

The Smith Family History Part 1 – The Captain

This month's family history features the Smith family beginning with Captain James A. Smith and his wife Mary Anne Underwood. According to the Museum's family history binder, James A. Smith was born circa 1825 in Pendleton, Co., and married Mary in 1848 in Indiana. I could not find documents to support this. The 1861 Census for Amherstburg lists James and Mary Smith along with their children Henry, John, Joseph, James, Sarah, Clarence, Mary and Gertrude. The 1871 Census lists a few more children including Roman, Filo (Philo), and Anna. This record also lists James as a Steward, while his son John was a Mariner and Joseph was a Farmer. The 1881 Census lists the occupation for James Sr., James Jr., Clarence and Roman as Mariners, while Mary E. was a seamstress.

Before discussing James and Mary's children, I will share a few more details about them first. Sadly, on November 13, 1891, *The Amherstburg Echo* printed Mary Underwood Smith's obituary writing "SMITH – In Amherstburg, on Tuesday, November 10th, Mary Ann, beloved wife of Capt. James A. Smith, aged 53 years, 9 months. Deceased, whose maiden name was Mary Ann Underwood, was born in Mount Pleasant, Jefferson Co., Ohio, on January 17th, 1824, and was a daughter of Rev. Mr. Underwood, who preached here several times, some years ago, although he was never stationed here. Mrs. Smith came here when about 16 years old and in 1848 was married to James A. Smith, who survives her. Three brothers of the deceased are also living, viz.: Rev. J.P. Underwood, of Mt. Pleasant, Ohio; James Underwood, of Mananhuwa?, Wis., and Albert Underwood, of California. By her union with Mr. Smith, she has borne twelve children, of whom, two are dead, Pleasant Henry and George. The surviving children are: John W., mariner, of Cleveland, O.; Joseph L., of Marquette, Mich.; Jas. W., mariner; Sarah J. (Mrs. Geo. Foster, of Malden); Clarence, who is steward on the steambarge, Prentias; Mary, (Mrs.

Samuel McDowell, of Windsor); Roman F., steward on the Bulgaria; Gertrude (Mrs. Wm Bush, of Amherstburg); Philo G., steward on the John Martin; and Annie, who lives at home. Mrs. Smith has lived here ever since her marriage and enjoyed good health until about 10 years ago, when she began to fall and in June last she was taken worse, since which time she has suffered much. She was troubled considerably with her kidneys and an ulceration in the stomach. For almost two weeks previous to her death she was troubled much with hemorrhages. Every [sic] since coming to Amherstburg, Mrs. Smith has been a regular consistent member of the First Baptist church and the funeral will take place from the late family residence on King street to the church this (Friday) afternoon at 1 o'clock thence to the cemetery. Rev. J.A. Holt will officiate and will be assisted by Rev. W.S. Kane.”

I was also able to find James A. Smith's death record and obituary. According to his death record, James passed away on August 8, 1904. His obituary which appeared in *The Amherstburg Echo* on August 12, 1904 shares that “SMITH – In Windsor, Monday, August 8th, at the residence of his daughter, Mrs. S. McDowell, 151 Windsor avenue, James A. Smith, aged 78 years and 11 months. Capt. James A. Smith was born in Virginia in 1821? And came to Amherstburg 1840? He was married to Mary Ann Underwood in 1847. Twelve children were born to them as follows: John W. of Cleveland; Joseph L. of Marquette; James W., of Cincinnati; Clarence, who is steward on City of Banger; Gertrude (Mrs. Wm. Bush), Amherstburg, Philo, steward of Str. Senator; Anna, (Mrs. J.C. Weeden), of Springfield, Ky; Mary, (Mrs. Sam'l McDowell, Windsor; Roman, steward of steamer Princeton, Sarah J., (the late George H. Foster), died on 23rd March, 1899, and Henry and George died in Youth. Besides above he leaves 25 grandchildren. Mrs. Smith died on November 10th, 1891. Capt. Smith resided here continuously from 1841 to about 1894, when he sold his property and went to live with his daughter, Mrs. McDowell, in Mich. He

was a member of the First Baptist church for over 53? Years. Deceased followed the lakes for many years and sailed the schooners Barber and Annie L. Sloan. He was very successful so cumulated a good deal of property, including a farm in Colchester North. He was a most even tempered man and was never known to be angry or say an angry word. He was a friend to all and did not have any enemy. The funeral took place yesterday, Thursday, via funeral car on the electric railway, thence to the First Baptist church where services were conducted by Rev. Mr. Bradby, Windsor, assisted by Rev. T.W. Johnston. Interment took place in Rose Hill cemetery. The pallbearers were Thos. H. Harris, Wm. Edwards, Jas. Dodsine, J.D. Brown, S. McDowell and Jos. Bell.”

What we publish is not a complete history of any family and is based on the documents that are available. We welcome photos and information to fill in the gaps. See you next week for part 2.