

General Sam G. Smith
September 18, 1794 – September 1, 1835

28.51 # 280781

Sam G. Smith, born on September 18, 1794, in Granville County, North Carolina, was the son of Colonel James Webb Smith and Mary Downey Smith. Mary Smith died at the home of her daughter Mary W. Ridley in Maury County, Tennessee, on June 7, 1836. On Mary Smith's tombstone, in the St. John's Ashwood Church Cemetery, was inscribed with the history of the family's move to Tennessee in 1810.

During his short life, Sam G. Smith was engaged in many pursuits. He was as a 2nd Lieutenant in Jesse Bean's Company of Tennessee Volunteer Mounted Spies. This unit served in the Louisiana campaign before the Battle of New Orleans on January 8, 1815. After the Battle, he was promoted to 1st Lieutenant and became an aide-de-camp to Brigadier General Bird Smith. With victory of the British at New Orleans, soldiers returned home in triumph. Smith completed his military service on May 13, 1815.

At the Tennessee governmental level, Sam G. Smith was a State Senator 1827-1829, Bank Commissioner 1829 and Secretary of State 1831-1835. He was known as "General Sam. G. Smith," an honorary title.

At age 40 years, he died on September 2, 1835, at Elizabethtown, Kentucky, while on route to Harrodsburg Springs seeking benefits for his poor health. On October 24, a Resolution was passed at the State Legislature for General Sam G. Smith. The Resolution was sent to his father James W. Smith in Jackson County, Tennessee. In part the Resolution praised "his polite and amiable demeanor which has endeared him to all."

Sam G. Smith had written his will, in Nashville on August 29, 1835, just a few days before he planned to leave town on a trip to Harrodsburg. His will was recorded in Davidson County in January 6, 1836. Listed as beneficiaries in his will were his brother James M., Thomas and Sydney Smith and his sister Mary W. Ridley. In his will Smith freed his slave named Dick. There was no mention of a wife or children in his will. No record has been found that Sam G. Smith was married.

A handsome monument was placed at City Cemetery in memory of General Sam G. Smith. According to a family historian, "friends and admirers of Sam G. Smith erected a monumental edifice over this grave." In 1880, a fire destroyed "Beech Hill," the Smith family home in Jackson County, Tennessee, thus destroying any portrait or papers belonging to Sam G. Smith.

Sources

Mary Smith, mother of Sam G. Smith. Tombstone St. John's Ashwood, Maury Co. On-line Obituary. *Nashville Banner & Whig*, Sept. 8, 1835. Gen. Sam G. Smith. City Cemetery website Resolution. Legislature. *Nashville Republican Banner*, October 24, 1835 City Cemetery website *Sam G. Smith*. Jonathan K. Smith. 1968. Manuscript. TSLA
Dt. Tom Kanon, War of 1812 Scholar. Historical data on military service of Sam G. Smith

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