

DEVEREUX SMITH, FEARLESS PIONEER

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DANGER lurked everywhere in western Pennsylvania when Devereux Smith reached Pittsburgh.

The exact date of his arrival was not recorded, it seems, but his obituary of December 28, 1799, stated that "he had resided at Pittsburgh and its vicinity near forty years."¹

He probably arrived at Pittsburgh soon after Fort Duquesne was destroyed. At any rate, he was born in 1735 in Warwickshire, Great Britain, so he was in his twenties when he reached the wilderness known as southwestern Pennsylvania.

He was in Pittsburgh as early as 1765, for entries in the Fort Pitt Day Book attest to that fact. An entry of March, 1765, described him as a brewer. His daughter Elizabeth was born in that year.²

Extensive research has failed to yield a description of his personal appearance, but the perils and hardships of his times, as well as his heroic deeds, prove that he was a robust individual.

He was, undeniably, a brave man, and one who would not swerve from a course that he believed to be right.

He was one of the very first pioneers and landowners in the section of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, now known as Oakland. He owned land elsewhere in Pennsylvania, as well as in downtown Pittsburgh, and "Smithfield Street" commemorates his name there, but "Smith's Grove," the name of his property in what is now part of the Oakland area of Pittsburgh exists only in the deed records of Allegheny County

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1 The *Pittsburgh Gazette* of Dec. 28, 1799. (My thanks are hereby conveyed to Miss Rose Demorest of the Pennsylvania Room of Carnegie Library, Pittsburgh, Pa., for saving me the trouble of searching for the obituary published in that paper).

2 The approximate date of Elizabeth Smith's birth was established from information given in her obituary (she was then Elizabeth Smith Greenough) in The *Pittsburgh Gazette* of Nov. 18, 1815.

and on maps.³

By September, 1771, Devereux Smith and Ephraim Douglass had become business partners as is shown by the ledger of "Smith & Douglass—From Sept. 1771 to Jan. 1777."⁴

James O'Hara "from Dec. 1773 to March, 1774" was "in the service of Devereux Smith and Ephraim Douglas of Pittsburg as an Indian trader."⁵

When James O'Hara entered the employ of Smith & Douglas in 1773, he was nineteen, Douglass was twenty-three and Smith was thirty-eight years old. This was probably the first close association of Smith and O'Hara. O'Hara was to buy later, from Smith's son, Edward, 170 acres of the lovely land that is now part of Oakland, but which had once been known as "Three Mile Spring" and later as "Smith's Grove." O'Hara named the 170 acres he had acquired from Smith, "Smithfield," and that is where he died.

Devereux Smith and his wife must have been elated when he, not yet forty years of age, was appointed a justice for Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, by Governor Penn in January, 1774.⁶

The year 1774 proved to be one of his two worst years. Grave trouble started for him and other adherents of Governor Penn when Dr. John Connolly, in January, 1774, posted a notice of his appointment by Lord Dunmore, Governor of Virginia, as "Capt. Commandant of the Militia of Pittsburgh and its dependencies," and of Virginia's determination to include Pittsburgh and adjacent territory in a new Virginia county it intended to erect. Devereux Smith was one of the men who vigorously opposed those plans and ultimately defeated them.

Arthur St. Clair had Connolly arrested soon after he posted the aforesaid notice. Connolly, through a subterfuge worked upon the

3 A map which carries the notation "Surveyed for Thos. & Richard Penn, March 27, 1769, by Wm. Thompson, D. Sr." shows the location of a part of Devereux Smith's land in the area now known as the Oakland section of Pittsburgh. A copy of that map is in the files of The Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, and I hereby express my gratitude to the Society for bringing it to my attention.

R. E. McGowin's map of Pittsburgh in 1852 shows the names of the property owners of the land that had been Smith's land, but Smith's name is not mentioned.

4 Ledger of "Smith & Douglass—From Sept. 1771, to Jan. 1777" in the William Darlington Room of the University of Pittsburgh.

5 *A Century And A Half of Pittsburg And Her People*, by John W Jordan, LL.D., Vol. III, page 381.

6 Vol. X of *Colonial Records* page 142.

sheriff, got out of the Hanna's town jail within a few days. He vanished for awhile from that area, but returned to it on March twenty-eighth with sufficient men, with swords drawn, to repel resistance.

The inhabitants' troubles with Connolly were not their only griefs, for the Indians were on the warpath in parts of southwestern Pennsylvania. Their attacks and Connolly's forays caused many of the settlers to decide to leave. "During this time, Arthur St. Clair, Aeneas Mackay, Devereux Smith, and other staunch friends of the Penns by their personal influence alone succeeded in quieting the Indians and in allaying the fears of the people."⁷

Pittsburgh, but for the efforts of St. Clair, Mackay, Devereux Smith, and others like them, might well have become a part of Virginia.

Less than a week after Connolly's return to Pittsburgh, Aeneas Mackay wrote to Gov. Penn:

"Since the return of the Celebrated Doctor Connolly on the 28th of March, our village is become the scene of anarchy and confusion . . . The doctor now is in actual possession of the Fort, with a Body Guard of Militia about him, Invested, we are told, with both Civil and military power, to put the Virginia law in force in these parts."⁸

Mackay also wrote, at that time, of the devices employed by Connolly to win the people to his side, one of them being "promises of grants of Lands on easy Terms."

On April seventh, Connolly invaded Joseph Spear's store and had a physical encounter there with William Amberson who was then taken to the Fort.

Two days later, Connolly had Mackay, Andrew McFarlane and Devereux Smith arrested, and even though they were Pennsylvania justices, he had them sent to the Staunton, Virginia, jail.

The month of May came, and while they were still away from their homes, some of Connolly's men went to Devereux Smith's home to pillage it, but were prevented from doing so by Mr. William Butler, who then resided there. Connolly himself later came to the house in a rage and visited his wrath upon Butler and Mrs. Smith.

On May 5, 1774, Aeneas Mackay wrote to Governor Penn regarding his arrest and that of Smith and McFarlane. He mentioned his talk at Williamsburg with Lord Dunmore, who told him that Connolly was authorized by him "to prosecute the claim" of Virginia "to

⁷ *The Frontier Forts*, Vol. II, page 292.

⁸ *Pennsylvania Archives*, Vol. 4, pages 484-5-6. (Letter was dated "4th April, 1774").

Pittsburgh and its dependencies" and that Connolly, in arresting them, had "only imitated the Pennsylvania officers in respect to Connolly's imprisonment by them."⁹

When Mackay and Smith returned home after their release from the Staunton jail, they had more trouble. They went for a ride on May 27th, and while they were gone, six of Connolly's men went to Mackay's place and began to tear down his sheep house and a stable. Mrs. Mackay, greatly alarmed, quickly sent a man to intercept her husband and Mr. Smith. When Mackay and Smith returned to Mackay's home, they put a stop to the destructive work going on there and told the men that they would talk with Connolly at the Fort about the matter.

Enroute to the Fort, they were met by Captain George Aston, who was to die at Devereux Smith's hands the next year. Aston was at the head of thirty armed men and Connolly was at the rear of that force. Aston ordered the Virginia sheriff to seize Mackay, which he did with the aid of several other men, and Aston threatened to shoot Mackay. What a day!

About two weeks later, Connolly went to Mackay's house again with one of his officers and was as abusive as before.

In the interim between the first and second episodes at Mackay's place, Arthur St. Clair wrote on May 29, 1774, from Ligonier, Pennsylvania, to Governor Penn that "An Association for the immediate raising of an Hundred Men" had been formed by himself, Devereux Smith, Aeneas Mackay, Mr. Butler, Colonel Croghan and certain other inhabitants, and that the men were to act "as a ranging company to cover the inhabitants in case of danger."¹⁰

Smith and Mackay had another bad encounter a little later with a number of men who broke open their respective backyard gates and aimed their guns at them, after which one man struck at Mackay with his gun while another put his gun through Mackay's parlor window and threatened to shoot Mrs. Mackay if she would not admit them. She tried to run away, but was stopped and stabbed in the arm by Captain Aston.

The year ended, but not Smith's troubles, for on the night of February 8, 1775, a dozen or more armed men surrounded his house in Pittsburgh, hurled stones and tried to break into his home. The

⁹ *Pennsylvania Archives*, Vol. 4, page 494.

¹⁰ *The Frontier Forts*, Vol. II, page 293.

members of his family were terrified, and he was ready to shoot any man who dared to enter his home.

The important role played by Smith and Mackay in opposing Virginia's attempt to annex Pittsburgh was well proven by Connolly's repeated attacks upon them.

Another phase of Devereux Smith's troubles was revealed in a letter, dated "Pittsburgh, 23 May 1775" to Governor Penn, which was signed by Smith and four other men in which, after relating how the militia continued to kill their cattle and hogs, they stated:

"They likewise take upon them to determine our title to our lands . . . This was actually the case with Devx. Smith the Third Inst., when Connolly in like manner Dispossessed him of a tract of land some miles Eastward of this place, and Declared it should be the property of one George Sly & in Six Days afterwards the Sheriff broke open Mr. Smith's door & gave the said Sly possession . . . We are deemed and treated like Degraded beings . . . and the very name of a Pennsylvanian is sufficient to render any man odious at this place nowadays." ¹¹

Devereux Smith had certainly been a patient man and one who preferred to settle difficulties with words rather than with violence. His ability to reason with the Indians, and their respect for him, proved him to be that kind of man, but Connolly's machinations goaded him into killing a man, and that man was Captain George Aston, whom he killed in self-defense and in defense of his home. The tragic story of that killing, and its aftermath, was well told by Smith's business partner, Ephraim Douglass, in a letter dated "Pittsburgh, 21st Nov., 1775" to Colonel James Wilson, in which he asked him to aid Smith. The letter, with certain unimportant omissions, follows:

"Sir . . . The Court of Examination was this Evening held at Mr. Smith's for the death of Capt. Ashton. They made innumerable objections to holding it at his house, though they well knew he could not be removed without inevitable danger of his life; however, at length upon his petition they consented, and came attended by a throng of witnesses, some of whom without regard to truth or matter of fact, swore whatever they thought would please the Bench and procure themselves a dram from his Enemies. The rest, tho' not quite such wretches, said as much as possible against him, and nothing at all in his favor, but what was extorted from them by dint of interrogation. All of them, however, (except the first mentioned class, some of whom swore that Mr. Smith touched Ashton on the Shoulder, telling him he wanted to speak to him—and as he turned towards him thrust the dagger into his body) could not help confessing that Ashton, without any previous irritation on Smith's part, assaulted him by giving a blow in the face yet they endeavored to

11 *Pennsylvania Archives*, Vol. 4, pages 625-6.

palliate this by saying it was like the slap of an open hand—that to them it sounded so—but could not deny but it staggered him so as to nearly make him fall. The Evidence all examined, Mr. Smith's attorney pleaded that it was Excusable Homicide but no more regard was paid to him than to the candid part of the Evidence—and Court were all of the opinion that Mr. Smith was guilty of the murder wherewith he stood charged. When the attorney demanded that Mr. Smith might be bailed, the Court adjourned till seven in the morning, till when I can inform you nothing more of the matter . . . Mr. Smith continues to be very ill, and I fear the uncommon Severity of his determination will operate powerfully against him unless the hopes of assistance from you and his other friends may make him bear it with greater resolution.

"He is not without hopes of the intervention of Government, but at a loss to suggest to them in what manner to endeavor preventing his being sent to Williamsburg. In this he is persuaded that your advice and assistance, added to Col. St. Clair's, to whom I also wrote, would not fail to render him signal service . . . " ¹²

He added a postscript:

"22nd—Mr. Smith is admitted to Bail and Bound in £3000, Mr. Mackay, Mr. Butler and Mr. Hanna his sureties in £1500 each for his appearance at the next general court, if his wounds will permit his attendance—and if not at the next succeeding court."

Nearly two months later, Aeneas Mackay wrote to Colonel James Wilson: "Mr. Smith is still very bad with his broken leg, but the Doctor says he is out of danger." ¹³

The devotion of his friends, when he needed them most, must have been very comforting to him.

Connolly's heinous attacks upon Smith and Mackay focused the attention of Congress upon Pittsburgh and Connolly, and probably led to the discovery "at the opening of the Revolution" of Connolly's vile plot "to make Fort Pitt an important British Post." ¹⁴

After Connolly's capture in Maryland with two other conspirators, (and strangely enough, one of them was named Smith, but his first name was John not Devereux), John Hanson wrote, under date of November 24, 1775, to John Hancock, President of Congress, and referred to "a proposal by Connolly to Gen. Gage for raising an army for the destruction of the liberties of the Colonies." ¹⁵

It is very significant that there was a difference of only three

¹² *Historical Register*, Vol. II, pages 58, 59 and 60.

¹³ *Historical Register*, Vol. II, pages 60 and 61.

¹⁴ *Pennsylvania—Colonial and Federal* by Howard M. Jenkins, published by the Pennsylvania Historical Association.

¹⁵ *Historic Frederick* (a booklet), page 41, by Colonel John R. Holt, U. S. Army, Retired.

days from the date of the hearing on November 21, 1775, at Devereux Smith's home, when he was held on a charge of murder, and the date of Hanson's letter to John Hancock. Connolly's apprehension came at a very advantageous time for Smith! It demonstrated, too, how right Smith had been in opposing Connolly's oppression of Pittsburghers.

Congress, on Dec. 8, 1775, directed that Connolly and the men arrested with him "be confined in prison in Philadelphia."¹⁶ Nearly four years later it was "Resolved that . . . Lieutenant Colonel J. Connolly" be exchanged "for any lieutenant colonel" of the United States Army "who was then a prisoner of war."¹⁷

Devereux Smith never completely recovered from his last encounter with Captain George Aston. His pitiful plight was described in a letter, dated November 3, 1783, written by him to the Chief Justice and the other justices of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, in which he stated:

"Long did I languish under the wounds the usurper gave me, and I am forever deprived of the use of my limbs."

It was eight years after the Aston killing before Devereux Smith could say, as he did in a proclamation dated March 18, 1784, to "The People of Pennsylvania":—

" . . . The bill of indictment brought against me, being returned ignoramus, I was discharged according to law, which will appear on the records and proceedings of the court of oyer and terminer, held at Hannah's-town, November sessions last."¹⁸

The truth of his assertion was attested in a certificate¹⁹ dated March 17, 1784, by Thomas McKean, Chief Justice at that time of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.

Smith, in the interim between the indictment and his public vindication, exerted himself, when he was able to do so, in behalf of his country and his countrymen as he had done from the time of his arrival in Pennsylvania.

Smith's partnership with Ephraim Douglass was ended at the end of 1776. It was likely terminated because Douglass, at about that time, had become a first lieutenant in the Continental line.

Edward Smith, Devereux's son, was probably the Edward Smith

16 *Journals of Congress* (Minutes of Dec. 8, 1775).

17 *Journals of Congress*, Vol. XV, page 1231.

18 A complete copy is part of Appendix III.

19 A copy in full is part of Appendix III.

who "entered into 'The Flying Camp' in 1776 under Capt. Timothy Green," but positive proof is lacking.²⁰

Devereux Smith's standing in Pittsburgh was not impaired by the Aston killing. In 1787, he was one of the trustees in the deed from the Penns to the Trustees of the Congregation of the Episcopalian Church in Pittsburgh. The other trustees were John Gibson, John Ormsby and Dr. Nathaniel Bedford.

Devereux Smith was also one of the men empowered by an Act of the Pennsylvania legislature of April 13, 1791, to purchase in the Commonwealth's name, for the use and benefit of Allegheny County, a piece of ground in downtown Pittsburgh "and thereupon to erect a court house and prison"

This, too, adds to the proof that he was a highly respected and very important man in Pittsburgh, and that he always worked zealously to promote its interests.

He was a resident of downtown Pittsburgh for some time, and he had a store there, but he lived for years in what is now the Oakland section of Pittsburgh. He had a plantation there of 354 acres and 83 perches.²¹

The life of Devereux Smith, fearless pioneer and staunch Pennsylvanian, came to an end three days before Christmas in 1799. His obituary could not tell the full story of his perilous, arduous life, but it told in part what many of his characteristics were, and was as follows:

"**DEVEREX SMITH**—On Sunday, the 22d instant, **DIED** at his plantation near this place, **DEVEREUX SMITH, ESQUIRE**, aged 64 years. He was born in Warwickshire, Great Britain, from whence he had emigrated at an early period of his life, and had resided at Pittsburgh and its vicinity near forty years. With foibles attendant on human nature, he had many virtues. Char. ty and hospitality were eminently predominant. His door was never shut against the stranger, nor was the hungry ever allowed to pass his cottage. As a husband he was tender; as a parent, affectionate; as a friend, warm and benevolent; as a neighbor, obliging; zealously attached to our present happy form of government, a representative democracy, and peculiarly so to the State of Pennsylvania, where he had officiated as a magistrate prior to, as well as subsequent, to the revolution. He has left a disconsolate widow, and a numerous progeny of affectionate children and grandchildren."²²

²⁰ *Pennsylvania Archives*, Fifth Series, Vol. IV, page 526.

²¹ See Appendix I—"Oakland and Devereux Smith's Plantation".

²² *The Pittsburgh Gazette* of Dec. 28, 1799.

²³ A bit of information regarding his children and some of his descendants is set out in Appendix II hereof.

A finer tribute could not be paid to any man!

He mentioned in his will his "living son Edward" and his "living Daughters Mary Amberson, Elizabeth Greenough, Sara Fowler, Margarette Small, Jane Heaney and Hannah Means," and admonished them to be good "to their aged Mother as Christians ought to be" to their parents.²³

His living descendants can be very proud of his record as a man and a patriot.

He left Pittsburgh and Pittsburghers a heritage of courage!

APPENDIX I—OAKLAND AND DEVEREUX SMITH'S PLANTATION

Devereux Smith owned 354 acres, 83 perches of land in what is now the Oakland district of Pittsburgh.¹

On January 1, 1791, he made a deed to his son Edward for that acreage. Edward also received a deed from John Penn, the younger, and John Penn, the elder, dated Jan. 24, 1791, for that very same land, in which it was recited "which premises are now in the possession of said Edward by virtue of a grant from his father, Devereux Smith, dated the first day of January, 1791, and intended to be recorded by the said Edward Smith." (D.B. 8, page 356, in the office of the Recorder of Deeds of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania).

By an indenture dated March 3, 1792, Edward "demised . . . and farm lett" to his parents, Devereux Smith and Elizabeth Smith, 140 acres of that farm of more than 354 acres "on which he then lived, and which was on the great road three miles from Pittsburgh." (D.B. 10, page 277).

Devereux Smith died on Dec. 22, 1799, and his wife and son entered into an agreement, dated May 15, 1801, whereby Mrs. Smith, for the considerations therein recited, agreed to relinquish her rights

¹ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, deed records disclose that Devereux Smith was a landowner in that county as early as 1769. William Evans, on June 10, 1769, sold to "Devx. Smith of the town of Pittsburgh Mercht" 300 acres of land on a branch of Forbes Creek on Forbes Road, which he, Evans, had acquired earlier that year on "location 1260" from the land office of Pennsylvania. Smith bought other land in that year, and four years later, on Nov. 7, 1773, a conveyance of 300 acres of land "situate within five miles of Pittsburgh" was made to him, with certain reserva-

in and to the said 140 acres of land. (D.B. 10, page 248).

The next month Edward Smith and his wife conveyed to John Wilkins, by deed dated June 19, 1801, 169 acres and 27 perches of the 354 acre farm mentioned above. (D.B. 10, page 419).

Along about that time, as shown by records in the office of the Prothonotary of Allegheny County, Pa., Elizabeth Smith filed a suit against her son Edward for "Debt Sans Breve—\$1000" and Edward appeared "by Thomas Collins, his atty.," and confessed "judgment to Elizabeth Smith for the sum of one thousand dollars . . ."

More than a year later, Edward and his wife, Margaret, executed a deed dated Oct. 6, 1802 (D.B. 11, page 213) to James O'Hara for 170 acres of the 354-acre farm that he, Edward, had acquired from his father on Jan. 1, 1791. O'Hara named this acreage "Smithfield."

John Wilkins held the 169 acres and 27 perches of land that he had bought from Smith for about five years, and then he sold it to James Chadwick on Oct. 13, 1806. (D.B. 14, page 173).

James Chadwick² held that acreage for thirty years, and then sold nearly all of it in the latter part of 1836 and the rest of it in January, 1837. All of the Chadwick conveyances of that acreage were made pursuant to his agreement dated April 1, 1836, with Charles B. Taylor. It was Taylor who had subdivided the 167 acres that had once been a part of Smith's Grove into lots, and they were sold under the lot numbers he assigned to them. His plan was known as the Charles B. Taylor Plan. It is recorded in Plan Book 1, pages 58-59 in the office of the Recorder of Deeds in Allegheny County, Pa.

Some of those who bought the acreage thus disposed of by James Chadwick were: Nancy Murray, William Stewart, Samuel Church, James S. Craft, George Ledlie and Moses Atwood.

Now, as to the 170 acres of Smith's Grove in what is now Oakland, which was purchased by James O'Hara and named "Smithfield" by him, Devereux Smith's widow, Elizabeth, made a quit-claim deed, dated Nov. 13, 1811, in favor of O'Hara. (D.B. 17, page 379). It was recited therein that O'Hara had agreed to pay her the sum of "one hundred dollars," annually in quarterly payments, "during her natural life," and that, in consideration of those payments, she renounced her

² James Chadwick and his wife are buried in Allegheny Cemetery in Pittsburgh, Pa. Three very well known descendants of the Chadwicks in the Pittsburgh area are Mrs. Mary Stewart McKee, Frederick Chadwick McKee and Wallace B. McKee. (The first two McKees live in the Fox Chapel district and Mr. Wallace B. McKee lives in Aspinwall, Pa.)

rights to the land in Pitt Township "whereon" she had "for many years resided." Those payments were ended by her death on July 31, 1813, at eighty-four years of age.

The Chadwick conveyances in 1836-37, mentioned earlier, of the portion of the land once known as "Smith's Grove," which Chadwick had acquired, gave the area now known as Oakland a fine start towards its phenomenal growth.

Samuel Church, one of the purchasers from Chadwick in 1836 of a little more than 19 acres of what had once been Smith's land, sold it on April 10, 1837, to B. A. Fahnestock, who named the land he had thus purchased "Oakland."

Isaac Harris threw a bit of light on the Oakland district of Pittsburgh when he stated, in Harris' *Intelligencer* of May 25, 1839, that three roads could be taken to Minersville. He described two of them, and then he stated: "or by taking the road to Mechanics Turnpike at the Colony, *or Oakland, late Chadwick's farm*" one could reach Minersville.

Some persons have mistakenly assumed that Oakland got its name from William Eichbaum, but it was known by that name before he purchased land there in 1840, as the portion just quoted from Harris' *Intelligencer* proves.

Furthermore, it was Benjamin A. Fahnestock's country estate that was known by the name "OAKLAND," and not Mr. Eichbaum's as some persons have assumed. In a biographical sketch of Benjamin A. Fahnestock³, "Physician and Capitalist," it was stated:

" At his beautiful country seat, "Oakland," near Pittsburgh, his gardens and poultry yards were a great attraction to visitors."

R. E. McGowin's map of Pittsburgh in 1852 shows B. A. Fahnestock's estate as being next to Joseph Coltart's on Forbes Street, and W. Eichbaum's residence as being on Pennsylvania Avenue (now Fifth Avenue) almost in a direct line with the Fahnestock and Coltart residences.

The changes wrought in the Oakland district of Pittsburgh since Devereux Smith lived there would surely amaze him if he could see them!

³ Biographical Encyclopedia, pages 191 and 192, published in 1874 by Galaxy Publishing Company.

APPENDIX II.—DEVEREUX SMITH'S IMMEDIATE FAMILY AND SOME OF HIS OTHER DESCENDANTS.

Research has failed to reveal the year in which Devereux Smith and his wife, Elizabeth, were married. He was born in 1735 and died in 1799. She was born in 1729 and died in 1813.

Mr. Smith's allusion in his will, dated July 13, 1798, to his "living son Edward" and to his "living Daughters, Mary Amberson, Elizabeth Greenough, Sarah Fowler, Margarette Small, Jane Heaney and Hannah Means" leads one to the conclusion that there were other children born of his union with Elizabeth, and that they were dead.

Edward Smith, Devereux's son, married Margaret Castleman, whose father, Jacob Castleman, in 1788, acquired 264 acres of land in Pitt Township and called it "Castlemania." He was a well known citizen of Pittsburgh. Castleman Street in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, perpetuates his name. Margaret Castleman Smith's sisters were: Mary, wife of Joseph Little; Susanna, wife of John Ross, and Rachel, wife of David Ekin (also known as Aiken). A reliable person states that Edward Smith drowned in 1817. It is known that he was dead by Dec. 20, 1820, for on that date his wife executed a deed in which she was described as the "widow of Edward Smith." (D.B. 30, page 462, of Allegheny County, Pa., deed records). She was then a resident of Fayette County, Ohio. In her will, dated July 19, 1855, filed in Ohio, she mentioned their two sons and eight daughters, who were: Edward Smith, Castleman Smith, Sarah Rankin, wife of John Rankin; Mary Taylor, wife of Edward Taylor; Susanah Hukill, wife of Noak Hukill; Rachel Paul, wife of Alrose Paul; Eliza Bloomer, wife of Joseph Bloomer; Calina Heaton, wife of Nathaniel Heaton; Julia Ann Harris, wife of Joshua Harris, and Margaret Smith, wife of James Madison Smith.

Devereux Smith's daughter Mary married William Amberson for whom Amberson Avenue in Pittsburgh, Pa., was named. He was a man with a fine civil and military record. His accomplishments would make interesting reading, but they cannot be set out here. A known descendant of the Ambersons, J. Burns Amberson, M.D., is living in New Jersey.

Devereux Smith's daughter Elizabeth married Thomas Greenough, a Pittsburgh merchant, on Jan. 16, 1787.¹ She died in the fifty-first year of her age, in November, 1815, leaving "a disconsolate husband

¹ The Pittsburgh Gazette of Jan. 20, 1787.

and a large number of children to deplore the loss of a tender and affectionate wife and mother.”²

Devereux Smith's daughter Sarah married Alexander Fowler, who was “Capt. Fowler” when he became an auditor for the U. S. Army in the Western District. His record in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, is an interesting one, but cannot be narrated here. Sarah was still living when he died on Feb. 25, 1806. She referred to herself as the “widow of General Alexander Fowler” in a power of attorney to Walter Forward, which she acknowledged on March 26, 1818, and which is of record in Allegheny County, Pa.

Devereux Smith's daughter Margarette (known also as Margaret) married Simon Small, who, at one time, was a stage-coach driver and whose speedy horseback ride in December, 1820, from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to the State Capitol of Pennsylvania, with William Wilkins' credentials is said to have been responsible for the appointment of Wilkins as a Western Pennsylvania judge. If he had been delayed in reaching Harrisburg, someone other than Wilkins might have been appointed to fill the vacancy that then existed.³

Devereux Smith's daughter Hannah married Samuel Means. Some of their descendants were Robert Means, a founder of Bellevue Borough, Allegheny Co., Pa., his son, Edward Smith Means, Sr., a Burgess of Bellevue, and Edward Smith Means, Jr. Two daughters of the latter are living in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. They are Doris Means McFarland and Sarah Means Kinderman. Bellevue's tax collector, William C. Means, said recently that “his people are related to Devereux Smith in some way.”

Devereux Smith's daughter Jane married Stewart Haney.⁴ They were still living on July 1, 1839, when they executed a Power of Attorney to William, John and Enoch Small. Jane was the only one of Devereux Smith's children still living at that time.

There are, undoubtedly, many of Devereux Smith's descendants living today, and they can all be very proud of the record he made in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

² The Pittsburgh Gazette of Nov. 18, 1815.

³ Sewell E. Slick's article “William Wilkins, Pittsburgher Extraordinary” in Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine, Vol. 22, page 228.

⁴ Devereux Smith spelled the name “Heaney” in his will, but generally the name was spelled “Haney.”

APPENDIX III—EXONERATION OF DEVEREUX SMITH, AS EVIDENCED BY THE FOLLOWING PROCLAMATION*

"TO THE PEOPLE OF PENNSYLVANIA."

"MY FELLOW CITIZENS,

"I take this public method of addressing you on a subject which has been much talked of in this state, and on which various conjectures have been formed with misrepresentations very injurious to my reputation. Though it was not in the power of several of my malicious enemies, "apostate sons of this state" to deprive me of any friend, yet, least their wicked insinuations should prejudice any of my worthy fellow citizens against me, who had not an opportunity of being acquainted with a true state of the facts respecting the death of Mr. George Aston. I take the liberty of laying before you the following letter, with a certificate of the honorable Thomas M'Kean, chief judge, which I hope will be sufficient to shew the sincere wish I had long conceived to have that unhappy affair clearly investigated, in order to prove my own innocence, and restore me to that share of your esteem I had long enjoyed, and shall ever endeavour to merit.

The bill of indictment brought against me, being returned ignoramus, I was discharged according to law, which will appear on the records and proceedings of the court of oyer and terminer, held at Hannah's-town, November sessions last, to which is annexed the above-mentioned certificate. As I value my reputation dearer than life, and as all men are mortal, I think it a duty done to this state, to myself, my family and my friends in publishing those circumstances, praying to the Almighty God that no usurper whatever, may attempt in future to disturb the peace of you my fellow citizens, under any pretence whatsoever.

I subscribe myself, with invariable respect, the public's most devoted humble servant,

DEVEREUX SMITH.

Philadelphia, March 18, 1784."

"Pittsburgh, November 3, 1783.

Gentlemen,

I presume your honors have been informed, that I have been under a criminal charge respecting the death of George Aston, in which truly disagreeable situation I have remained these 8 years; often indeed did I petition the late government of Pennsylvania (in whose service as a justice of the peace in supporting the government thereof, which had been established, and thitherto exercised in peace and quiet, against the daring usurpations of lord Dunmore, the charge was incurred) for a speedy trial; often have I earnestly renewed the same petition to the present government, but the calamities of war, local situation and other circumstances have hitherto delayed my trial, and that delay has in many respects produced the same effects to me and my large family, that a denial of justice could have done—for while held up by one party in a criminal point of view, I have been deprived of many advantages, which the good opinion that my fellow citizens in general are pleased to entertain of me, would have put in my way.

But the day is now near, I thank Heaven, in which, I trust my character will appear to the most inveterate and abandoned tools of the usurper lord Dunmore in a very different point of view from that in which a few of them endeavoured to represent it—even in that of a man much injured indeed. Happily for this country the spirit of that party has greatly subsided, and the distinction seems

almost forgotten by the best men amongst us, would to God I could forget it also; but I will, during life, be a monument of their lawless rage; long did I languish under the wounds the usurper gave me, and I am forever deprived of the use of my limbs.

I trust, therefore, that my trial will come on next week, and that all the reparation which the case will admit, will be given to a wounded mind and wounded body, and a much injured man; I trust that my character will then appear to your honors and to all people, as fair as it was before this most unfortunate event, and in order that it may so appear, I wish that the severest scrutiny may be made, that every person may be summoned who can give the least information on the part of the state. It is not for me to point to any individuals, because it might be suggested that it was done in order to keep the strongest testimony out of view; but there are many in this place who were eye and ear witnesses of the whole transactions. I trust I shall not appear unbecomingly importunate, if I intreat that the attorney-general will make strict enquiry before he leaves the spot, and that he will put up advertisements in town, requiring all those who can give evidence against me to appear at court; this I would do myself, but the malicious might put a construction on it injurious to my reputation. I pray that your honors will pardon this, perhaps unnecessary application; every thing which I have yet left near and dear to me, greatly depends upon having this unfortunate affair fairly investigated in the face of the country.

I am with great respect,

your honors most obedient humble servant.

DEVEREUX SMITH.

The honorable Thomas M'Kean, chief justice,
the hon. W. A. Atlee, and the hon. George
Bryan, justice of the supreme court of Pennsylvania"

"At the request of Mr. Devereux Smith, I do hereby certify all whom it may concern, that, after the bill aforesaid was returned ignoramus by the grand jury, a public enquiry respecting the fact charged against him was had in open court, and after examining general Richard Butler, &c. the judges were contented with the said return, and the said Devereux Smith was thereupon discharged by public proclamation as above mentioned. Given under my hand at Philadelphia, the 17th day of March, 1784.

(signed) THOMAS M'KEAN."

Note: A copy of the quoted proclamation is in the files of The Library Company of Philadelphia.