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A MAINE FAMILY OF
SMITHS



Benjamin F Smith

A MAINE FAMILY OF^c
SMITHS

By
BENJAMIN F. SMITH



PRIVATELY PRINTED
1922

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To My Brother

GEORGE WARREN SMITH,
who in his 97th year, with mental
vigor and business acumen undi-
minished, remains my comrade, this
narrative of our boyhood aspira-
tions, our early struggles and our
later successes is affectionately
dedicated.

FOREWORD

THIS narrative of incidents in the history of our branch of the numerous families bearing the name of Smith is gathered out of the recollections of a busy life, supplemented by authentic family data. That portion which is genealogical in character is the result of investigation made with the assistance of Miss Virginia Hall, of Cambridge, Mass., in the New England Historic Genealogical Society of Boston.

BENJAMIN F. SMITH.

Clifford Lodge, Warrenton Park,
Glen Cove, Maine.
September, 1922.

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THE PIONEERS

I

ON looking back to early childhood, one finds events and incidents in life that seem worth recording, if only that in after years others of the same lineage may know more about their ancestral predecessors — whence they came, from what nationality, and what were the leading events and surroundings that shaped their lives and brought them benefits that their descendants will most prize among their inheritance.

The history of this “Maine Family of Smiths” begins with one James Smith of Bristol, England, and Martha Wills, daughter of Thomas Wills, Esquire, of Exeter, England, who were married and came to America, and in 1668 were living at Berwick, in the then wilderness of Maine. (See Church Records at Berwick, Maine.) James, with other settlers, first

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began clearing away the forests for planting, and later on was active in laying out the town of Berwick, and also in taking up land for farms, at the tidewater at Kittery Point, Maine, a few miles distant, opposite Portsmouth, where each received his allotted share. (See "History of Old Kittery and her Families," with map giving boundaries and names, on which James Smith's name is recorded.)

This was the period of the French and Indian War. Since Indians lurked in the forests to capture the English settlers, whom they took to Canada for ransom, the settlers were compelled to build blockhouses as places of refuge, with men on watch from an elevated tower to give the alarm on discovery of Indians. Clearings were only made in sight of these blockhouses. Such were the conditions prevailing at that early date — the settlers having to work and fight for existence.

James and Martha Wills Smith at that time had two young sons, the youngest, named John, being quite a youngster.

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One day when Martha and this young son John were wandering perilously near the thick woods, Indians pounced upon them, securing both, and rushed back with them into the dense forest. The alarm was given, but too late. Mother and son were taken into the woods, far beyond recovery by the white settlers. The Indians carried them more than two hundred miles through wooded wildernesses to the Canadian border. In the town of Montreal they were given over to a French officer, who paid the Indians their reward, quarters were assigned to them, and after being baptized into the Catholic Church, they were left to the care of the guardsman of that section.

Here they lived for a year or two, or until the treaty of peace between the French and the English ended the war for the territory of Maine in favor of the English as far as the Canadian border or St. John River. This treaty stipulated that all captives from the English Colony should be returned to their homes, and under this agreement Martha Wills Smith

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and her son John were restored to their home at Berwick. John grew to manhood, married, and lived to a good old age. Among his children was a son Joshua, who also married and lived to be about eighty-seven, leaving, among other children, a son by the name of Stephen.

II

STEPHEN SMITH enlisted at the age of twenty in the War for Independence, and served for four years, or until the end of the war. He was mustered out at the age of twenty-four, and returned to his home town Berwick. During his absence in the war, his father Joshua had moved to Sandy Point, then a part of Damariscotta, and now in Nobleborough. Here he had purchased six or seven hundred acres of pine land, and erecting a sawmill, began shipping lumber to Portland, Salem, and Boston.

Stephen, after his return from the war, married Mercy Andros, one of two daughters of John Andros, an English immigrant who had settled at Berwick, and brought his wife to his father's home at Sandy Point. As in due time his family became numerous, he decided he must look for a home for himself. He was fond of hunting and fishing, and in his fishing

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trips had followed the Sheepscot River up to its headwaters. In these wild, unsettled woods he had found a good site for a mill near the headwaters of the river, with a fine forest of large pine trees near by.

There he decided to make his home, and in the fall of 1794 built a log cabin on a hillside near a little brook, where there was some meadowland made by beaver dams. Here grass grew luxuriantly, and he could cut hay and have pasturage for a cow. Completing his log cabin that fall with the exception of the roof, he returned to his father's home at Sandy Point for the winter. In early spring, with his wife and six small children, Stephen started for his new home in the log cabin in the wilderness, moving their belongings on an ox sled. On nearing a high wooded hill, later called Otis Hill, he pulled up in front of the log cabin of a friend who had recently settled there. Here he remained, awaiting the advancing spring, and cut a bridle path through the woods to his own log cabin about three miles distant.

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On the fifth of May, 1795, he again started with his family for their new home. Two of his children, too small to walk, were put into a saddlebag on the back of his horse. Thus they trudged along the bridle path through the thick woods to their cabin, where they unloaded their effects and took possession. The cabin had no roof, but Stephen was not long in providing one. Thus Stephen Smith became the first settler in Beaver Hill Plantation, subsequently called Freedom, in Waldo County, Maine.

The fall before, Stephen had made a clearing of an acre or two, cutting down the big trees. These he had piled in a heap as best he could and set on fire, burning them sufficiently to plant corn and other vegetables. On this "burnt land" the soil was good, and the ashes from the logs made a good fertilizer. His crops grew finely, and he felt assured that he could maintain his family through the coming winter. He had a horse, also one cow, on which the small children depended for milk. Jimmy, the oldest boy,

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aged fifteen, drove the cow down to the meadow for pasturage, and then back to the cabin at night.

One day in August, Jimmy, when he went for the cow, found her flat on the ground with a big bear gnawing at her shoulder. In his fright he shot off his gun at the bear and, running for home, gave the alarm to his mother and father. They rushed back with him to the cow, which they found lying on the ground, her shoulder blades protruding where the bear had gnawed off the flesh. They succeeded in getting her to her feet and back to the log cabin, where Mercy, with her primitive knowledge of the curative properties of the wild herbs that grew there in abundance, set to work to bathe and treat the terrible laceration. She kept constantly at work over the animal, giving her such food and grasses as could be gathered. Finally all wounds were healed and the cow restored to her important sphere of usefulness.

Wild raspberries and other berries were found, and the children picked many

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quarts that helped the family until the green corn was ready to be eaten. Then came new potatoes, and these, with what milk they got from the cow, made life in the log cabin in the dense woods, far from other settlements, a really happy one. Trout were then abundant in the Sheeps-cot headwaters near the proposed mill site, and with these Stephen kept the family well supplied.

When the corn was in the milk, the black bears that were plentiful in the woods would come at night into the cornfield and help themselves to the sweet, delicious corn and break down and destroy much more. Like other new settlers, Stephen had these bears to fight to save his corn from destruction. He set a loaded gun on stakes about two feet high, just a few rows inside the cornstalks, on the side of the corn patch where the bears would be most likely to come from the adjacent woods. Then he ran a fishline, supported about two feet from the ground, for quite a distance. This line was attached to the hair trigger of the gun,

which was at full cock and pointed just high enough along the line so that when the gun was fired, the bullet would strike a bear around the heart. No bear could come into the cornfield on that side without hitting the line and discharging the gun.

Having set up his gun, Stephen went home to bed and awaited results. He was always fond of relating his success. Sometimes in the small hours of the night the family would hear the gun go off. Stephen would jump out of bed and exclaim, "Mother, we have got a bear, sure enough!" Then in the early morning the whole family would go out and find the bear dead. The neighboring settlers were notified to come and help skin the bear and divide the meat, so that each had some to take home to his family.

Finally the corn ripened sufficiently for grinding. In Unity, twelve miles distant, on the Sandy Point stream, was a grist-mill of primitive construction. Nothing daunted, Stephen, a broad-shouldered and stalwart man, took a bag of corn on

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his shoulders and, by the aid of spotted trees, went the twelve miles to the grist-mill. There he had the corn ground into meal to feed his wife and their half-dozen children, and returned with it to his log cabin. Our father was one of those children, and we boys, when we were youngsters on the old farm, have heard him say that never in his life did any food taste so good as that first hasty pudding and milk.

Stephen was a man of many resources. In the stump of a large tree near the cabin he burned a cavity sufficient to hold a quantity of corn, and with a heavy oak pestle hung from a spring pole he pounded the corn into the consistency of meal. The coarser part, called samp, was sifted out for boiling. Thus the family could live, independent of the gristmill.

That fall, Stephen, with his brawny arms and his axe, felled more of the forest trees, adding several acres to his cleared land. He brought his family successfully through the vigorous winter, securing food sometimes by hunting the big game

that was plentiful, and having the protection of the forest and an abundance of firewood. In the spring he burned the felled logs, planted the new land with all kinds of important vegetables, and got some pigs and another cow, so that the following winter his family were living in luxury in the log cabin, having plenty of pork, sausage, and bacon, with potatoes, pumpkins, turnips, and other garden vegetables.

Stephen was industrious, always up at a very early hour in the morning and at work as long as daylight lasted. Thus his increasing family were sure of plenty of food, but their clothing was scanty, and for a time the children had to go barefooted even in winter — until material for footwear could be made for them. In this primitive way the family lived, increasing to twelve children — ten boys and two girls, including four pairs of twins. The older boys were helpful in clearing away the forest and planting more acreage. There was an increasing number of hogs, cows, and sheep; and in-

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coming settlers who had little to start life with in the new country came to Stephen Smith to buy wheat, seed corn, potatoes and other vegetables, for planting, for Stephen always had a surplus to sell to them. He became known among the new settlers as a successful farmer. Then he built a sawmill on the headwaters of the Sheepscot River and he and his growing boys sawed the great pine trees into lumber, which he sold to the settlers to build their homes. With increasing prosperity he cut and sawed the lumber for a new frame house for his own large family. This he erected in 1804. Two of his boys, John and Benjamin, who had been working at the carpenter's trade, did the inside finishing of the house. In 1806, the family moved from the log cabin into the new frame house, the first to be built in the town, then called Smith Town, and later the town of Freedom.

Stephen Smith continued to clear away the forests and bring his land under cultivation, helped by his sons as they grew to manhood. Other settlers were doing

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the same sort of work, and Freedom became known as a flourishing settlement. Stephen, being the first to venture into that wilderness, was most talked about, as a soldier in the War for Independence and a prosperous farmer.

III

WHEN the War of 1812 was declared between England and the United States, and young men were enlisting for service, Stephen's son George, our father, was among them. He served in Captain John Cummings's company in a volunteer regiment of United States Infantry, from May 28, 1813, until May 27, 1814, when he was mustered out.

Returning home, George and his brothers discussed their future prospects and what they should do for a living. There was not room for so large a family of boys on their father's farm; they must strike out for themselves. What should they do? During the winter of 1814 various plans were discussed. They had heard of a new country in the far West, where the land was rich and there were no stones to hinder easy cultivation. That sounded very attractive compared with the hard

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work necessary to make a farm on the stony land of Maine.

Four of the boys — two pairs of twins, John and Joshua, George and Stephen — decided that in the spring of 1814 they would leave for “the Ohio.” They spent the winter in building a wagon suitable for the long journey to that El Dorado, and when the snow was gone and the roads settled, these four boys were ready with their wagon, horses, and necessary personal effects, to make that long journey of fifteen hundred miles. There were no railroads then, and “the Ohio” seemed very far off.

The day of departure from South Freedom arrived. Early in the morning the wagon was packed, the horses harnessed, and the start was made, the father and mother riding beside them on horseback as far as Augusta to see them off. They reached Augusta the first day, where they remained overnight with friends. The next morning Stephen and Mercy said good-bye to their boys and returned to their South Freedom home. On that lonely

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journey homeward, Mercy in her downheartedness would exclaim, "Stephen, we will never see those dear boys again!"

The boys journeyed on. In passing through Connecticut they were stopped for traveling on Sunday by officers enforcing the "Blue Laws." When they reached Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, President Madison was just arriving with a long train of wagons loaded with government archives to save them from the British, who had captured Washington and burned the White House. On and on westward the boys traveled with their wagon, finally reaching the new town of Zanesville, Ohio. After a six weeks' journey they had at last reached the El Dorado they had dreamed about.

Here they made their stand from which to go out and battle for a living. Two sought work as carpenters, the other two working at anything that offered. Columbus was then being built as the capital of the state; and our father George there found work in helping to clear the stumps out of the streets that were being laid out.

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After four years, the boys concluded that they should bring the "old folks" out to Ohio, where they all expected to live, for two more brothers, Benjamin and Silas, had come to join them. It was decided that George should go East for this purpose. Accordingly, in the summer of 1819 George left Zanesville on horseback for South Freedom, fifteen hundred miles away. In his after life he used to relate to us young boys many incidents about that trip. Arriving home, he laid before his mother and father the proposal to take them to the new home in Ohio.

The father was elated over the idea and wanted to go, but the mother refused to listen to a plan which would separate her from her lifelong friends, whom she would never see again. George pondered over the situation, and decided that his mother's objections were well founded and should be considered. He wrote to his brothers in Ohio regarding the matter, and they all replied that he should remain with the "old folks" while they lived.

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Since the remaining brothers had also gone to Ohio, it was important that at least one son should stay with the mother and father in their old age.

This decision changed George's whole plans for his future life, but he accepted it. Having settled this important question, George realized that he would be lonely with all his brothers in Ohio. He soon made the acquaintance of Mehitable Clifford, daughter of John Clifford, who was the son of Zachariah Clifford of New Hampshire. John Clifford had previously lived in New Hampshire near his father, and had a large family of children, mostly grown up. Deciding to move to Maine, he secured a tract of land in Montville, adjoining the town of Freedom, near Hogback Mountain. There he and his family began their new life, several stalwart sons helping to subdue the forest. The acquaintance between George Smith and Mehitable Clifford resulted in a proposal of marriage. On March 29, 1821, they were married, George taking his bride home to his father's house.

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IV

IN due course of time, George and Mehitable Smith had six children, — Aurelia, Francis, George Warren, David Clifford, Benjamin Franklin, and Nancy Cordelia. Life on the farm provided plenty of good, wholesome farmer's work for these growing children, and all helped to provide for the necessities of life as they developed into manhood and womanhood. But along with all this were surroundings that appealed to these country children: beautiful hills, fields, and woodlands, streams and brooks filled with trout and ponds with pickerel, making it a never-ending delight to go fishing. And in the woods bordering the fields were partridges in plenty, where the small boy with a gun was always sure to bring home a few for a stew or a pot pie.

In those days, wild pigeons were abundant, and in September, when the wheat harvest had been secured, the pigeons

would fly onto the stubble in great compact flocks to feed on the scattered grain. A smooth bed sprinkled over with grain was made, and an ingenious net fastened with ropes to some spring poles was concealed behind it. The pigeons would see the grain and swoop down. A man hidden in a booth near by would then spring the poles. The net would instantly envelop the whole bed, securing hundreds of pigeons at a time. These were exciting incidents for the boys, and remain vividly in memory in after life.

There are incidents worthy of note in the early childhood days of these children. One fine afternoon in summer their mother invited some women of the neighborhood to have hot biscuits and tea with her. Francis, four years of age, and George Warren, two and one-half, were playing round the grounds near a well with no curb, but with a board platform and the usual well hook with which to let down and draw up the water bucket. These little children saw a frog leap upon the platform and down into the well.

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George, then called Warren, ran upon the platform to look into the well and see where the frog went. A plank tipped up and pitched him headlong into the well. Francis, frightened, ran into the house crying, "Mother, Warren is in the well!" With a scream his mother rushed out, and, seizing the well hook, thrust it down into the well. Warren had now come up to the surface of the water. The mother hooked him under his arm, the hook catching in his dress, and pulled him out. The incident was the talk of the neighborhood for years afterward.

The father, George Smith, on returning from his five years of life in Ohio, found that Stephen, his father, had many apple trees. Men in the business of grafting came along with scions of the best varieties of apples, and George employed them to graft his trees. The result gave them the best apples in town, including Spitzenberg, Baldwin, Greening, Golden Dun, Summer Graft, Seek-No-Further, and the early High-Top Sweeting,—all apples of superior quality. When late in

the fall the father and mother invited their neighbors to a paring bee, it was an occasion of delight to the children, long to be remembered.

The varieties of potatoes then grown on the farm and common in those days, such as Shenango, Long Red, and Hog Horns, had a flavor not equalled by any of today. With an abundance of milk, butter, eggs, farm-grown yellow corn, and wheat, all ground at the local gristmills, the method of making wheat bread and johnnycake seemed to produce a deliciousness not found in the cooking of the present day.

The hog-killing time, just before Christmas, provided ham for smoking, side meat to be salted down for winter use, and choice parts for sausages, flavored with sage and other spices, which appealed to the appetite in a way not equalled by any of today's productions. And the goose for Christmas dinner, roasted on a spit before an open wood fire, together with pumpkin pies, mince pies, and puddings, always made Christ-

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mas an eventful time. With the cellar filled with potatoes, apples, turnips, onions, and other vegetables, the barrel of sauerkraut and the pork barrel, these children had much to be thankful for in being born on a farm in the country.

The corn huskings were memorable events, when George Smith's neighbors were invited to come and husk the long pile of corn heaped on one side of the barn floor. Men and women, boys and girls, seated on the sides of the pile, husked the corn and threw the ears into another pile. The great bank of ears diminished very fast, and usually some man with a voice sang a familiar tune to enliven the scene. Then came a summons to the house for supper: baked beans, hot puddings, also hot mince, apple, and pumpkin pies, with all the "fixings" that went with them. All had a fine time, and always some small child lurked about, to be given some of the good things afterward.

Another incident in that early life happened in midwinter, when Benjamin,

called "Benny," suddenly became very sick. It was a stomach trouble, called erysipelas by the doctor. At any rate, intense and long-continued pain resulted in emaciation, and the severity of the disease caused the case to be regarded as hopeless. When weeks passed and the boy, only eight years of age, still lived, it was a wonder commented upon by all the neighbors. Returning spring helped to bring strength to the boy and happiness to the whole family.

The routine of farm work, and the care of cattle, sheep, hogs, chickens, geese, ducks, and turkeys, always kept the family well employed. As winter came on, a good-sized woodpile was always in the yard to furnish plenty of the open fires of those days. Stoves and furnaces were then an unknown luxury to the farmers. The winter schools, which brought the children of the district together for education and the incidental fun and frolic at recess and noontime, were looked forward to with a great deal of pleasure. Sometimes, during winter evenings, there

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were spelling schools, common in all school districts in the neighborhood, when spelling contests put the boys and girls at their wits' end to secure prizes by spelling down all the others in the class. Thus the brighter and quicker boys and girls became good spellers as a result of the teaching methods of those days. At other times there were oratorical contests, when on an appointed evening people from adjoining school districts would come, filling the schoolhouse. Often, to enliven the occasion, some well-known man would act the part of clown, dressed in costume and often being very witty.

As time passed and the children grew older, the father, working with his young sons in the fields, would often tell them the incidents of his early life: of leaving home with his three brothers, making their long journey in a two-horse wagon to Ohio, and of his five years of life there. All these stories interested the boys immensely. Then after dinner, in summer days, they would run down to the mill-

pond and have a swim before going to work in the afternoon.

Francis, when about eighteen years of age, in the sledding season of midwinter, drove a pair of steers with a load of bark to Hunt's Tannery at Liberty. Meeting some bad roads over Otis Hill, he did not return home until after midnight. Having taken no lunch with him, he was very hungry and ate much cold food. Indigestion resulted, together with a high fever the following morning, which terminated in a severe sickness. It incapacitated him for any hard work, and for a year or more he moped about with a cloak over his shoulders, always feeling chilly. As a matter of fact, in his whole after life he never knew what good health really meant.

V

AT the age of sixteen, George Warren went to the fall term of Professor Paine's Academy school at China Village, about eight miles from his home at South Freedom. While he was there the school agent from Albion, a town near by, came to the academy to engage a teacher for his winter school. Professor Paine recommended George Warren. He was engaged, and taught the Albion School very satisfactorily that winter.

Just at the close of school in the early spring, he came down with measles. When he arrived home, he thought he was well of them, and assisted his father in hauling wood for spring and summer use. The sharp rays of glaring sunlight on the snow, still on the ground, affected and inflamed his eyes; the virus of the measles, still in his blood, settled in them, and his agony was intense.

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The inflammation continued during the summer, and when fall brought colder weather he was kept in a room with every ray of light excluded. The front room of the house had an open fireplace. Here Warren stayed during the winter, with his eyes closely blindfolded. As the inflammation was so painful, towels wet in cold water were kept upon his eyes almost all the time.

Thus he sat in his rocking-chair, and whiled away the days and nights before the open fire. His father and Benny, now a young schoolboy, kept up the supply of wood, and did all they could to relieve his suffering, talking with him to cheer his loneliness, in what was to him a winter of midnight darkness.

Finally came the mild spring days of April, and the need for Warren to leave his room. With the light doubly guarded from his eyes, he was moved by degrees to the front door and then to the yard. With warmer weather, he began to walk about the grounds, and gradually removed the bandages from his eyes. It

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gave him much joy to emerge from a total darkness of more than four months and begin to see the light. His improvement continued as the warm spring months brought softer breezes, and now, able to give his eyes more light, he felt the need of exercise. Taking his axe in hand, he wandered daily into the wood lot, found some fallen trees and chopped them into four-foot lengths. He kept this up into the summer, and for years afterward the evidence of his chopping could be seen in the wood lot.

His condition improved as time went on, and he substituted green goggles for other protection to his eyes. Thus able to go about more freely, he would take a hoe and work in the fields with his father and the boys. Francis was still much of an invalid and not able to work on the farm, so Warren also went about with him, either walking, or driving with the horse ("Old White") and wagon. Both got all the health and comfort possible.

In the following October, Benjamin Smith, father's brother, whom he had

not seen since he left his brothers in Ohio twenty-five years before, came from Albany, N. Y., with his lovely daughter, Sarah Elizabeth, seventeen years of age. She was exceptionally beautiful, with light hair and large blue eyes, and had been finely educated at Mrs. Loverage's school for girls in Albany. The coming of such a bright, witty, charming girl into the life of the country farm and into her father's old homestead, which he had not seen since he, with his three brothers, started in their two-horse wagon for Ohio in 1814, was a revelation.

This fascinating young girl, with pink and white complexion, just out of school and full of laughter and the desire for fun and frolic, was the wonder of the neighborhood, and Francis and George Warren were carried away with the new life that came into the family. Cart rides, hay-rack rides, romping up and down the roads with the freedom that only country life could give, all appealed to the girl. She loved every incident, everything and everybody, with the abandon that made

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friends with every one. Such was life for many weeks at the old farm. In the meantime Uncle Ben, with his brother George, lived over again the incidents of his boyhood life, and met all the older people of the town — and there were several — who could remember so far back.

Finally the time came when Uncle Ben and his daughter must take their leave and return to Albany. Sarah Elizabeth urged upon George Warren the importance of going to Albany to have his eyes treated by their doctor. After their departure, father, mother, and children had new thoughts and subjects to engross their minds, and the conversation was about the new possibilities and new vision of life left them by Uncle Ben and his daughter.

VI

WITH shortening days and advancing cold weather, the inflammation in George Warren's eyes increased. Again he betook himself to his darkened room, and in winter bandaged his eyes to keep out all rays of light. Although not afflicted so severely as during the previous winter, he was still virtually a prisoner in his lonely room. His condition bore heavily upon the sympathy of the whole family, but nothing could apparently be done except to await future events.

As spring approached, it was decided that he should accept the invitation of Uncle Ben and his daughter to visit them in Albany. Accordingly, the father began to make two small leather trunks, one for George and another for Francis, who was to accompany his brother. When all arrangements had been completed, and

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while the roads were still very muddy and somewhat covered with the remains of old snowdrifts, on the morning of April 14, 1845, Squire Clough, a neighbor, drove up to the door with a strong wagon drawn by a two-horse tandem. George Warren and Francis got in, with the two little trunks. Squire Clough pulled up the reins and off they went for Hallowell, to take boat for Boston and Albany. At their departure, as the wagon moved off, David and Benny, the two younger brothers, who were chopping the summer's woodpile in the yard, looked anxiously after them, and wondered if they would ever see them again.

On their arrival at the home of Uncle Ben, at 22 Lydius Street, Albany, George and Francis were made very comfortable, and in the warm days of spring, George Warren, wearing green-glass goggles, walked about the streets of the neighborhood feeling the freedom of a bird let out of a cage. Week by week his eyes improved, and he began to feel that he would like some employment.

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To that end he secured from a print shop some lithographic prints of the Presidents of the United States, which he carried about, trying to sell them at very small print-shop prices. In the meantime, Francis had gone on to Worcester, getting an agency from a publishing house there to sell some of its publications.

Uncle Ben's daughter and young son Ben, Jr., were taking drawing lessons from an English artist named Edwin Whitefield. He proposed to George Warren that he make a drawing or sketch of the city of Albany and have it lithographed and copies printed. George could then get subscribers for the sketch at paying prices, and he would pay George a monthly salary for his work.

This venture proved successful, and George and Whitefield then talked over the plan of making drawings of some larger city. They decided upon Newburgh and Brooklyn, Long Island, N. Y., whither George went. Establishing himself in a boarding house in Brooklyn, he

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began canvassing the city for subscriptions to a view of Brooklyn, to be published at three dollars a copy. Securing the names of some of the prominent men of the city, then of about ninety thousand inhabitants, he began to call upon them for subscriptions, and he was usually successful in getting them to write down their names and addresses for one or more copies in his little subscription book. As he progressed, the prominent names on his list induced others to subscribe, so that finally he had secured so long a list of subscribers that the financial success of the enterprise was flattering and assured. This was the beginning of the Smith brothers' fifteen years of work in getting up and publishing views of the principal cities in the United States, as well as of Havana, Cuba.

VII

GEORGE WARREN was now able to abandon goggles and put on gold-bowed, four-eyed, green lens glasses. Francis went to Boston, then having a population of ninety thousand, to get up a view of that city. The drawing was made by Edwin Whitefield, lithographed, and copies delivered to subscribers whom Francis had secured at three dollars each. The final balance sheet showed a small profit. The view of Brooklyn in the final settlement showed also a profit. As these profits had to be divided with Whitefield, the artist, while the chief work was the securing of subscribers for copies when ready for delivery, Francis and George Warren decided that they would hire an artist to do the work, thus securing to themselves all the profits remaining from subscriptions. This made Whitefield very mad, but it was "business."

*View of Boston, 1854. From
the drawing made for the Smith
brothers by John W. Hill.*

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It might be well to state here that George Warren was the first of the brothers to teach in the country schools. Later Francis, and also David, taught school for several winters, and finally Benjamin taught a winter school before leaving home. Teaching school was quite a common practice among ambitious Maine boys in order to get money with which to go away from home to find more lucrative business pursuits. They received from ten to eighteen dollars per month, with board at different families.

George Warren went to Philadelphia to secure subscriptions for copies of a view of that city. After getting the work well started, he went on to Charleston, S. C., for the same purpose, and from there to Havana. By securing the name of Governor-General Concha to head his list as a subscriber for five copies, he made canvassing for copies of a view of Havana comparatively easy work, and the result showed a profitable balance sheet. Returning from Cuba, he and

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Francis worked at securing subscriptions to the Philadelphia view.

Before going to Havana, George had gone to Pittsburgh to arrange for a view of that city. Then a canvass was made for a view of New York City, on which Francis and George worked hard, while David canvassed for a view of Hartford and New Haven and other small cities, including Salem, Mass. The following spring, in 1850, when some of these views were ready for delivery, Benjamin came on after finishing a winter of teaching school, and his first work was with David in delivering the view of Salem to subscribers. Whitefield still had a partnership in the net proceeds. All the Smith Brothers were now employed in publishing views of cities.

While Francis and George were canvassing for views of New York and some other cities, Benjamin and David delivered to subscribers the views of Salem and Hartford. David went from there to New Haven, Benjamin to New Bedford to begin a canvass for a view of that

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city. Within a few days he had secured the subscriptions of about a dozen of the leading men. Then feeling very ill, he went to his boarding house, a Mrs. Swayne's on County Street, and to bed. Soon losing consciousness, he was found in this condition by the chambermaid, who informed the landlady; a Dr. Bartlett was sent for, and then a man nurse to care for him. It was an extreme case of dysentery. The boy's letters were looked over, and the discovery was made that he had a brother in New Haven. David was sent for, whose coming gave encouragement to Benjamin, and though the excruciating pains were violent, the treatment with laudanum and starch did in time allay them, and after about three weeks the boy was able to leave his room. His recovery was considered at the time, by Dr. Bartlett and others, almost a miracle.

Going to New York, Benjamin met Francis at No. 15 Leight Street, and remained there until October, when he went to Philadelphia to meet George

Warren, who was canvassing for two views of that city. Later Francis and David also went to Philadelphia. All four brothers took an attic room together at \$2.50 a week each, with a Mrs. Longstreth, at No. 92 South Eighth Street, where the winter was spent in canvassing for the Philadelphia views. The following summer, when the views were ready for delivery, a change of boarding house was decided upon, and an attic room obtained on lower Walnut Street below Third, with a Mrs. Crim, at the same price.

The following winter, in 1851, George Warren and David went to New Orleans to canvass for two views of that city. They were quite successful, and when the views had been printed and were ready in February, 1852, George and Benjamin took a steamer, the *Northern Indiana*, from Louisville for New Orleans to deliver them to the subscribers, arriving on the first day of March. In the meantime Francis and Sam Parmelee, his brother-in-law, went to Havana to deliver the views of that city. When

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that was done, all returned to New York.

At this time there were several auction sales of negro slaves during the spring. Benjamin attended these sales and took mental notes of all that occurred, which made the reading of Mrs. Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin" doubly interesting. All had returned to New York to continue canvassing that city. The following winter, Francis and his wife were boarding at No. 15 Leight Street, while George Warren and Benjamin were boarding with a Mrs. Routon on Bleeker Street.

That winter was a severe one. About the last of January, George had an intense pain in the ball of his foot, that laid him up for a week. Then the same pain struck the other foot. The doctor pronounced it acute inflammatory rheumatism, and advised getting into a warmer climate in the South. Passage was engaged on a steamer for Savannah, Georgia, and Benjamin went on board with him on the thirteenth of February. With a friend accompanying a Mr. George Washington,

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one Allston Jenkins, an amateur artist, they spent about a week in Savannah, and then took the boat for Jacksonville, Florida. Arriving there, they found the weather very warm, and George, with his feet in very large loose slippers or shoes, could walk about. The opportunity to be out-of-doors in that warm sunshine with sandy, soft soil to walk upon, had a marvelous effect upon him, and the rapid improvement showed that the doctor's advice to go to Florida was wise.

Remaining in Jacksonville about two weeks, George met Colonel Calhoun, who had a winter ranch on Anzie Island in the St. Johns River, about thirty or forty miles above Jacksonville. Being alone, having lost his wife, the colonel invited George to go up and spend a few weeks with him, which invitation was accepted. "Ben" and Jenkins went to a winter resort, Silver Springs, at the head of the Oklawaha River, a tributary of the St. Johns, a few weeks later, meeting George again at a boarding house in Savannah. This was about the fifteenth of

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April; the flower gardens about the town were beginning to bloom quite freely and made Savannah look very attractive. Frequent trips out to the cemetery, "Bonaventure," with its wonderful old trees laden with the hanging moss so prevalent in the South, was a marked feature which all enjoyed. It was there they met Mary Warren of New York, a young schoolgirl, and her companion, Miss C. C. Stone, whose acquaintance in New York and Boston lasted many years.

On his return to New York the latter part of May, George had greatly recovered from his lameness and seemed quite like himself. At that time Francis and his wife were living at Hoboken and David and his wife in Brooklyn. The canvass for subscriptions to the steel-engraved view of New York City was kept up by Francis, George, and David, while Benjamin went to Boston to canvass for an engraving of that city, hiring one John E. Howard to help him.

That winter, in 1853, it became necessary to have an impression printed of the

engraving of New York City then being made in New York by a noted steel-plate engraver, Robert Henschelwood. No press in New York was large enough to do the printing; the plate had to be sent to Philadelphia to a printing establishment on the corner of Sixth and Chestnut Streets. This building took fire, the contents were all consumed, and likewise the steel plate.

Having obtained many subscribers for the view and not being daunted, the brothers employed an artist, John W. Hill, to make a new drawing of the city. By the advice of an artist, Mr. Schaus, the drawing was sent to Paris, and the contract let to François de la Rue & Cie., to engrave a new plate.

In due time Hill also made a drawing of the city of Boston, which was sent to Charles Mottram, 174 Tottenham Court Road, London, a noted steel-plate engraver, and the contract let to him through a well-known print-publishing house in London, — Paul and Dominique Colnaghi & Co.

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Canvassing for the views went on in Boston, New York, and other cities, with all the energy the Smith boys could put into it. David had gone to London on an observation trip to see if any field existed there for the Smith kind of publication, but as no encouragement could be had, he returned to Boston in November, Benjamin meeting him.

David then announced his intention of attempting to have a painting made of the last days of Daniel Webster at Marshfield. He first learned that Joseph Ames of Boston was the artist who had been most successful in painting portraits of Webster. Then Benjamin and he called upon Peter Harvey, one of Webster's most intimate social friends, and mentioned to him their intention of having Webster's last days at Marshfield put upon canvas. Harvey took a favorable view and recommended them to call upon J. W. Page, a prominent Boston merchant and Webster's brother-in-law. Mr. Page received them pleasantly and spoke favorably to them. They then called

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upon Dr. Jeffries and Dr. Warren, Webster's physicians who had attended him in his last sickness. David and his brother described the scene they wished painted, and they said they would render all the assistance possible, and thought well of Ames as an artist. Then they called upon Fletcher Webster, son of Daniel Webster, at that time Collector of the Port of Boston. Peter Harvey had previously talked with him about the proposed painting. He said that he would render every possible assistance.

With these assurances they went to Ames, who had already thought much about the work, and made a bargain with him that he should receive \$3000 when the painting was finished. Thus the scheme was fully launched and Ames commenced the work, going to Webster's residence at Marshfield to sketch the room where Webster's friends had come with the two doctors when they had reported his illness to be serious. This event was about a week before his death, and it was this occasion and scene that



*Last Days of Daniel Webster
at Marshfield, 1852. From the
painting made for the Smith
brothers by Joseph Ames.*

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Ames was to put upon canvas. As Ames progressed with laying in the personages and surroundings, David and his brother went frequently to listen to his detailed descriptions of the effect as a work of art that he was aiming at. Ames secured the personal sittings of nearly all of the group in the painting at his studio in Boston, hence the likenesses were perfect, and those of Rufus Choate and Mr. Page remarkably characteristic.

That summer all of the brothers went to Rockland for a few weeks with Father and Mother Smith and "the girls," returning in September to continue the work of canvassing for a view of New York and also of Boston. Benjamin went to New Jersey in September, and as the result of mosquito bites, got his system thoroughly charged with malaria. The fever resulted in a congestive chill. Dr. Mott was called and questioned him about the treatment Dr. Trall was giving of cold packs and sweatings, and remarked, "If you don't keep him out of the water you will kill him." Later on he was able to

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do some canvassing again in New York, where the brothers all remained that winter.

Throughout the year 1854, the views of several cities were delivered and more canvassing done. Ames continued working on the Webster picture, and late in the fall or early winter it was pronounced finished. Then it became necessary to have a steel-plate engraving made from it, and the best engraver must of course be secured for the work. A correspondence with Mottram of London, who was engraving the view of Boston, resulted in his agreeing to do the work at a certain price, but first he must see the painting. The brothers discussed the matter of who should go over with it, and as Benjamin's health was impaired in consequence of the fever, he was selected.

VIII

TAKING the painting with me, I sailed from East Boston for Liverpool on the Cunard side-wheel steamer *Africa*, on the thirteenth day of February, 1855. The voyage across the ocean was very tempestuous, seas running mountain high. The 3000-ton side-wheel steamer of that day seemed at times almost engulfed, but after a sixteen days' voyage, it arrived in Liverpool on March 3.

I at once proceeded to London, took a room at Queen's Hotel, St. Martin's le Grande, and immediately went to bed, my exhaustion from the voyage having irritated my throat,—a trouble to which I had long been a victim. After about a week, I was up and about and went to see a play at Drury Lane Theater. This was at a time in the midst of the Crimean War, in which England, France, and Austria were fighting Russia. When

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the curtain dropped at the end of the first act, the stage manager came out in front, held up his hand, and said, "I have to announce to this audience that news has been received in London that Emperor Nicholas of Russia died today at one o'clock." The whole house was hushed for the moment, then the orchestra struck up "God Save the Queen."

Taking the Webster painting with me, I went to Mottram, the engraver, a typical Englishman, with hair well sprinkled with gray, looking like the artist he was. He was pleased with the artistic appearance of the painting and said that it would make an effective engraving. After discussing details, he agreed to put the work in hand at once and explained why the engraving of the Boston view had been delayed. I left him and went to the American Embassy. James Buchanan was then American Minister to Great Britain, and his secretary gave me a card to visit the House of Lords, which I was very desirous of doing. Going there at the proper time, I saw Lord

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Brougham, then very old, the Duke of Argyle, the Duke of Buccleuch, Lord Panmure, and many other notable English lords.

Quitting London, I then went to Paris, and took a room at the Hôtel de Lille et d'Albion, rue St. Honoré. Paris was strikingly different from London, with brightly lighted streets; an evening walk along the rue de la Paix, the boulevard des Italiens, the Madeleine, the rue Royale, and the rue de Rivoli, fronting the Tuileries, gave an impression long to be remembered.

The next morning I went to see François de la Rue & Cie., who were engraving the New York view on steel. I found de la Rue a typical French business man, who gave me all possible information about the work and told me when I might expect it to be finished. That done, as I intended to make quite a long stay in Paris I secured a room at No. 22 rue Mazagran, not far from the Porte Saint Martin, and made myself as comfortable as possible, although I was far from well.

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Paris with its novel sights appealed to me, but the March weather was very inclement, so much so that during the day I kept much in my room, but went out at evening to dine in some restaurant, and then enjoyed the novelty of walking through the different passages so brilliantly lighted, and visiting the little shops so attractive and so well sheltered from the inclement weather outside.

Going to the French theaters interested me very much. Not understanding the language, I engaged a French teacher, and made such progress as I could, although it was slow. What helped me to understand the spoken words was to go frequently into the shops where I could see on the plate-glass windows "*Ici on parle anglaise.*" Then the shopgirl in attendance would help me out as I stumbled along, trying to pronounce the French words and sentences.

As time went on and the spring days became brighter and warmer, I improved in health and could enjoy much of what I saw. Visiting the Louvre with its

galleries of paintings and treasures of art gave me new pleasures. Then on a pleasant afternoon about four or five o'clock I would walk up the Champs-Élysées, the fashionable promenade. There I had the first sight of the beautiful Empress Eugénie, riding in an open imperial carriage with her maid of honor, out to the Bois de Boulogne. Often about five o'clock Napoleon III., the Emperor, would come up the avenue, riding with his aids, a distinguished-looking man, with his heavy light-brown mustache and the bearing of a cavalry general — "The Famous Nephew of His Uncle," as he was often styled. Once, while walking near the Bourse or Stock Exchange, I saw an open carriage approaching, and in it was Napoleon III. with his uncle, Jérôme Bonaparte, brother of Napoleon the First. His likeness to his brother, whose portraits were in the Louvre, was very striking.

In the warm spring sunshine I enjoyed looking about Paris and going into the surrounding country to Fontainebleau

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and other notable places. At this time Napoleon III. was at the height of Imperial splendor and Paris had the gayety and social attraction for which she was so renowned. In June I went back to London to see how the engravings were progressing, and in August, with two other gentlemen, made a tour of Scotland, Ireland, and the north of England, all of which I enjoyed immensely. Returning to Paris, I remained there through October, then went to London, and on November I took passage on the German steamer *Hermann* for Southampton and New York. After a rough passage homeward, I was glad to be back in America once more.

IX

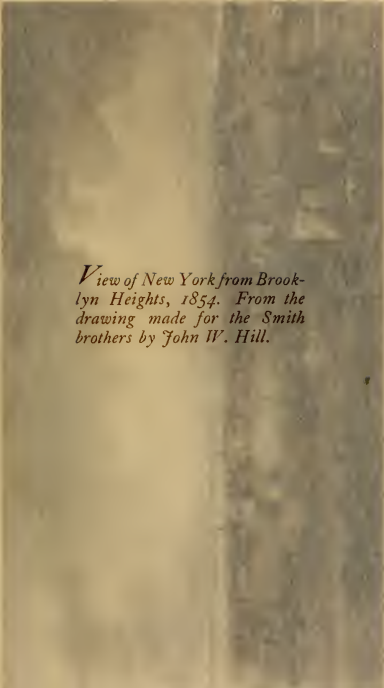
THAT winter, in 1856, my brother David and his wife, and Francis and his wife, were living in Hoboken. Since my throat continued to be troublesome, I went to Florida for the winter and up to Welaka on the St. John River above Palatka. There was plenty of game: ducks on the river and deer and wild turkey in the timberland. Meeting with some other northern men, — Savery of Massachusetts and Bailey of New Hampshire, — I had some good hunting.

I returned to New York, and later in the summer joined my brother and went down to Rockland for a visit to father and mother. That fall and winter I continued to canvass Boston for the steel-plate view that was being engraved in London. During the winter of 1857, the New York view was finished and the

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printing done by W. H. McQueen, of London, the printed copies were sent over, and the following spring they were delivered to the subscribers. It proved very satisfactory and is today considered the best view ever published of New York City, as it looked at that time.

David and Mr. Sam Parmelee, his partner in the enterprise, continued a vigorous canvass for the Webster engraving all over the principal cities of the country, while I canvassed Boston. After many delays the engraving was finished and printed by McQueen. The organized effort to deliver copies to some twenty-five hundred subscribers was begun about two weeks before the great panic of 1857, which swooped down over the country, causing the failure of more than fifty of the prominent business houses of Boston. Coming as it did in the midst of the delivery of the engraving to subscribers, the panic proved a calamity to that enterprise, and not much more than half of the original subscriptions were ever received, leaving a net profit, when all costs and



View of New York from Brooklyn Heights, 1854. From the drawing made for the Smith brothers by John W. Hill.

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and the following spring they were de-
livered to the subscribers. It proved very
valuable and is today considered the
best work ever published at New York
at that time.

David and Mr. Sam. Piercelee, his
partner in the enterprise, continued a
valuable service for the engraving

of the
view of New York from Brook-
lyn Heights, 1824. From the
drawing made for the Smith
brothers by John W. Hill.

about 1824, and was about
1857, when the country,
and the views of more than fifty of
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During all the time, in the midst of the de-
pression, the country to that enter-
prising and more than half of the
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deductions were made, of only \$1260. The father of President emeritus Eliot of Harvard, a wealthy man, owned stock in the jobbing house of Charles N. Mills & Co., which failed; he was declared by creditors to be a general partner. It took every dollar of his property, and he died soon thereafter.

The chills and fever which had clung to me for more than two years, undermining my health, resulted in a congestive chill, so that one day while I was walking down State Street, in Boston, a carriage had to be called and I was taken to my boarding house, and from there went to New York, where I spent the winter.

The Webster engraving was finally finished and printed in London, the prints sent over, and delivery began that summer; but the political unrest and threatened secession of the South made a deep cut in the number of patrons who would take the copies they had subscribed for, particularly in the Southern cities. The final settling of all bills left

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about \$50,000 in net profits, as related to me by David, although George Warren has said that Francis told him they were much less.

THE COLORADO GOLD MINE

X

IN 1858, my brother Francis heard that a new town was springing into existence in the far West on the Missouri River, where fortunes might easily be made by those who had a little ready money. He decided to make the venture, and leaving New York, went out to this town, called Omaha. He started a small banking house on the north side of Farnam Street, near Twelfth, in a little one-story frame building that stood with its gable end to the street. The total capital of all the Smith brothers at that time did not exceed \$60,000.

This was after the great financial panic of 1857. Depositors were not easily obtained, for there was a scarcity of money even for the barest necessities. When the doors of that modest bank were first opened for business, many flocked to it, to secure, if possible, a little money with which to tide them along. Money rates

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were five per cent per month, and security for a loan of even one or two hundred dollars was not to be had, unless it was vacant lots in the town, or government land warrants, then selling, when a customer could be found, at seventy-five cents per acre. These conditions made money at five per cent per month look cheap.

Francis made many little loans of from twenty-five to one hundred dollars, or thereabouts, and in a great many cases took watches, rings, and other jewelry, as collateral. But he did not have this field of five per cent per month long to himself, for a few months later a young man by the name of Augustus Kountze opened a little bank alongside of him. The depositors of these banks did not have much of any money, and this made the Smith and Kountze banking business pretty hard sledding.

Late that fall came the announcement of a new discovery of gold at Pike's Peak in the Rocky Mountains. The original discovery of gold there had been made

THE COLORADO GOLD MINE

in the fall of 1858, at the junction of Cherry Creek and Platte River, where Denver is now situated. Every one was stirred up in the hope that it might be true. A young newspaper man in Omaha, William N. Byers, later founder of the *Rocky Mountain News* at Denver, decided in the fall of 1859 to make the six-hundred-mile trip across the Plains, to ascertain if the facts regarding the discovery of gold were correct. After spending a month or so in the mines where Black Hawk and Central City now stand, he returned to Omaha. He arrived at one o'clock in the morning and went directly to Francis Smith's house. Calling him up, he stated that it was all true, and that he had brought some of the gold with him. They arranged that he should come to the bank the next morning to show what he had brought.


Early the next morning, Byron Reed, who slept in the bank and cared for it, had a good fire going in the stove. Francis had invited many of Omaha's well-known citizens to come and see Byers'

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display of gold. All came early, and Byers, who had little buckskin sacks of gold entrusted to him by miners for their friends in the States, poured it out into small piles. It amounted to ten thousand dollars. The men of Omaha were excited at the sight of so much gold, and immediately there was a great stir in town to prepare for an early start in the spring across the Plains to the gold mines at Pike's Peak. This was in December, 1859.

My brother Francis wrote me regarding the discovery. Knowing that I had long suffered from throat trouble, he urged me to come to Omaha, and then go to the mines that had been discovered in the Rocky Mountains. He said he had talked with men who had come from there, and that the climate was dry and delightful and just what I needed. The suggestion appealed to me. I packed up, started for Omaha, and arrived there on January 9, 1860.

On February 13, I pulled out of Omaha with five two-horse freight wagons loaded



Francis Smith. Photographed in Rome, January 28, 1876.

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display of gold. All came early, and those who had little buckskin sacks of gold returned to him by miners for their money or the States poured it out into small piles. It amounted to ten thousand dollars. The men of Omaha were excited at the sight of so much gold, and immediately there was a great stir in town to prepare for an early start in the spring across the plains to the gold mines in Pike's Peak. This was in December,

1876. I had been in Rome, Italy, and had just returned. I had been suffering from great trouble, and he urged me to come to Omaha, and then go to the mines that had been discovered in the Rocky Mountains. He said he had talked with men who had come from there, and that the climate was dry and delightful and just what I needed. The suggestion appealed to me. I packed up, started for Omaha, and arrived there on January 9, 1876.

In February I pulled out of Omaha with two heavy freight wagons loaded



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with goods to sell to the miners, such goods as I judged they would need. I rode a pony in the dead of winter all the way across the Plains. The trail led through the country of the Indians, whose tepees or lodgings were in the Platte Valley, where they had their winter quarters. There were also large herds of buffalo that wintered in the Republican Valley, forty miles south.

I had decided that it would be wise to take something along to please the little papooses, and accordingly had a sack or two of New Orleans brown sugar, some small, round hand mirrors in metal cases that shut, and some wooden combs which I gave to the Indian women, delighting them greatly.

On the second night we reached the Platte Valley, near where Fremont now stands. There we camped for the night, pitching small tents in which to cook, and sleeping in the tops of our wagons under the canvas cover. The snow was about a foot deep and it was below zero. This was my first experience in listening most

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of the night to the howling of wolves and coyotes, who smelt our food. It was rather musical, and sounded like the noise of a pack of half a hundred.

As we continued our journey along the Platte River, we were seldom out of sight of the Indians — Pawnees — who were returning to their lodgings after a trip to where the government distributed Indian supplies. At night, whenever we came near their camps, the Indian boys and girls would flock around us while our men were unharnessing the horses. Then I would open a sack of brown sugar and put some in the hands of each of them, and give mirrors and combs to the older ones. The effect was like magic; all seemed delighted, and did not annoy us at any time. I kept this up whenever we met Indians. Although we saw many of their camps, we were never molested.

XI

IN due time we reached the Platte River, and crossed on the ice to Old Fort Kearney. The weather had now become warmer, but we got all our wagons across except one with a pair of mules hitched behind it. Our camp that night was on an island, and our tents were blown down several times, when a big storm came up. In the morning, on looking back across the river, we saw the mules still hitched to the wagon on the opposite shore, but the river channel was now open in the middle, and the ice had gone out about a quarter of a mile upstream. For a distance of one hundred feet, however, it was still intact.

The wind blew furiously, but I started to make the long trip across the ice to the other side, in order to untie the mules and let them run about. As I crossed the narrow ice bridge, the wind was so strong that I could not safely stand up. I had to

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lie down and crawl along. There was nothing to prevent me from being blown into the rapid current of open water except to stick my hunting knife into the ice. They watched me from the camp until I reached the other side in safety.

The mules, when I finally went to the wagon to untie them, became very much frightened on seeing me, and reared and plunged so furiously that I could not get near them. Thinking that my buffalo overcoat was the cause, I took it off, but that made no difference; they seemed just as frightened as before. Realizing that I could do nothing with them, I managed to get to the far side of the wagon. Crawling under it, I cut their halters. They then ran wildly about, but did not go far from the wagon.

It was now getting along toward night, and I discovered that it would be disastrous to attempt to recross the ice to the camp on the island. What was I to do? The weather was so cold and the wind so furious that to remain near the wagon with nothing to protect me was too

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hazardous. The nearest ranch on the road we had come over was ten miles away, over a trackless prairie. It was now dark and I had no time to lose. I knew the direction of the ranch and ascertained the angle of the strong wind to the course I would have to take.

I started for the ranch. Soon it became very dark, and I had nothing by which to gage my course but the angle of the wind as it struck me. After forcing myself against it, I would lie down flat on the ground to rest and get my breath; then I would push on again in the darkness of the level prairie. I kept this up, and finally, about eight o'clock in the evening, saw a light in the dim distance and knew it was the ranch I was trying to reach. Taking courage, I pushed on, and about nine o'clock, very much exhausted, reached the trading store kept by the ranchman.

The ranchman, who was James E. Boyd, subsequently Mayor of Omaha and Governor of Nebraska, was greatly surprised to see me at that hour in so dark

a night. He said it would not have been possible for me to go much farther. The next morning he sent two men back with me the ten miles to the river crossing.

After harnessing the mules, I forded the river with them to the island and joined the rest of the party. It was now impossible to cross the main channel to old Fort Kearney, for the ice was thin and had open places in it, so that we did not dare undertake it. We decided to drive our wagons farther up the river to find more solid ice. We went about six miles, and late in the afternoon found a place about a mile wide, entirely frozen over to the south shore. There we camped.

It was now so warm that we had to cross before the next day's sun, or the ice would not be safe. Taking two men with me, I crossed the ice on our horses, and rode back to Old Fort Kearney, six miles, to see what help I could get. I called upon Colonel May, in command, and explained our situation. He was very nice, but said he had no authority

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to order any men to assist us. However, if there was any material about the fort that would be of benefit to us, we were welcome to take it. So we collected some cedar rails, got some rope with which to tie them to our horses, and dragged them up to the crossing. The men at the camp had kept up a bright fire so that we would know where they were.

We arrived at the crossing about one o'clock at night, and crossed the ice to our men, who were up and had unloaded our wagons. Tying a couple of rails together to make a kind of sled, we put a wagon on it, filled it with goods, hitched horses to it with a rope, and ran it across the ice to the other side of the river. Our men went along to unload it quickly, and then we returned for another load. We worked in this manner for the rest of the night, and by morning had everything safely across the river. Then we rested as best we could.

At nine o'clock in the morning, the cook announced breakfast. Our appetites were keen and we responded quickly.

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The sun was now bright and the weather very mild. Frequently, as we were breakfasting, we could hear a roaring sound, and on looking up, would see a mass of ice moving downstream. By ten o'clock all the ice had gone, leaving open water. Only quick work had secured our safety and kept us from being caught on the island. At that time the river was not fordable, for the water in some places was ten feet deep.

After reloading our goods, we harnessed up and started again on our overland journey to the Rocky Mountains. We had now passed every vestige of snow. As I rode on my pony in front of the wagons, I felt glad to be in this wild, attractive country that stretched for miles and miles. We usually made about twenty miles a day and then camped for the night. Soon we reached the antelope country, and could see droves of them on the plains skirting the Platte Valley, with their lookout watching us. I had a good rifle and was a fairly good shot. By riding several miles ahead of the wagons, I

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managed to secure enough game to give us all fresh venison, which we greatly enjoyed, having had nothing but ham and bacon since starting out.

One day, about ten o'clock in the morning, on looking down upon the Platte River from O'Fallon's Bluffs, I saw a buffalo crossing to the opposite side. At the same moment I saw two Indians on ponies just below, who were also crossing. I knew they were after the buffalo. The Indians and the buffalo reached the opposite bank at about the same time, and then the race for life began. The buffalo was in the lead. Soon they entered the trail, and then the ponies parted company and came up on each side of the buffalo. We watched them as they went directly away from us. The race for life was neck and neck,—the buffalo between the Indians. Soon they closed in on him and plunged their arrows into his sides. He ran on about half a mile, and then fell. For us onlookers, it was a most exciting scene.

Continuing our journey, we came to

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Bouvé's Ranch. He was a famous French Indian trader who had a squaw for wife. Many Indians gathered there. We had our supper in the ranch-house, which had a large stone fireplace in which plenty of logs were burning. This seemed very attractive. In the evening many Indians came in and squatted all about the room on the floor. Mr. Bouvé assured us that they were all friendly, and told us to speak kindly to them, which we did. Then they wished us all to sit round on the floor with them and smoke a pipe of peace. An old Indian chief produced a handmade pipe filled with tobacco. He took a whiff and then passed it to his neighbor. We all joined in, and the pipe of peace went round and round several times. Finally, Bouvé asked the Indians to go to their wigwams for the night. They all did so promptly.

The next morning, we continued along the south fork of the Platte. It was very mild, and we enjoyed the outlook on the broad expanse of valley, with hills sloping down, on which antelope were usually

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grazing. On Saturday night we arrived at a place called Fremont's Orchard, on account of the trees scattered sparingly over the landscape in the valley. Here we decided to spend Sunday. That day was warm and bright and we enjoyed our rest. For Sunday dinner we had roast antelope, roast wild goose, mallard duck, canned tomatoes, sweet corn, ship biscuits, and coffee. All tasted good and we ate heartily.

On Monday morning we resumed our journey. Soon Pike's Peak and Long's Peak of the Rocky Mountains came in sight, white with snow and glistening in the morning sunlight. As we proceeded westward, we began to see the whole range of mountains, a most beautiful sight. After thirty-two days, we arrived at Denver, with its straggling buildings and tents scattered along two or three streets, and with miners from the mountains all about. The place was unattractive, with its stores and tents wide open in front, and with the ground inside covered with sawdust and piled high with goods in

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boxes, ready for trade. But to us, after our long journey, it seemed most inviting.

Here we rested for a day, and then went on fifteen miles along the canyon on Clear Creek over a fairly good mountain road to the foot of the mountains. After three days more we arrived at Mountain City, in the heart of the Gregory diggings. The next day was Sunday. We lodged in a log camp with a dirt floor and a large stone fireplace. Good pine wood was in abundance, and the blazing fire we made kept us very comfortable in that wild, mountainous country.

On Sunday, the miners flocked round our wagons to buy the goods we had brought. We were the first to arrive in the mining camp that spring. That day we sold goods from our wagons amounting to \$700 in gold dust, the only currency in the mines. Soon we had sold at a handsome profit everything we had brought. More goods were sent on by Francis from Omaha, and for about six months we continued in this fashion; then we sold out and quit merchandizing.

XII

THE miners were mostly working placer diggings in the gulches, taking out quite a large amount of gold, and also quartz, from which many enjoyed large profits. The influx of thousands of miners in 1859 continued through 1860. Hundreds were arriving almost daily from the States, but as usual, only a few found large mines, while the masses were disappointed. Many returned to their homes in the States before winter came on.

I went back to Omaha for the winter, but in March, 1861, returned by stage-coach to the mines. Francis accompanied me, for he wanted to see the country and the mines that were talked about so much. While we were there, we bought an interest in a quartz mine, an extension of the original Gregory Mine, the first one discovered. Francis then returned to Omaha and I began to work the mine.

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Its development proved rich in gold. I had the ore hauled to a stamping mill for crushing, and found a very profitable yield of gold. This gave the Gregory Extension Mine of Smith and Parmelee a wide reputation as one of the rich mines of the Gregory Extension diggings. We then built a stamping mill of our own, at that time one of the largest in the diggings, right over the entrance to the tunnel into the mountains, where our mine was located. We worked in the mine, employing about seventy-five men.

But we were not to work our mine in peace. A man by the name of Dalton, who had a reputation and a history, "framed up" a claim to the mine and brought suit in the miners' court. This court was then the only court of last resort: no territory had even been organized and consequently no territorial or federal laws were in existence. The suit came before the miners' judge and jury of twelve men, and the trial lasted several days. Each litigant had to deposit a bag of gold dust with the judge to pay jury

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fees, as the jury always found for themselves first, and the party losing paid the costs.

Finally the jury rendered a decision of "No agreement." Then Dalton's henchman, one Pat Crocker, rushed out before the crowd in the log cabin, swinging his arms vigorously, and shouted, "Who will follow me and go down and take the mine and drive Smith out?" All the crowd joined Crocker to see him take the mine by force.

Parmelee and I, knowing that force would be attempted, had protected the entrance to the mine, armed ourselves and a dozen of our best men with rifles, shotguns, and revolvers, and were prepared to defend ourselves to the last. We saw the horde coming down the gulch, Crocker in the lead. The Gregory Gulch stream was between us and the road on which the crowd was advancing, and across this a footbridge to our stamping mill and mine had been erected. We came out of the mill, about fifteen of us, all armed for resistance.

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When Crocker and his gang got within five hundred feet of the footbridge, they came to a halt. Three of his men were selected as a committee to demand surrender of the mine. Our men were drawn up in line, Parmelee at one end and I at the other. As the three men neared the footbridge, Parmelee and I, with our guns at our shoulders, called out, "The first man that attempts to cross that bridge will be shot dead!"

The three men, seeing guns at our shoulders, turned and ran back, crying, "They will shoot! They will shoot! They will shoot!"

The crowd then began to run, with Crocker gesticulating, swinging his arms, and cursing them for their cowardice in the most profane language, in which he was a past master. But all to no good. We fifteen men, armed to the teeth and with guns at our shoulders, were an argument that Crocker and his rabble could not face. Dalton then made no further attempt to rob me of the mine.

I continued working the mine, with day

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and night shifts, and it gave good results. We had then only the old stamp mills, for smelters had not yet been established. This was during the period of the Civil War.

In 1864, my brothers, Francis and George Warren, formed a mining company in New York — the Smith and Parmelee Gold Mining Company — with offices on Broad Street, near the Stock Exchange. I had previously been buying from the miners all the gold dust I could secure, paying for it in government bank-notes, and adding to its price the amount of the premium on gold. This I would send to my brothers by express. As the premium on gold in those days was always advancing, when my brothers sold it in New York, there was always a large profit over what I had paid in the mines. Gold reached its highest market quotation in 1866 — 284 — and to that extent showed the poor credit of the government at that time.

The capitalization of the Smith and Parmelee Gold Mining Company ad-

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vanced materially, and a controlling interest in its stock was sold to Wall Street capitalists at what was considered a large figure in those days. This was the second Colorado gold mine ever put upon the market in New York. The market quotation on its stock was at one time \$21 a share, on a par value of \$10. When the shares of the new company were sold, the promise was made that I would remain at the mines as manager for one year, — a responsibility that I accepted.

A sepia-toned portrait of George Warren Smith, an older man with light-colored hair, wearing a dark suit and a white shirt with a dark cravat. He is seated and looking slightly to the right of the camera. His hands are resting on a large, light-colored object, possibly a book or a piece of paper, which is positioned in front of him. The background is a dark, textured surface.

*George Warren Smith at the
Age of 60.*

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George Warren Smith
of New York.



XIII

DURING one period of the Civil War, Major-General Pope and his army were seriously menaced by Rebel forces, and Major-General Fitz-John Porter, who had a large army under his command, was ordered to advance by forced marches to General Pope's support. Porter failed to obey orders, in that he made slow, daily advances to Pope's relief. In the meantime the latter was attacked by Rebel forces, and cut to pieces with a loss of over ten thousand men. This was at the battle of Chancellorsville. Porter was court-martialed, and would have been shot if it had not been known that President Lincoln would not sign the death warrant. He was, however, dismissed from the army in disgrace.

Porter had friends in New York who were interested in mining claims in the district where I was located. One of

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those friends, whom I knew, engaged him to go out to the Colorado mines and look after their interests, and gave him a letter of introduction to me. In due time Porter arrived at the mines, and promptly called upon me with his letter of introduction.

I knew of his discharge from the army, but treated him like a gentleman. He told me about the mining property he had come to look after. It proved to be located on the top of a hill about two hundred feet high, adjoining the mining claims of the Gregory Extension quartz mine. I happened to own eight hundred feet of another quartz mine on Briggs Lode, about one hundred feet distant, and parallel with the quartz vein Porter had come to look after. I was working that vein from the foot of the hill, tunneling into it, while Porter's Mine, which had never been worked, was on top of the same hill, one hundred feet northwest.

I took him up to the top of the hill, showed him the location of the quartz vein, and told him where I thought he had

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better sink a shaft for development. On coming back to my office, he expressed a desire to go into my works on the Briggs Lode and see what such a mine looked like. He seemed surprised when he saw that this particular ore proved to be a fine lot of rich material.

Porter started work on the top of the hill, where his Gregory Extension claim ran parallel to my Briggs quartz claim. He was continuing this work when, one Sunday morning, a carpenter whom I knew, by the name of Van Camp, came to me with a secret he thought I ought to know. He said that Porter had sunk a shaft on the Gregory Extension about sixty feet deep, and then finding the vein "pinched" and not promising, had changed his course from the perpendicular to an angle of forty-five degrees, pointing toward my Briggs Lode, which he would reach if he continued.

It was Sunday, and no miners were at work. I went with Van Camp to the top of the hill and then down by bucket and windlass into the works as far as Porter

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had progressed. And there, sure enough, I found that he had changed the course of his shaft to the eastward at an angle of forty-five degrees, and had gone ahead on that angle about fifteen feet. It showed his intention of getting onto my Briggs Lode. He had hired Van Camp to plank up the inside of the shaft so that no one could see where it left his mine. On striking a richer-looking vein, he could work there for a year or more, perhaps, and I would know nothing about it, unless I drove my tunnel on the quartz vein of the Briggs Lode. But I would not have been likely to do this, for I found the vein stronger on going deeper.

Porter's whole purpose was as clear as daylight. He wanted to strike a rich patch of ore where he would not be molested for a year or two, and so make a good showing. And if it was discovered, he would claim that he had followed his Gregory Extension vein. He wanted the inside of his shaft planked up so that miners or any one else going up and down his works could not see the change in the

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direction of his shaft from the perpendicular.

I told Van Camp to go ahead and plank up the shaft as Porter had directed. That night I called up my foreman and asked him who were his best workmen. I said I had decided to run my tunnel in the quartz vein on the Briggs Lode into the mountain where my eight-hundred-foot claim was, in order to see what I might find. He said he had good men for the work.

The next day I went down into the mine to see at what point we should start to drive the tunnel. We fixed the point at about sixty feet above the bottom of our works, as it showed such rich ore there. I told my foreman to start work the next morning, and to keep three shifts working continuously night and day. I knew that Porter, following the incline of his shaft, would soon break into the top of my tunnel in the quartz vein of the Briggs Lode.

The miners pushed the work, and at the end of two months had reached a

point thirty feet or more beyond the line where Porter's shaft would strike in upon it. I then stopped further work on the tunnel and awaited evidence.

It was not long before we could hear Porter's miners drilling over our heads. Finally my foreman came to me and announced that they would blast through the top of our tunnel that afternoon. I arranged to be on the ground at that time.

After Porter's miners had made a large hole through the top of the tunnel and had come down into it, I told them that they could quit further work as I could work my own mine without their assistance. Accordingly they went up in their bucket to the top of the hill. A little later Porter came rushing into my office close to the mine and said, "Smith, you have discharged my men!"

I replied, "Yes, and I should not think you would be surprised."

Then I opened up on him, recalling to him that he had brought letters of introduction to me, that I had treated him like a gentleman, and had even taken him

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down into my mine on the Briggs Lode, where I showed him the richness of the ore. "And now," said I, "you have deliberately tried to rob me of my mine by driving your shaft down into my Briggs Lode, where you thought you could work and I not know it for a long time! I have watched your work from the beginning."

Porter colored, and said, very red in the face, "To-morrow, at one o'clock, I will put my men to work again."

"General Porter," I replied, "you will find me there to receive you." Then he departed.

For some time it had been noised about town among the miners that there was to be a clash between Porter and Smith, that Porter was trying to get Smith's mine, and that a contest or fight would take place the next day. Consequently when Porter arrived with eight men, each had a pair of revolvers strapped to his belt. He ordered two miners to go down the ladders with their tools, and the eight men with revolvers followed. Then Porter was let down in the bucket.

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I was at the bottom when he arrived. He ordered the two miners to go to work, but I stopped them. I said I would settle that matter with Porter, and at once grabbed him by the collar. Throwing him back against the walls of the tunnel, reeking with mud and water, I cried, "You get out of this mine, or I will kill you on the spot!"

He, much excited, said he would go out and meet me in the courts.

"That is right," I replied.

He got into the bucket, I pulled the bell rope, and up he went, arriving at the top of the shaft, 204 feet from the bottom, covered with mud and water. When he emerged at the top of the hill, a crowd of miners and boys collected there began to yell. That evening the newsboys, going up and down the gulch, called out, "General Lee surrendered to General Grant; Smith whipped Fitz John Porter!" The excitement in the mines was intense, and the town was awake all night, the streets filled with men, women, and children until a late hour.

XIV

PORTER got out an injunction against me, restraining me from interfering with the working of his mine. I was promptly haled into court and admitted all his accusations. The injunction suit was held before the United States Circuit Court and Judge Stephen S. Harding brought up from Denver for the purpose. This old judge was a broken-down politician from Indiana who had secured his appointment from Lincoln. He had his rooms with Porter's attorneys in their office building.

The judge issued an injunction against me, ordering me, on penalty of the law, not to interfere with Porter's occupancy and working of the mine. This ousted me and put Porter in possession, — a most atrocious and high-handed proceeding on the part of the court. My lawyers were Henry M. Teller of Central City, later United States Senator from

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Colorado, and Moses Hallet of Denver, later Chief-Justice of Colorado.

Teller said to me, "Smith, you now have the court to fight as well as Porter."

"Mr. Teller," I asked, "what do you advise me to do?"

He answered, "Fight them both to a finish!"

I proceeded to do this as follows. The sinking of Porter's shaft down into my tunnel made a perfect chimney. I saw that by accumulating in the tunnel at the bottom of the shaft the most inflammable material, and by kindling a fire, the smoke would ascend up the shaft and make it impossible for any one to descend by ladder or bucket from the top. I also secured several pungent things to put into the fire, as these would add to the danger of attempting to come down the shaft.

Porter, finding it impossible to get down into the mine, had the judge, who remained in Central City, issue a warrant for my arrest. I was duly arrested and taken before Judge Harding in a one-story log cabin, the only courthouse in

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town. When charges were preferred against me, I denied all of them. The trial lasted for several days, and the excitement all over the mines, caused by the judge's attempt to oust me from the mine and put Porter in possession, resulted in filling the courthouse to overflowing.

In the meantime, Porter's lawyers had sent to Denver for military assistance. They urged Colonel Moonlight, who was in command, to come to Central City and assist the court in enforcing its mandate. The colonel sent a lieutenant in command of a squad to investigate. As I saw the squad pass up the gulch, I surmised their mission. Colorado was then a territory. The lieutenant looked about, talked with the lawyers and with some of the leading citizens, and returned to Denver with the report that there was nothing to warrant military interference.

When the last day of the trial came, it was announced that the judge intended to send me to jail. That would give Porter, his lawyers thought, a chance to

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get into the mine, barricade the tunnel, and then keep possession of the mine. In that country, and at that time, possession was called ten points of the law.

The final day's trial lasted until after ten o'clock in the evening. The room was packed with miners and citizens. I conferred with Teller and Hallet, and we agreed that Teller should "open up" on the judge for his complicity in the case. Teller, Hallet, and I were sitting on a front seat, directly facing the judge. The time had come when the judge was about to pass sentence on me. Teller said to me, "Shall I go for him?"

Hallet and I both replied, "Give it to him!"

Then Teller arose, and remarked to the court that he had something to say before sentence was passed against his client; that he would show "the partisan manner your Honor has shown in this case."

The judge instantly cried out, "Arrest Mr. Teller!"

The sheriff, who knew the game, failed to obey the order. The courtroom was

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on its feet at once. Nearly all carried revolvers, as was customary in those days. Some of the judge's friends surrounded him and got him to the side of the room. They put him through a window and into a carriage waiting outside. He was driven down the mountains to Denver that night, and the next morning put into a coach going East to the States. He never returned to Colorado.

Porter, thus defeated in his connivance with the judge, was now left to his own resources. The smoke continued to come up through the chimney-like shaft, observed by all who looked at the top of the hill. Porter and his men could make no headway in trying to descend through his shaft into the mine.

He then resorted to his skill in military engineering, and began to construct a building on top of the hill, directly over the entrance to his shaft. When this was completed, he built an immense fan inside it, in the shape of a wheel, sixteen feet in diameter. Then he put eight men in the building, who were to stay there

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day and night. They were to operate the fan, which required four men at a shift to turn it. The top of the shaft was covered up, with a trapdoor to let him in and get down the ladders. By means of a flue from the fan running many feet down into the shaft, he intended that when the wheel was turned rapidly, the smoke should be forced back on me in the tunnel below.

I now remained day and night with my men in the mine to insure a vigilant and constant watch, and take no chances of being caught unprepared. When Porter's men turned the wheel, the smoke would come down and almost suffocate us. But if we lay flat on the bottom of the tunnel, most of the smoke hung above our heads, and we could breathe with some ease. Then we would let the fire go down, but we were always ready to start it up again whenever we heard any sound of moving up above, indicating an attempt to come down the ladders. We could easily detect the slightest movement up the shaft.

Porter's men made many attempts to

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descend, usually at about two or three o'clock in the morning. Sometimes they got down many feet, only to be driven back by the smoke, which we quickly started up. They were almost smothered at times before they could get above it, as it was driven down by the great fan.


This contest for the possession of the mine was watched all over Colorado, resulting in many decided comments and heated discussion night and day. Porter kept up his effort to smoke me out of the mine and go down and barricade against me, thus holding possession. But he failed, and after about fifteen or twenty days, men were seen tearing down the building that housed the great fan. When it was exposed to view, it created many queer comments. In a few days both building and fan were demolished.

Porter immediately left for the East, and never returned again to Colorado. This ended the fight for a mine. If Porter had been successful, it might have resulted in compelling me, as manager for

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the company, to return the money received from the stockholders.

The following December, 1865, I turned the management of the mining company over to D. D. Belden, brother-in-law of my brother Francis. Physically much broken down, and with nerves shattered, I went East to New York to report to the company what I had done. I never returned to the mines as manager. The money realized from their sale was the foundation of the greater fortune of the Smith brothers.



*Francis, George Warren,
David and Benjamin Smith.
Photographed by Fredericks,
New York, March 17, 1866.*

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George Warren

Francis

Asa

Benjamin

THE OMAHA STOCK YARDS

XV

AFTER the Civil War, there was a great business and financial depression all over the country. Gold sold in 1866 at 284 in United States currency, and all railroad and other kinds of indebtedness, usually considered the best for investment, sold much below par — even government seven-thirty bonds selling as low as 70. These conditions, for those who had ready money and confidence in the future, presented unusual opportunities for investment.

Francis and George Warren were in New York much of their time, and on going about Wall and Bond Streets, the great financial center and barometer of ups and downs, had ample opportunity to learn at first hand the public estimate of financial values. They always investigated the real worth of any class of railroad bonds that promised ultimate safety as an investment when values

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should again become normal, and having quite a large amount of money at their command, due largely to the sale of the Colorado gold mines to the New York company, they bought railroad bonds freely, among them Morris and Essex, Erie 2nd and 3rd, Chicago and Northwestern, Richmond and Danville, Hoosac Tunnel Western, Fitchburg, Rock Island, C. B. and Q., Milwaukee and St. Paul, Union Pacific, Chesapeake and Ohio, Atlantic Coast Line, New York and Northern, and many others, and invested in the construction of Omaha and South Western and Omaha and North Western, each of which had land grants from the state of Nebraska, finally selling out to the C. B. & Q. and St. Paul and Omaha lines, which were carried through to completion and made Omaha one of the important focal points of the mid-West.

With returning business prosperity, all these bonds were regarded more favorably by the investing public. Prices rose to the values of normal times, so that the profits from their sale constituted a large

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capital with which to buy more bonds. There was not one of these investments but what proved in the end profitable, owing to most careful judgment regarding what to invest in and what not.

Years came and went, bringing increasing income, new money to reinvest, and a greater amount of property. My health had now become reëstablished from the nervous strain of five years of hard work in the high altitude at Central City, in the mountains of Colorado. I now went to Omaha, to look after the investments which Francis had made while he was operating his little bank there. He had left Omaha in 1863, returning to a larger field in New York. When the gold mines were sold to the New York company — the Smith and Parmelee Gold Company, of which William R. Traverse, a noted Wall Street operator, was first president, — offices were opened in Broad street, near Wall, and the new mining company was managed there. It was reliably stated at that time that all of the New York investors in

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the company made money, and some quite largely.

About the time I went back to Omaha, in February, 1868, the city, according to the census of 1870, had a population of sixteen thousand. As money was in demand, I made loans for the account of the Smith brothers. They were usually in small amounts of a few thousand dollars, at 10 and 12 per cent per annum, to single individuals whose mortgages were of undoubted value. I loaned many thousands in this way to leading business men in Omaha. As years passed I began to invest to a limited extent in such real estate as was most favorably located. As some of my loans were not paid at maturity, foreclosure proceedings also brought a considerable amount of real estate into the hands of the Smith brothers, and thus increased our investments in Omaha and Nebraska property. In the seventies, I placed contracts for several large business buildings, notably on Farnum, Harney, and 16th Streets, as well as on Douglas Street. The up-

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building of the various railroad systems—Union Pacific, C. B. & Q., North Western, Rock Island, and others—made of Omaha quite a mid-West city.

XVI

LETTING cattle graze at no cost on government land was then profitable. Swan Brothers had the largest cattle herds in the North Platte Valley. In 1882, Alexander Swan came to Omaha and called a number of the best business men into council. He suggested that as they had to ship their cattle through Omaha to the Chicago market, five hundred miles east, why not build cattle yards at Omaha? Then, when cattle arrived in quantity, packing houses would be built and Omaha would become a center of cattle yards and packing houses. He already had options on about two thousand acres of farm land a few miles south of the city, and if Omaha men would join him and raise about three hundred thousand dollars to purchase the land and form a working capital, he would close the deal and form the South Omaha Land Company.

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A few of us, enthusiastic over the prospect of helping to build up through this industry a big city in the future, joined together and subscribed for the stock of the new company. I invested to the extent of \$20,000. This was the beginning, in June, 1883, of the South Omaha Stock Yards Company, in which I, with a few other investors, became a director.

Having secured the land, on which at that time there was only one little farmhouse, the Drexel house, we next had to build some yards in which to receive cattle, feed, and water, and then reship them to the Chicago market. With these two thousand or more acres of vacant land as a basis of capital stock, and with only a few acres fenced off for feeding and watering cattle in transit to the Chicago market, the directors began to realize that something had to be done to develop the property into a live investment.

William A. Paxton, a cattleman and large real-estate owner, was a director in our company. He was also the owner of some small stockyards over the river

A MAINE FAMILY OF SMITHS

at Council Bluffs. We bought out his investment there, thus absorbing his interests entirely in our company at South Omaha. Then it was suggested that if we were to accomplish anything, we must build some packing houses in which to slaughter the cattle that were shipped to our yards. We first tried to get a local packer, ex-Governor James E. Boyd, to come in with us and abandon his local plant, but he did not look favorably on our offers. Then we went to Chicago and tried to interest Armour & Company, and also Swift & Company, and others. None of them would consider any proposition to come to South Omaha and build a packing plant. It was too new and too experimental for them.

It was then up to the directors to devise some plan. Mr. Paxton suggested that he could build a packing house for the company; then some Chicago packer might be induced to come and operate it. This suggestion seemed our only way to success, and the directors authorized him to place a contract for the first

THE OMAHA STOCK YARDS

packing house, a hog house, at South Omaha.


When this was finished, at a cost of \$40,000, we again sought some Chicago or other packers to occupy it, free of all rental charges, and with water for operating furnished free. But our proposal was turned down. The location was so new and undeveloped that no one wanted to run the risk of failure and loss of money; all preferred to stick to what they had at Chicago, Kansas City, and elsewhere.

The disappointment of the directors was very great. They now began to realize that they had something to learn about the packing business. For the company to go into this business was too hazardous for most of the directors to countenance for a moment. The packing house we had built stood idle, and the outlook was discouraging. Finally we had an interview with George H. Hammond, of the Hammond Packing Company, of Chicago and elsewhere in the East, who had made a success of the packing business.

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After much negotiation, Mr. Hammond said that although he feared the result, if he could have our packing house free of all rental or other charges, and the company would furnish him all the water he needed without charge, and if successful he could have all the ground room he needed free of charge, he would come to Omaha and start work. We closed with him, and he began operations.

After the first year he said that he had made nothing, but would "hang on" and operate for another year. Some of our stockholders became impatient and wished to dispose of their stock. I, therefore, bought twenty-thousand dollars' worth of their stock, making my investment \$40,000.

A sepia-toned studio portrait of a man with a full beard and mustache, wearing a dark suit and a white shirt with a dark tie. He is seated and looking slightly to his left. The background is a mottled, studio-style backdrop. The photograph is mounted on a light-colored card.

David Clifford Smith. Photographed by J. W. Black & Co., Boston, 1868.

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After much negotiation, Mr. Hammond was induced to accept the terms. He feared the result. He would have our packing house free of all taxes and other charges, and the company would furnish him all the water he needed without charge, and if successful he would have all the ground room he needed free of charge, he would come to work and start work. We closed with him, and he began operations.

After the first year he said that he had "hang on" and "Some of our stockholders became impatient and disposed of their stock. I, therefore, bought twenty thousand dollars' worth of their stock, making my investment \$200,000."



XVII

THE next man to propose to our company to come and build a packing house was Sir Thomas Lipton. He wanted light hog meat (hogs weighing 150 pounds or less) for his English customers. We gave him all the land and other facilities he required, and he built the second packing house. After operating it for a year or more, he found that with corn at fifteen cents, the farmers would not send their 150-pound hogs to market, but kept them to fatten to a weight of from 300 to 500 pounds. He therefore sold his plant to Armour & Company.

Fowler Brothers were the next packers to look for a location at South Omaha. Mr. Robert Fowler came to see what terms he could get to meet his wants. Mr. Paxton and I went over the ground with him, and standing on an elevated location he said to us, "Give me a deed of ten acres on this spot, in consideration

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of one dollar, and Fowler Brothers will come and build a good packing house." We lost no time in closing the deal. Later the Fowlers sold out to the Omaha Packing Company, now the Morris Packing Company of Chicago.

The necessity of enlarging the capacity of the yards to handle the cattle and hogs coming to the packers was now very great. Immediately plans were made and construction was entered upon to meet these increasing demands. This required the outlay of large sums of money. The increase of the capital stock to \$5,000,000 gave the directors the necessary funds.

The next packers to be induced to come to South Omaha were Swift & Company, as the result of giving them ten acres of land and other facilities in a location selected by them. They built the first Swift & Company packing house. The Hammond Packing Company's business had increased, and they now proposed that if we would give them the packing house which we had built at a cost of \$40,000, with ten acres of surrounding

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land, they would spend a large amount of money in enlarging the plant, so as to do a much bigger business. We accepted their proposal, and gave them, free of cost, a deed of the property. All this required the expenditure of large amounts of money by the Stock Yards Company for more cattle pens, sewerage, drainage, and pavements to keep pace with the growing business. Money had to be provided in large sums, and this we secured by the sale of stock and in other ways.

The Cudahy Brothers, John, Michael, and Edward A., were then with the Armour Packing Company at Chicago. As they were anxious to build up a packing business for themselves, they came to South Omaha, looked the ground over, and, as a result, bought Armour's Sir Thomas Lipton plant. Then they asked our directors to give them ten acres of land with which to extend their plant. The land was given them, and later more land, which finally resulted in the splendid packing-house plant of Cudahy Brothers, one of the finest in the country.

XVIII

THE increased growth of the stockyards business caused our directors to believe that the South Omaha market, located as it was in the heart of the live-stock interests of the country, might in time become one of its leading markets. To achieve this desired prominence, it was necessary to have all the big packers, or at least most of them, locate branch houses there.

Armour & Company, one of the largest, was not there, and thus far we had failed to induce them to come. Philip Armour's son Ogden, and his financial agent, P. A. Valentine, were aware of the facts, and came to the directors with a proposal that would insure bringing Armour & Company there and the building of a large plant.

The Stock Yards Company's capital stock had been increased to \$7,500,000, a large amount of which was still in

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the treasury of the company, unissued. Ogden Armour and Valentine said to the directors, "Give us seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars' worth of your capital stock and we will bring Armour & Company to your yards."

The offer called for such a large bonus that most of the directors were opposed to it. I talked it over with Paxton, and we concluded that while the bonus was big, we must realize that Armour's big plant and name as a packer would bring a large amount of business to the yards. They would grow and become of greater importance in the future than that seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars' worth of stock. We urged the other directors to look at the matter in this light.

At first it was hard to convince them. Paxton and I fully agreed that we must get Armour & Company, if the yards were ever to have a nation-wide reputation. Our answer had to be given in June. I went East and explained the situation to some of the eastern stockholders, who were furious, and denounced the di-

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rectors in no uncertain terms for considering the proposal for a moment.

Paxton and I, with such other directors as would act with us, could not be dissuaded from our position that this would be playing the big trump card to secure the future position of the South Omaha market in that world industry. The day before the directors were to meet at their office in the headquarters of the stockyards to render their answer to Armour and Valentine, Paxton, who was president of the board, sent me a night message at Rockland, Maine, to wire him my answer. I wired him, "Close deal with Armour. I fully approve and vote yes." The meeting was held the next day, and my message to Paxton read to the board, which voted unánimously to accept Armour's offer.

As soon as arrangements could be made, Armour began the construction of his new plant at the South Omaha stockyards, completing it the following year in time for the heavy run of live stock. This packing house, with all the auxiliary houses necessary for the business, was

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a large one, and probably cost nearly a million dollars.

Across the Missouri River in western Iowa was a large number of hogs and cattle, since that farming country had been settled earlier. The four or five railroads running to the Missouri River all wanted to haul this live stock five hundred miles to Chicago over their respective roads. South Omaha was getting little or none of it, although it was almost at our doors.

Armour took in the situation, and began to send all his products that were shipped to the East over one of these railroads. In time the other roads complained that as they had their lines to the Missouri River, they thought they were entitled to a share of the output of the Armour packing house that was shipped to eastern markets. They urged Armour to give some of his business to them. Mr. Armour's reply was, "Gentlemen, I have my packing house at Omaha, and have to have live stock to operate it. If your roads can bring cattle and hogs to me, I

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shall be glad to give you some of my business." The operating officials of the railroads needed no further hint. They tumbled over each other, so to speak, to break the embargo, and began to bring live stock to the packers. Now, in 1922, a good share of western Iowa live stock comes to the South Omaha market.


This act of Armour has proved to be far more valuable to the business of the South Omaha stockyards than the seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars' worth of the company's capital stock. South Omaha has become the second largest live-stock market in the United States, and probably in the world. The Stock Yards Company has expended up to the present time more than ten million dollars in building up the yards to their present perfection in handling this immense business, and in completeness they are equal, if not superior, to any in the country.

When we look back upon the lack of knowledge and limited means that were

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available to develop such a business as is demanded by modern stockyards, we should treasure the memory of those few men, most of whom are now dead, who went in originally and put up their money. Their foresight and hard work have resulted in the upbuilding of South Omaha to a population of 35,000. It must be acknowledged that it was the development of South Omaha, now incorporated in the city of Omaha, and its greatest pillar of strength, that has given Omaha its population of 200,000.

BACK TO MAINE



*Warrenton, home of George
Warren Smith at Warrenton
Park.*

Warren Smith at Warrenton
Park.
Warrenton, home of George



XIX

WHEN in the middle of the nineteenth century the four brothers whose career I have briefly sketched left the home of their boyhood to seek their fortunes in a wider field, they did not sever relations altogether with the scene of their birth. Maine, where our ancestors had established themselves in the wilderness, and where our parents had inherited the rewards of their labor and sacrifices, was always the place to which our hearts returned, not alone because father and mother were there, but because there was in the history and the atmosphere of that region something which drew us as no other spot on earth could do. When opportunity allowed, it was our joy to come back to the old farm in the rural town of Freedom, to mingle with the members of the family, and to renew the

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wholesome associations of life on the old farm — as the Poet Riley sings:

“Back where we ust to be so happy and
so pore!”

But when I, the last of the four to remain, heard the call that came from the business world into which my three brothers had gone, and I too left home, there was nobody to help our father carry on the farm. So in 1850 he sold the Freedom property, and with our mother and sisters removed to the seaport town of Rockland, then in the midst of the busy era of shipbuilding, and there he built two houses. The second one, built in 1853 at the corner of Chestnut and Cedar Streets, was of considerable size, and thenceforth served as the family home. In this house our father died in 1875, and there our mother continued to live in the happiness of a hale old age, dying in 1893 at the age of one hundred years, and retaining her faculties in a marked degree to the very end. This house passed into the possession of our

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brother David and remained his home until his death in 1911.

It was a source of satisfaction to the sons that as prosperity came to us we were able to surround our parents with every material comfort. Our first visit to the new Rockland home, in 1852, was a memorable family occasion. The four of us, fresh from the fashionable environs of New York, landed one morning from the little Boston steamer, dressed in the fashion of the period, with long black coats, white pantaloons, and tall beaver hats. Rockland was strange to us and we needed to have the paternal home pointed out. As it was at a remote end of the town, our journey thither through the chief thoroughfare partook of the nature of a uniformed parade, to the wonderment of the people who saw us passing.

It was in the early Eighties that the series of events began which resulted in the development of "Warrenton Park," the home estate of the Smith brothers, some five hundred acres in extent, picturesquely situated upon the shores of

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Penobscot Bay, lying within the limits of the town of Rockport and adjacent to the prosperous city of Rockland. The health of our brother David had become impaired, and believing that life in the open was preferable to medicines, he made a purchase of land, a few acres in extent, consisting chiefly of alder swamp. This, with no purpose other than the pursuit of bodily strength and health, he bore down upon, axe in hand, his coat hanging from an adjacent fence post, and worked diligently at the task of freeing the place of its cumbering growth of alder bushes. It was a task of no small magnitude, but David never was easily daunted, no matter what the task, and when at the season's end he saw the alders cleared, and moreover found himself renewed in health and vigor, his satisfaction was unbounded. The next season the brush was burned, a neighbor with horses and plough broke up the rough ground, oats and grass seed were sown, and in process of time there were crops to garner. This meant a barn for

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David's hay, the first he had had a hand in raising since his boyhood days on the paternal farm. So a barn of goodly dimensions was erected, the first building on the estate of Warrenton. It stood by the entrance to the big wood lot called the Jones Woods, but long ago passed out of its employment as a hay barn, for although its outside was undisturbed, its interior was transformed into a pleasure house, with an extensive dancing floor, where throughout the summer season social life is enjoyed by many people.

When David's brothers saw what he had done, they in turn were seized with the desire to become owners of land upon this favored portion of the wonderful Maine coast. They speedily joined in the purchase of all that now forms one of the noted estates of these regions. Much of the land was rough pasture, requiring the work of a little army of men and horses throughout the summers of seven years to subdue it to its present parklike state of cultivation, with several

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miles of driveways, rolling fields, and trim-cut lawns, handsome gardens of flowers set off by the natural growth of trees, of which there is a remarkable extent and variety, both evergreen and deciduous. It was their purpose not to carry out a formal plan of landscape gardening, but merely to bring to full expression the things with which nature had so richly endowed this piece of ocean shore.

This is the brief story of the happy chance through which the four brothers, associated together in such a remarkable degree, as has been narrated, were led in the concluding years of their strenuous activities to create an estate in this beautiful region. Some two hundred and fifty years had passed away since the immigrant James Smith, mentioned in the beginning of this narrative, sailed from Bristol to make a home in the new world across the sea. At almost the same time that he arrived upon these shores, the Council of Plymouth, England, were recording acts for settling and governing

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New England, in which they made a number of hasty grants. One of these included this neighborhood of Penobscot Bay, through which the Council on March 13, 1629, old style, March 23, 1629, new style, granted title to Beauchamp and Leverett, which was called "the Lincolnshire or Musconkus Patent," or grant. The point of land at Rockport still bears the name of Beauchamp, and at one time the name of Leverett appeared on the maps in connection with the point adjacent to our estate, now known as Bay Point and occupied by the famous Samoset Hotel.

Subsequently this Musconkus Patent became the property of General Samuel Waldo, the name changing to Waldo Patent. It was later acquired by Major General Henry Knox of Thomaston, and is the origin of the titles under which our ownership was acquired. It was by James I that the original grant to the Plymouth Council was made, and it was his grandson, Charles II, who in 1664, for the purpose of clearing up disputes, issued

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another grant to New England possessions. While this did not affect the Muscogus Patent, it is of interest in that it connects both of these noted monarchs with the piece of land that our English immigrant James made it possible, after a lapse of two and a half centuries, for my brothers and myself to own. A copy of this document from the Second Charles is in my possession and the following is an extract:

“Charles the Second by the Grace of God King of England Scotland France & Ireland Defender of the faith &c To all to whom these p^{nts} shall come Greeting: Know yee that wee for diverse good Causes and Consideracon^s us thereunto moving Have of our especiall Grace Certaine knowledge and meere motion Given and Granted And by these presents for us our heirs and successors Do Give and Grant unto our Dearest Brother James Duke of Yorke his heirs and Affignes All that part of the Maine Land of New England begining at a Certaine place called or knowne by the name of St. Croix, next adjoyning to New Scotland in America and from thence extending along the sea coast unto a certaine place called Petuaquine or

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Pemaquid and so up the River thereof to the furthest head of y^e same as it tendeth northwards and extending from thence to the River Kinebequi, and so upwards by the shortest course to the River Canada northwards. . . .”

It was here on the banks of this renowned region of Penobscot Bay that in 1886 my brothers Francis and George Warren built the attractive home now occupied by the latter, and here in 1908 Francis came to the end of his busy and honorable life. In 1896, upon another part of the estate, I built the house “Clifford Lodge,” that has since been my home throughout the spring, summer, and autumn months of the year, the winters finding me in the midst of my business interests in Omaha. Sharing this home at Warrenton are my children and grandchildren. My only son, Clifford Warren Smith, died in 1901.

The death of our brother Francis marked the first break in the close relations that had so long and successfully existed between the four brothers. Ten

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years later our brother David died. George Warren and myself, in the fullness of years, blessed with good health, he at 96, I at 92, continue in the enjoyment of the estate, happy in the consciousness of lives well spent and in the knowledge that the old-fashioned attributes of thrift, industry, and square dealing are as potent in the affairs of the world today as they ever were; and that the opportunities for young men to exercise them are far more plentiful today than they were in that far-off period when the four sons of "A Maine Family of Smiths" went out from home, alone and unaided, to seek their fortunes.



APPENDIX

GENEALOGICAL

JAMES SMITH, of Bristol, England, married Martha Wills, of Exeter, England, came to America, and in 1668 was living at Berwick, Maine, then a wilderness (see old Church Records of Berwick). His second son was

JOHN, who was the father of

JOSHUA, who was the father of

STEPHEN, born at Berwick, 1751; died at South Freedom, Maine, 1836. Married Mercy Andros, born at Berwick, 1758; died at South Freedom, 1837. His son

GEORGE was born at Nobleboro, Maine, August 30, 1791; died at Rockland, Maine, September 4, 1875. Married, March 29, 1821, Mehitable Clifford, born at Candia, New Hampshire, July 18, 1793; died at Rockland, January 23, 1893.

CHILDREN OF GEORGE SMITH

relia - I. ~~Amelia~~, born March 26, 1822; married Gorham Clough, April 21, 1845; died November 4, 1907.

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- II. Francis, born August 16, 1823; married Harriet Parmelee, March 2, 1852; died January 28, 1908.
- III. George Warren, born October 2, 1825. *died Dec 31st 1922*
- IV. David Clifford, born August 30, 1827; married Arianna Thompson, January 7, 1852; died September 7, 1911.
- V. Benjamin Franklin, born August 5, 1830; married Henrietta M. ~~Shaw~~, *Stra* December 5, 1862.
- VI. Nancy Cordelia, born November *May 29-1923* - 15, 1833; married Alfred Murray, February 16, 1878.

THE WILL OF JAMES SMITH

In the Name of God Amen /

The last Will & Testament of James Smith of Barwick, in the Parish of Barwick, in the Towneship of Kittery in the Province of Main in New England, Being weak in Body not knowing how it may please God to deale with him, and being willing to Settle his Estate, So y^t he may prevent future trouble, being in perfect memory and of a Sound disposing mind, doth Ordayne this to be my last Will and Testament.

Imp. I doe give and bequeath my Soule into the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ my blessed Saviour and Redemer, & my Body to the Earth to be decently Buried, and after my funerall Charges and all my Just & honest Debts be p^d I doe dispose of the Rest of my Worldly Estate as followeth,

2ly. I doe give and bequeath unto my

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Eldest Son James Smith, my Now dwelling house out houses, and all the Land y^t I bought of William Piles, (excepting four Acres of Land given to my Couzen Peter Knap) allso So much more Land, Adjoyning to y^t house Lott, as will make the whole to be one hundred thirty Six Acres, one half of the houses and Land to be Injoyed by my Son James Smith, when he Comes to the Age of twenty one Year, & the other half of the houses and Land to be Possessed and Injoyed by my Son James Smith Immediately after the decease of his Mother, my Son James Smith paying to his Brother John Smith twenty Poundes, in Such pay as is RaiSed from of the farme, & fiveteen Poundes apeice to each of his Sisters, Mary Smith, & Elizabeth Smith in the Same Specie /

3ly, I doe give and bequeath unto my Son John Smith, twenty Acres of Land lying at a Place commonly called & knowne by the Name of Loves Bridge, and eight Acres of Meadow at a Place called Goe Look, and twelve Acres of

APPENDIX

Land more lying on the Eastward Side
of Nechowannick River

4ly. I doe give and bequeath to my
Loving wife one half of the dwelling
house, out houses, & one half of the
house Lott contayning one hundred &
thirty Six Acres of Land, during her
naturall life, and the other half allso of
the afores^d houses and Land, untill my
Son James Smith Come to the Age of
twenty One Year, at which Time one
half of the afores^d houses and Land,
Shall be delivered unto my Son James
Smith, & Immediately after his Mother
decease the S^d James Smith my Son,
Shall Injoy the whole farm both houses
and Lands to him & his heires forever

5ly. I doe give and bequeath unto my
Cozen Peter Knap four Acres of Land
lying and being, where he hath built his
dwelling house and broken up Some
Land it being the West Side of my house
Lott, & Joyning to Rich^d Towsers Land/
only if the S^d Peter Knap or his heires
think fitt to dispose of the S^d Land, he or
they Shall give my Son James Smith the

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Refuse of the S^d Land, and it Shall not be Sold or given to any other Person or Persons if the S^d James Smith will buy it.

6thly. I doe give and bequeath unto my Loving wife, all my Cattle, horse, Sheep, and all my Moveables for the bringing up of my Children my Sons untill they Come to the Age of twenty One Yeares, & my Daughters untill they Come to the Age of eighteen yeares, or be Married

Lastly I doe hereby make, Nominate, and Appoynt my Loving Wife Martha Smith to be my whole and Sole Executrix of this my Last Will and Testament, In Wittnesse whereof that this is my Last Will & Testament I the S^d Jams Smith have hereunto Sett my hand and Seale this Tenth day of August, Anno Dom^s, 1687, & in y^e third Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord James the Second by the Grace of God of England Scotland France and Ireland King, Defender of the fayth, &c

The marke of
James J Smith (sigill^m)

APPENDIX

Signed Sealed and Delivered in the
presence of us

George Broughton Icabod Plaisted

John Broughton Benjamin Birdges

James Plaisted Crystopher Grant

Sworn to by two of the attesting witnesses Sept., 14, 1687;
recorded Oct., 10, 1687. Inventory returned 14th Sept., 1687
at £158:03:00 by William Ardell, James Plaisted Jn^o Plasted,
appraisers.

[/stores.ebay.com/Ancestry-For](https://stores.ebay.com/Ancestry-For)

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