

February 26, 1998

V #9

Edward Darrell Smith

[1770]

The sixth child and third son of Josiah Smith II (VI#17, 1740) and Mary Elizabeth Stevens (VI#18, 1740); the husband of Sarah Tucker North (V#10, 1770); and the father of Josiah Edward Smith III (IV#5, 1800).

Born 1771 at Charles Town, South Carolina.

Died Aug. 17, 1819, at St. Louis, Missouri.

Married, Nov 11, 1802, Sarah Tucker North (VI#10), with whom he had children:

1. Elizabeth Smith, b 1802. Charleston S.C.
2. Mary North Smith, b 1804; bapt Sept. 30, 1804, Charleston S.C.
3. Josiah Edward Smith III (IV#5) b Dec. 3, 1813. Columbia, S.C.
4. Emma Gough Smith, (IV#5A) b ca 1814, Columbia S.C.; m Nov 26, 1832 Dr. James Postell Jervey; 10 children.
5. Anna Edmonds Smith, (IV#5B) b ca 1815; Columbia SC; m. William Washington Wescott. M.D.
6. Sarah Louisa Smith, (IV#5C) b ca 1817, Columbia SC; died unmarried .
7. Fannie Smith, (IV#5D) b. ca 1818, Columbia, S.C.; m Gilbert Snowden of Columbia, S.C.; no offspring.
8. Edward Darrell Smith II (IV#5E), b after August. 1819, Columbia, S.C.; m Aug 14, 1846, Laura Susan Jervey; 11 children; d. 1888 at Charleston

[Data from NSH; SCHS File 30-4 *The Family of Edward North and Elizabeth Tucker*; Will of Edw. Darrell Smith; SCH&G 45:19;]

Edward Darrell Smith was a physician of Charleston who gave up his Medical practice to become the the Professor of Chemistry at the South Carolina College, then gave up his professorship to become a planter. He died on a trip to the Missouri Territory, where he had gone to seek land.

Edward Darrell Smith was born at Charles Town in 1777, in the midst of the Revolution. He was three years old in 1780 when the British captured Charles Town and his father, Josiah Smith II, was sent into exile at St. Augustine as a notorious rebel. Edward lived with his mother and his brothers and sister in Charles Town until the summer of 1781, when Josiah was transferred to Philadelphia and his wife, with all of her children except the eldest, and with her aged father-in-law, was packed into a small transport ship with 160 other people and sent to there to join him. Among the families that were sent to Philadelphia with them were those of Captain Edward Darrell (VI#17A) and Captain Edward North (VI#19). The three families had been closely associated with each other in Charles Town, and they were even more closely associated during their two and a half years of exile in Philadelphia.

Edward was four years of age when he was taken to Philadelphia and seven when he was returned to Charles Town -- which had now had its name changed to "Charleston". In the years after the War Josiah Smith II became quite prosperous. He sent Edward to school in Charleston through secondary school, then he sent him to do "preliminary medical work" with his good friend Dr. David Ramsey and his cousin Dr. William Smith Stevens.

Dr. Ramsey was one of the outstanding physicians of Charleston, but he was much more than that. He was a Revolutionary patriot of some renown, and a historian of national stature. He was the Charleston equivalent of his contemporary, Dr. Joseph Warren of Boston.¹ He had been a member of the Council of Safety, a physician with the Continental Army, a member of the Legislature, a fellow exile of Josiah Smith II in St. Augustine, and a member of the United States Congress. He was also President of the South Carolina Medical Society, and, in addition, a historian of note, being better known today as a historian than as a physician. Association with Ramsey must surely have been stimulating for young Edward, whatever it may have taught him about medicine. Association with Josiah's cousin, Dr. Stevens, who had been a surgeon with the Continental Army, may not have been equally stimulating for young Edward, but it was undoubtedly instructive, for it introduced him, as intended, to contemporary surgery -- possibly on the principle that if he was

1. -- or, as I am sure the Charlestonians would say, Dr. Joseph Warren was the David Ramsey of Boston.

not thoroughly turned off by what he saw he was indeed prepared to undertake a medical career.

In 1794 Josiah sent Edward to the College of New Jersey, the *Alma Mater* of the Tennants and of David Ramsey. Edward was, so far as I can tell, the first Princetonian in our story. He graduated from the College of New Jersey in 1798. Then Josiah sent him to Philadelphia, to the College of Pennsylvania, where he became the first person in our story to attend that institution also.² He received a Medical Degree from Pennsylvania in 1800. He gave a dissertation, which was then a requirement for the degree of *M.D.*, on ... "*an Attempt to Prove that Certain Substances are Conveyed Unchanged through the Circulation.*" While he was in Philadelphia he spent some time as a student apprentice of Dr. Benjamin Rush. He returned to Charleston after that.

About 1801 Edward Darrell Smith opened up his first medical practice in Charleston. Shortly after that, in 1802, he married Sarah Tucker North, whom he had known since his childhood. The young couple probably went to live in the large double house that Edward's father had just built at 85-87 Broad Street. Edward probably carried on his first practice there. Two years later he associated himself with his classmate, Dr. John Parker Gough, and opened a private hospital for the treatment of slaves. This was not a charitable enterprise. Although it was a valuable facility for those it treated, providing them with medical and surgical care on a level with that which was provided for whites, it was nevertheless a "for profit" medical institution. South Carolinians of that time considered their Black "servants" to be their most valuable property. Planters and merchants would pay handsomely to have their illnesses and injuries treated. In Charleston there were a number of infirmaries for the treatment of slaves, of which the Smith and Gough facility was only one. Physicians who treated Blacks treated Whites also, but the Whites, of course, had their own infirmaries.

Medical practice in Charleston, however, was not for Edward Darrell Smith. Whether he did not like the practice there or could not make a success at it is not clear, but I suspect the latter. For whatever reason, he left Charleston and went west, as so many young Americans, North and South, were doing at that time. In 1808 he moved with his family to Pendleton, in the far Northwestern corner of South Carolina.³ Pendleton was filling up with of families from the Low Country. His brother-in-law John Laurens North had moved there before him.

Pendleton, like Pinopolis and Summerville, was originally one of those communities that Low-country planters moved to in the summertime to escape the malaria. Pinopolis and Summerville were in the pine forests of the lowlands,

2. At the beginning of the 19th Century the University of Pennsylvania was the chief source of medical graduates for South Carolina. In 1809 there were eleven graduates of the University practicing in the state, among them Dr. Edward Washington North, the brother-in-law of Edward Darrell Smith, and Dr. John Parker Gough, his classmate.

but Pendleton was in the foothills of the Blue Ridge. Before the Revolution it had been a part of the Cherokee Territory, but in 1783 the Indians had been persuaded to part with it and it had been made a part of the Ninety-Six Judicial District. Many up-country families -- including the Pickens and the Calhouns -- discovered its fertile soil and salubrious climate and moved in. In 1789 the Pendleton area was made a separate judicial district, and the town of Pendleton was founded in the center of it to be the site for a courthouse and local commerce.⁴ Shortly after this a number of Low-country families discovered the attractions of the area and began to move in also. SIMPSON lists twenty-eight of these, including Pinckneys, Elliots, Stevens, Ravenels, Porchers, Hamiltons, Wilsons, Gibbes and Hugers, as well as Smiths and Norths. When Edward Darrell Smith moved there Pendleton was considered to be development with a great future -- healthy, delightful climate, beautiful scenery, good farmland, and a fashionable place to live.

John Laurens North and his wife Elizabeth Elliot Drayton [North], and Edward Darrell Smith and his wife Sarah Tucker North [Smith] were, in a real sense, members of a post-War generation moving out of Charleston to a new community. The Smiths saw their new home as a place of new opportunities. They bought land near that of the Norths, and Edward embarked on a new career, as a farmer as well as a physician. He had already begun to write medical articles, and he continued this also, sending most of his work to journals published in Philadelphia. He showed a distinct interest in physiological chemistry and urinary tract disorders. He was obviously very busy, but not very successful. The medical practice seems to have been sparse, and the farming was fundamentally subsistence farming, which produced food but none of the cash that was provided by the plantation farming of the Low Country. Since he could not live on the beautiful view, the healthful climate, and the pleasant society, Edward's stay in Pendleton was not prolonged. By 1812 he had moved to Columbia, taking his family with him.

What attracted him to Columbia was the opportunity to be Professor of Chemistry at South Carolina College. Columbia, the new Capital of the State, was a village of a few thousand people when he went there. It had been founded in 1785 in the center of the State in response to the demands of the residents of the South Carolina Up-country, who had complained that Charleston was entirely too far away. At Columbia there had been established, in 1801, the South Carolina College, which had admitted its first students in 1805 and was, by 1812, educating an increasing number of the sons of Planters and well-to-do merchants. It had a hundred students, a President, three Professors and two tutors. The students were inclined to be unruly. They rioted from time to time, and sometimes they fought duels with each other. The faculty, however, were considered to be on a par with those at other American Universities. They were graduates of Northern universities -- Brown, Princeton, and Yale.

4. The Pendleton District was later divided into three counties: Oconee, Anderson and Pickens. The town of Pendleton, at the center of the old District, is now in Anderson County, near the point where the three counties meet. It is alongside of Clemson and Clemson College, the Agricultural College of South Carolina, which was established near the old Calhoun homestead.

Their salaries, funded by the State, were regarded as munificent -- \$2,000 annually for a Professor. Despite this, the President and some of the faculty enhanced their income by serving as Ministers of local Protestant churches, and **Edward Smith** engaged in the practice of medicine.

His opportunity to come to the College arose in 1811, when Dr. Charles Simons of Charleston, the Professor of Chemistry, died suddenly. Clearly **Edward Smith** sought the position not simply for financial reasons. He had an interest in physiological chemistry and medical investigation which he had shown while he was in Charleston and in Pendleton. He continued this interest in Columbia. Most his medical articles were case reports, which he sent to northern journals -- "An extraordinary case of disease of the stomach", a "Case of Dysuria", and "A case of Calculus in the Urethra"-- but there was also a report "On the Application of Medico-Chemistry to Calculous Affections", which demonstrated his awareness of the role of dissolved substances in forming urinary calculi. His performance as a teacher must have been satisfactory, for in 1817, when a Committee of the Board of Trustees investigated a student riot, it commended Dr. **Smith** and two other Professors for their behavior and their competence.

Finances did, nevertheless, finally shape his life. His family seems to have caught up with his income. While he was in Charleston he and **Sarah Tucker** had two children, but after that they had no other children during all of their years in Pendleton. When they arrived in Columbia and **Edward** began to have a regular income, the began to have children again. Probably this was not a coincidence. By 1819 **Edward** and **Sarah** had seven children, the youngest only one year of age, and another was on the way. He felt the need for more income and he decided that Columbia could not provide it. Once again his North in-laws gave a lead to his behavior. The territories of Alabama and Mississippi had been opened to settlement, and his brother-in-law **Edward Washington North** had moved there. The best land in these two States had already been taken, but the Missouri Territory, which still had good land, was applying for admission as Slave State, and **Edward Darrell Smith** decided to go there. On June 28, 1819, just before he left, he wrote a will. It says, in part, "I expect ... to commence a journey to the Missouri, which will probably detain me from my family for at least three months, and which duration, though painful to my feelings, I deem it my duty to undergo in the hopes of making a better temporal provision than there is prospect of my doing in my present situation." He made the journey, and he died in Missouri in the summer of 1819.

The "Marriage and Death Notices" in the *City Gazette* of Charleston, on Thursday, September 30, 1819, gives the following:

"Letters from Columbia announce the lamented death of Dr. **Edward Darrell Smith**, Professor of Chemistry and Natural Philosophy in the College of South Carolina. 'This high-minded man', to use the language of one of these letters, died of a bilious fever at the house of his friend, Mr. Colter, at St. Louis, in the Missouri Territory, on the 17th day of August last, after an illness of twelve days ..."

those days, and often affected travelers in the west, where sanitary conditions were very poor, and the preparation and storage of food was equally poor.

The will of Edward Darrell Smith was proved on Nov. 5, 1919, witnessed by his cousin William Savage Smith, with his wife Sarah Tucker [Smith] as executrix.

Refs: MILLER; JOSIAH SMITH DIARY; SIMPSON; HUGER; WARING; HOLLIS; SCH&G 46:190; Will of Edward Darrell Smith, quoted by NSH.