a male clone, *Ilex* 'Patrick Smith' for her late husband, Mr. Patrick B. C. Smith, which were subsequently introduced later that fall by Holly Haven Hybrids of Knoxville, Tennessee. A tree was planted (in her honor) by Harold Elmore and Mrs. Frances B. Scheidt at Mrs. Smith's church, the Immaculate Conception in Knoxville, as the original plant at the late Mrs. Smith home on Topside Drive no longer exists, having been removed from her garden in 2008.

The large evergreen tree, estimated to be 23 years old, is 5.2 m (17 ft.) tall and 3.0 m (10 ft.) wide, with a broadly conical shape and a horizontal branching habit. Leaves are dark green above, Green Group 137A, and lighter green below, Green Group 148C, on the Royal Hort. Society Colour Chart of 1986. Leaves are large, smooth, elliptical, to 11.7 cm (4 5/8 in.) long, 4.8 cm (1 7/8 in.) wide, with margins slightly bowed or convex in side view, spinose, with uneven serrate spines, up to 10 on each side, alternating between small and medium, apices aristulate, with rounded bases and petioles up to 1.3 cm (1/2 in.) long. The abundant red fruit are axillary, with up to 12 oval fruit per cluster, 8 mm (5/16 in.) by 1 cm (3/8 in.), Red Group 44A, with petioles to 1 cm (3/8 in.) long. Hardiness results indicate this clone is winter hardy through Zone 6b on the USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map of 1990.

Plants were propagated and distributed by Holly Haven Hybrids, 136 Sanwood Road in Knoxville, Tennessee, since the fall of 1995, but no longer exists as a source for this taxa. *Ilex* 'Bessie Smith' and 'Patrick Smith' were distributed in 1995 at the Annual Meeting of HSA in Mobile, Alabama as part of the holly hardiness test program.

Selection was based on a rapid growth rate, green twigs, Green Group 143B, large pale yellow axillary flower clusters resulting in abundant red fruit and large, smooth, glossy leaves, which also distinguish this clone from the Bruner Hollies.

Voucher specimens are on deposit in the herbarium of the U.S. National Arboretum (NA), Washington, D.C. 20002.