

“Faith and Family History”



The home of Rev. Anthony Garnett Smith (1776-1852) of Crawford County, Georgia.

“The Rocky Road To Zion”

*Thus saith the Lord; “Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths,
Where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.”*

(Jeremiah 6:16)

by

Robbie Smith

Florahome, Florida 32140-3205

2010

A MAN OF FAITH

It is fitting that this essay, *Faith and Family History*, be lovingly dedicated to my brother, the late Anthony Joseph Smith. Joe was truly a “Golden Rule” man “doing unto others” as he would wish to be treated. At Joe’s funeral, his son, Anthony Joseph “Mickey” Smith, Jr., eulogized him simply, but profoundly:

“When Daddy was 19 years old he was baptized in Etoniah Creek. He began studying the bible intensely. He believed it was profitable for his life. It became a major part of his life and influenced his future. God gifted him with a great intellect and the skill to be a craftsman of wood. His life leaves a trail of faith. He leaves a heritage of faith for his children, and for his children’s children, just as his father and grandmother and great-great-grandfather, the Rev. Anthony Garnett Smith, left a heritage of faith for him.



*He built the pulpit that now stands in the East Palatka First Baptist Church, and built the console where the “**Message of Hope**” is broadcast at Way Radio (now BBN) at Orange Park. He befriended and counseled co-workers and others he met through life. He visited the sick. He helped and comforted others in their time of need. He prayed earnestly for others at their deathbed. He taught and proclaimed the Word of the bible. He volunteered at the Palatka Rescue Mission and was among the founders of Open Bible Baptist Church.*

*His favourite song was “**God Leads His Dear Children Along.**” In times of life when he faltered, failed, and had regrets, he never lost hope, always believing God’s promise of grace as written in II Corinthians 12:09 (And he said unto me, “**My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness**”). The doctrine that he held can best be defined in the words of the hymn, “**On Christ the Solid Rock I Stand.**” One year ago this month he preached his final message, “**Blessed be the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him**” (James 1:12). My father had no fear of death. His faith was strong. During his long illness he was a good patient, thanking those that assisted him. He set a good example, as he held fast to his faith during his affliction and trials” [**Truly a man of faith, Anthony Joseph “Joe” Smith died April 2, 2002**].*

A FAMILY OF FAITH

The fool hath said in his heart, "There is no God!" . . . (Psalms 14:1, 53:1)

Conventional wisdom "has it" that never talk religion or politics with family or friends. But faith is the defining character of our family, and we declare our beliefs in the light of scriptural study. We are dogmatic as to the truth of the Trinity: *Of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost*. Thus, as Simon Peter, we confess that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, "the Son of the Living God!" But we are not ignorant of philosophy and scientific method, the pursuits of human knowledge. Rather, we honour those pursuits as divining the wisdom of creation, but view creation as the purposed wisdom of divinity. We have not reached this conclusion by our own witness, but have obtained our understanding through faith. The Disciples saw and believed, but we heard and believed! We weren't in Egypt when a sacrificial lamb's blood was smeared upon the door-posts, nor were we there when Jesus was crucified at Calvary, *but we have witnesses*. Yes, people were there that did see, and we believed through their testimony!

Some contend miracles are figments of imagination, that the dead cannot rise, and hold that the primeval origin of life was an evolutionary fluke. But that evolutionary "accident" of first life was arranged at the dawn of creation by a composing and disposing mind. Death is the disposition of creation, but life is the miracle of composition! Death is not miraculous, but life is. A pebble isn't dynamic, but thought is. A pebble cannot roll itself from place to place, but thought can move mountains. If animated purpose and manipulation are physical manifestations of mind, what dynamic mentality created the heavens and earth? If life was created from cosmic detritus, and returns thereunto at death, why reason it beyond the creative ability of a cosmic mentality to reconstitute a disintegrated organism from that space dust, and thereby restore the miracle of life?

Thus the question of the age is, ***“What happens to a person’s soul at death?”*** Although a believer’s body returns to the natural elements from which it came ***“for dust thou art and dust shalt thou return”*** (Genesis 3:19), a soul doesn’t lie for eons in the darkness of a grave, nor is it at the mercy of fire, wind, and water. Those who died before the sacrifice of Christ were ***“carried by the angels to the bosom of Abraham”*** (Luke 16:22), and Jesus assured the thief upon the cross with these words: ***“Verily I say unto thee, today thou shalt be with me in paradise”*** (Luke 23:39-43). I do not doubt the power of God to raise the newly dead or reform an eons-old dead body from its scattered atoms, but such reincarnations are yet mortal and are duly constrained by the laws of nature. The resurrected body of a believer is a spiritual embodiment of the soul, for ***“flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven”*** (I Corinthians 15:50).

In a sense, the mortal body at death is like an old thread-bare coat that has been cast aside and replaced by a new and perfect garment. Or it can be somewhat likened to a sown kernal of corn that dissolves into the soil when it offers up its indefinable “essence” of life to a new plant. Accordingly, the “soul” of that seed corn no longer has need of its erstwhile host, having since transitioned into a new existence although it was still of a physical nature. When Jesus rose after three days in the grave, he appeared first to Mary, who stood weeping outside of the tomb, and Jesus said unto her: ***“Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father”*** (John 20:17). From this passage I daresay that the resurrected corpse of Jesus was yet flesh and unfit for the Kingdom, and that “paradise” is a state of grace wherein one’s soul awaits embodiment, as presumably did the soul of the confessing thief crucified beside our Lord. Within that esoteric conclusion, I find comfort with the thought that when we die we are immediately united with Jesus, our Risen Lord and Saviour. I have seen no scriptural evidence or argument that persuades me to think otherwise.

JACK GRIFFIN (quote): My 3rd great-grandfather was John Griffin, who was born September 3rd 1740 in [Goochland] County, Virginia. During the Revolution he was a sergeant in Capt. William Earl's 1st North Carolina Regiment, later promoted to lieutenant, and then captain under the command of Gen'l. George Washington. His son, **Thomas Griffin**, wrote some details concerning our pioneer Griffin line in his journal of 1841 such as: *"I was born September 24th 1787 in the County of Cumberland, State of Virginia. I am the youngest but one of eight children raised by marriage between John Griffin and Mary Andrews, both Virginians. My grandfather, David Griffin, as far as I know had only two brothers. One being an early adventurer to Kentucky and it's said had a family. The other brother removed to North Carolina and had a family, though I know nothing of either."* **Thomas Griffin went on to describe his father's move to Georgia:** *"My father, when a grown man as I oft heard him say, went into the world with nothing but a horse and saddle. About the year...1792 or 93, himself, Joseph Hubbert, and Robert Smith set out for Georgia, a tremendous undertaking for those days.... My father purchased a tract of land on the Big Creek, 4 miles from the Oconee River now lying in the county of Oglethorpe, 10 miles from Lexington...he and two sons, a young man, and a few servants...built a strong log house, leaving places for port holes to fire rifles through so this house was both residence and fort. He held this ground and made bread that year, and not a house there west of him....there was much trouble such as stealing horses, and the family of William Thrasher was killed near Scull Shoals after father brought us from the old settlement to Big Creek. The next year the country began to settle up rapidly, log houses were building in every direction, and the fields began to be opened. There was but few slaves there then. The people did their own work, or it was left undone"* (excerpt from **"My New Life"** —a spiritual odyssey written by Jack Ray Griffin and his son, Robert Silas Griffin, 2006).

John Griffin died around 1819 in either Greene or Oglethorpe County, Georgia, having fathered at least eleven children counting the twins David Andrews and Jesse Andrews Griffin [*Jack Griffin descended from David Andrews Griffin who, with his brother Jesse, was killed by Upper Creek “Red Stick” warriors in the Bashi Skirmish of Clarke County, Alabama, in the Autumn of 1813. Being allied with the British, after their defeat at Horseshoe Bend they fled to Florida*]. Thomas Griffin wrote that his father was averse to education and demanded his sons to work. He also confessed: “*My grand[parents] were regular Baptists for thirty years and I believe they were good people and I hope died in peace. My father, in theory professed to somewhat believe that way, but would not fully subscribe to their creed [doctrinal beliefs]. My mother’s attachments were to the Methodist people and my father’s to the Baptists, the house was divided!*”

In the late 1700s and early 1800s the new American nation, especially in the southern states, underwent a grassroots revival of religion now known as “The Great Awakening” which was largely inspired by the ideals of John and Charles Wesley. Unlike the rituals and intermediary doctrines of older denominations, the Wesleyan doctrine of grace and personal choice (*free will*) appealed to the frontier sense of propriety. But the “Old School” Presbyterians and some “Old Regular” Baptists fervently resisted, adhering to the calvinistic doctrine of predestination, which excluded personal choice or participation in salvation.

Accordingly, there were household disagreements, as Bishop Galloway observed: “*In one family the father called himself a ‘high-land, or dry-footed’ Baptist, and the mother professed Methodism but went to the Baptist church to keep her husband happy. In 1808 their son, Thomas Griffin, heard one of the itinerant Methodists preach, and went home a convert bent on heeding the call to preach himself, and started with his father, no easy task!*” (“**My New Life**”, page 75)

Thomas Griffin's account of his conversion: *There was to be a two day meeting held at Pope's Chapel in Oglethorpe. Hope Hull and James Russell were to hold it with Benjamin Blanton. Several of our relatives, to wit: Anthony Smith and others, were expected up to the meeting. I went to laugh and tattle tales that would ridicule the Methodists...Hope Hull came down and sang a hymn that made my flesh tremble, and impressed upon me an awful foreboding of the hereafter. That night there was a meeting. My cousin Anthony Smith and the young Andrews [also a cousin] wished to go so I went too...On Sunday, Hope Hull preached. He spoke like a man of God, enrapturing the audience while depicting the agonies of the Cross with 'the divine eloquence of the Holy Ghost!' The meeting wound up, and for the next two weeks my mind was like a pair of scales, and decided that I would seek God. Back home, I found a deep gully into which I crept and for the first time in my life, tried to pray to God sincerely. The following Wednesday while upstairs in my father's house about 12 o'clock, I surrendered unconditionally, the language of my soul was thus: "Save, Lord! Or I perish!"* **The last entry in Reverend Thomas Griffin's manuscript journal was January 1st 1850:** *"I now see the first of 1850, but much doubt my seeing its close. If I fall this year may I have grace sufficient to my day, and especially the dying day, and may the providence of God be over my children is my sincere prayer."*

COMMENT: John Griffin (*Jack Griffin's 3rd great-grandfather*) and his brother-in-law, Robert Smith (*my 3rd great-grandfather*) set out for Oglethorpe County, Georgia, from Cumberland County, Virginia, on December 25, 1791. They spent 32 days in the saddle, coming to their respective homesteads on January 27, 1792. John Griffin and Robert Smith, Jr., married sisters, Maryann and Hannah Andrews. Robert and Hannah Andrews Smith were ardent Methodists, and provided the site near their homestead whereupon the Mount Pleasant Methodist Church was built.

MOUNT PLEASANT METHODIST CHURCH

About the year 1815 when Uncle Robert Smith and his wife had grown too feeble to ride very far to church, after conferring with their neighbors, they built a brush arbour just below where the church now stands, making the pews out of puncheons (*logs split in half and roughly smoothed on the flat side with an adze*). Here they had regular Sunday services by some of the local preachers of the community. This grew in favour with the people and in the year 1820, a small house was erected. This being a central point, a part of the membership of Rock Springs and Prospect churches conveniently moved to Mount Pleasant. About this time, the Reformed church at Privilege disbanded and united with Mount Pleasant. When the church was first organized, a two acre plot of land for a building site was bought from Robert Smith for fifteen dollars, and in the name of seven trustees: **Robert Colquitt, Chesley Arnold, William Andrews Jr, Mark Andrews, Robert S. Smith, William G. Andrews, and Wyatt Andrews**. The deed was titled: "*To Mount Pleasant Meeting House, and to their successors in office, as appointed by this congregation.*"

In 1820 all thirty charter members were related by blood or marriage: Chesley Arnold, Susanna Andrews Arnold, Washington Arnold, Moses Arnold, Permelia Smith Arnold, Garnett Andrews, Jane Andrews, Wyatt Andrews, William Gaines Andrews, Mark Andrews, Betsy Smith Andrews, Juliana Smith Andrews, James Otis Smith, Robert Smith, Robert S. Smith, Lucinda Gresham Smith, Larkin Smith Jr, Charles Lee Smith, Larkin Smith, Kilpatrick Smith, Frances Smith Davis, Maria Smith Hargrove, Richard Hargrove, Charles G. Hargrove, William H. Colquitt, Robert Colquitt, Abraham Kidd, Elizabeth Smith England, Samuel C. Gallagher, and the Rev. Anthony Garnett Smith (*one of the original local pastors*). Seven circuit preachers have gone out of this church in the last fifty years, to wit: *James England, Bennet England, Sherman England, Vivian Bray, Jouett Bray, William Kelly, and Ford McRee (Rev. Clement C. Cary, 1920)*.

Even before Mount Pleasant Church was organized, there was a well-known local preacher, Rev. Anthony Garnett Smith (*the son of Robert Smith*), who came with his family from Virginia. He was the uncle of Rev. William Anthony Smith, and also the brother of Rev. James H. Smith of Meckleburg County, Virginia, and Haywood County, Tennessee. His wife was Miss Mary Allen, of Cumberland County, Virginia, and they raised a large family, including several sons [*one of whom was Rev. Wesley Fletcher Smith of the North Georgia Conference who also served the Winterville circuit at one time. He died there and is buried at Winterville*]. In 1823 a daughter, Zillah Smith, wed Nathan Johnson, the grandfather of Rev. Luke G. Johnson DD. A grandson, Robert Smith, married Miss Julia Turner, grand-daughter of Bishop George F. Pierce, and resides at Culverton, Georgia. Around 1827 Rev. Anthony Garnett Smith relocated to Crawford County, and died there January 18, 1852.

Mary Allen Smith was the daughter of Daniel Allen, one of the trustees of the Hampden-Sydney College in nearby Prince Edward County, largely a Presbyterian seminary. Two of Mary Allen Smith's half-brothers, the Drs. William Hill and Cary Allen, had notable evangelical careers as Presbyterian ministers, having been greatly influenced by their professors, Samuel Stanhope Smith and Robert Blair Smith, sons of the Rev. Dr. Robert Smith, likewise a Presbyterian scholar.

Rev. James H. Smith of Brownsville, Tennessee, practiced what he preached and inspired others to do likewise. Three of his sons attained positions of great regional influence: William Macon Smith and Thomas G. Smith as high court judges, and Dr. Carlos Greene Smith as president of the University of Alabama. After retiring from the university, Dr. Smith, with his wife, sister, and daughter, moved to Palatka, Florida (*then a well-known winter resort with amenities*). The family remained in Palatka as permanent residents, and all four are buried in West View Cemetery.

The Rev. Anthony Garnett Smith was no scholar given to “high church” oratory, but was rightly recognized by his eloquent peers as a man inspired to preach: *“Brother Smith’s piety was eminently characterized by firmness of faith and a professed love for the word of God. As a minister, he labored faithfully and very usefully in the local ranks, and was always a warm friend and ally of his brethren in the itinerant work. He was a plain, strong preacher of practical and experiential religion. And, undoubtedly, very many to whom he ministered will rise in the last day to call him blessed”* (**Southern Christian Advocate**).

Anthony Garnett Smith was a boy of eleven years when he fell under conviction to set himself right with God: *“In November 1787 I felt the pardoning love of God and for several years enjoyed the consolations of religion. Growing up to manhood and mixing with the world I lost its enjoyments. Backsliden in heart but was under the experience of grace as to have been strictly moral as to my conduct but always indulging in what the world calls innocent mirth until the summer of 1803 when I again renewed my covenant to live for God. And though I had frequent intimations for good and felt a degree of comfort, was not fully satisfied until the 15th of April 1804”*— **A.G.Smith** (per bible record). During that same year, he was licensed to preach. In 1811, he received ordination at the hands of Bishop Asberry, and ordained again in 1812 by Bishop McKendree.

Rev. Anthony Garnett Smith dutifully recorded his mother and father’s death in his bible: **Robert Smith** departed this life December 9, 1834, being 85 years, 10 months, and 29 days old. He was a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church upwards of 47 years. As he lived, so he died, in peace and feeling his way was clear.

Hannah Smith departed this life January 2, 1845, being 80 years, and 29 days old. Mother joined the Methodist Episcopal Church in the winter of 1787. Her life corresponded with her profession and she had no fear of death but waited patiently for the coming of her Lord and Saviour.

WESLEY FLETCHER SMITH, MG

Minutes of the North Georgia Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church (South), twenty-ninth session held at Elberton, Georgia, November 20 to November 25, 1895, records the passing away of Reverend Wesley F. Smith.

In the death of Rev. Wesley F. Smith, the church has lost a faithful servant and the Conference an honoured, useful member. His place is vacant here, but the memory of his ministerial zeal and fidelity lingers still as an inspiration and a benediction [*Wesley's father was the Reverend Anthony Garnett Smith, Sr*]. He was born in Oglethorpe County, Georgia, October 9, 1815. The subject of prayer and religious training from infancy, it may be truly said of him that he was brought up “*in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*” Piously inclined, his young life was moral and upright.

In his eighteenth year he experienced a thorough change of heart and on the same day joined the church, maintaining a blameless Christian character down to life's close. A deep conviction was fastened upon his mind and heart from the day of his conversion, that it was his duty to become an active worker in the Lord's vineyard—in fact, he was called to preach. As is frequently the case with the truly called of God to this high work, he hesitated and shrank from the responsibility. In hours of doubt and hesitancy he would go to his pious mother for counsel and comfort. Her uniform reply was, “*When you feel these impressions, say: “Speak, Lord, thy servant heareth!”*”

The church where he communed was impressed that a divine call was upon him. The membership saw in him elements of usefulness, and they sympathized with him in his struggle to solve the problem submitted to his decision. But the issue was soon to be settled, and in an unlooked for, somewhat unusual way. On April 5, 1837, he was married to Miss Louisa J. Hill, a most estimable woman, but at the time of her marriage unconverted, although a seeker of religion. Shortly after their marriage the event transpired which affected and, perhaps, gave direction to the current of his life.

The incident was this: Rev. Samuel Anthony, of blessed memory, invited Brother Smith to close a service for him, but he declined. At the next service when Brother Smith was about to take his seat near the pulpit, a venerable member of the church, Nathan Johnson, laid hold upon him, forced him into the pulpit, closed, and buttoned the door behind him saying, “*Now, do your duty!*”

When the preacher ended his sermon, Smith arose and began to sing but before the song was half through, a baptism of holy fire from above fell upon singer and upon congregation; an invitation to penitents was given; the altar was crowded, and many souls were converted, among the number was the wife of him so unceremoniously forced into the discharge of his duty. After this, Smith stood ready for any duty to which God might call him, and in 1840 he was licensed to exhort. The following year at Railroad Campground in Monroe County, he was licensed to preach.

In December of 1853 he was admitted into the Georgia Conference at a session held in Macon, being appointed to and serving the following charges: Culloden, 1854-1855; Fort Valley, 1856; but then until 1865, he pastored local congregations lacking regular ministry. Re-entering the Conference in 1865, he was appointed as follows: *Culloden, 1866-1867; Barnesville, 1868-1869; Culloden, 1870; Zebulon, 1871; Warrenton, 1872-1874; White Plains, 1875-1876; Decatur, 1877-1878; Hampton, 1879-1881; Lexington, 1882-1883; Forsyth, 1884; Clinton, 1885; Culverton, 1886-1888; Lexington, 1889; Winterville, 1890-1891.* Here Brother Smith’s active itinerant labours ended.

At the Conference of 1891, full of years crowned with the honours of a long and useful life, and followed by the love of his brethren, he retired gracefully and uncomplaining to his place in the superannuated ranks to await the Master’s call to “*Come up higher!*” His last years were spent in the quietitude of his Winterville home among his loving family. On the 7th of last June, he went into his garden, worked awhile, returned to the house, washed his face and hands, lay down upon a lounge, folded his hands, and without a word or sigh, fell “*asleep in Jesus!*” **J.F. Mixon.**

THE SALZBURGERS

Information provided by:

Georgia Salzburger Society

2980 Ebenezer Road

Rincon, Georgia 31326

(912) 754-7001

On October 31, 1731, Archbishop Firmian of Salzburg [Austria] expelled 20,000 Protestants who followed the teaching of the reformer, Martin Luther, forcing them to seek refuge elsewhere in Europe. But working through the “*Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge*” in England, Samuel Urlsperger, pastor of St. Anna’s Lutheran Church in Augsburg, Germany, made arrangements for some three hundred Salzburgers to settle as a community in Georgia, having been so invited by the colonial Trustees in 1732.

The first group of refugees arrived at St. Anna’s Lutheran Church in 1733 and departed October 2, 1733, traveling north through Dinkelsbuhl, Germany, on to Frankfort where they were welcomed. From Frankfort, they traveled by barge down the Main River to the Rhine River, and thereafter by ship to Rotterdam, Holland, arriving November 27, 1733. At Rotterdam this first group of Salzburgers were met by the Reverends Boltzious and Gronau, Lutheran pastors, who became their spiritual and secular leaders. Boltzious and Gronau escorted these refugees to Dover, England, where thirty-seven families boarded the transport ship “*Purysburg*”, and sailed for Georgia on January 8, 1734. On March 12, 1734, after sixty-three stormy days at sea, the “*Purysburg*” safely anchored at the mouth of the Savannah River, where the Salzburgers were met by General James Oglethorpe, head of the Georgia colony, who then led the Salzburgers some miles upriver to the proposed site of their new home at “Old” Ebenezer. This site, however, proved to be a poor choice and the community was subsequently relocated at New Ebenezer. This settlement was satisfactory and thrived until it was burnt in 1779 by the occupying British troops.

The settlement of Ebenezer was laid out following the plan of Savannah, roads and building sites being neatly and efficiently plotted in grid fashion like modern towns and cities. Farms were cultivated and homes were built, likewise an orphanage and a church which is yet active. Even now, descendants of that original congregation formed at St. Anna's Church in Augsburg attend services. The Salzburger settlement of New Ebenezer prospered, and by 1741 had grown to some twelve hundred citizens, being augmented by Swiss and Swabian immigrants arriving in successive transports until 1752. As a group, the Salzburgers were the most industrious and literate settlers in Georgia at the time, and laid a foundation of pious and conscientious citizenship upon which new settlers from Virginia and the Carolinas would build and scatter throughout the South.

Bringing "Old World" skills and handicrafts to the "New World" brought needed technology to the frontier, benefitting all. Among Salzburger accomplishments were the first sawmills and gristmills in Georgia, the first organized church and apparently the first orphanage in the Southern colonies. The Salzburgers were also more versed in agricultural practices and animal husbandry. Instead of allowing their precious stock of cattle, sheep and swine to range free and unprotected from wild beasts and bad weather, the Salzburgers employed "stock-minders" to follow and guard the herds and flocks, and pen the dairy animals.

And perhaps the most important traits in the Salzburger character was honesty and a sense of civic duty: the first Governor of Georgia, John Adam Treutlen, was a Salzburger. From Georgia westward to Texas, the Salzburgers were always mindful of others. In 1925, thirty-five Salzburger descendants met to discuss the formation of a Salzburger Society. At the later December 9, 1925 meeting, it was set to have the first annual meeting on March 12, 1926, that day being notable as the anniversary of the arrival of the first group of Salzburgers.

GIDEON POWLEDGE, JR.

The following essay was authored by Rev. F. L. Cherry and first published in “The History of Opelika and Her Agricultural Tributary Territory” c1885, and republished by the Genealogical Society of East Alabama, Inc., in 1996, pages 240-43 (it has been slightly abridged by Robert Lee Smith, 09 Jan 2013).

The Reverend Gideon Powledge, Jr., was a man who once known was never forgotten. Gideon was born near Savannah, Georgia, about the year 1801 or 1802, and as a young man moved to Macon, Georgia, and laboured as a blacksmith. He was quite successful in business at the outset such being an honest reward of industry, perserverance, economy, and good judgement, traits which were so harmoniously blended in the sum of his character. In 1828 he wed Martha Susan Godfrey, the daughter of Francis Harrison and Mary (Parkinson) Godfrey, of Macon, Georgia.

From Macon he and Martha moved to Talbot County, Georgia, and thereafter nigh on Muckalee Swamp in Sumter County, Georgia. He moved again in 1837 to Macon County (*Lee*), Alabama, crossing the Chattahoochee below Columbus where he then followed the “Mim’s Trail” to a point about a mile opposite “Kellum’s Bridge” where he turned due north. He then cut his way through the woods all the way to Chewacla Creek near where Judge Kellum now lives and dug down the banks on either side with a foot-adze, making the first ford at that point for wagons, and which has been a public crossing by bridge or ford ever since. Clearing a path through the woods up the creek a ways, he came to a small creek where he pitched a tent on the west bank opposite where an old man, a Mr. McCoy, lived.

The first residence built by Mr. Powledge was about a quarter mile further up, a few yards south of the road as it now runs and it was, like its builder, an orginal affair. The house was about twenty-five by fifty feet in size and the frame was stout posts set in the ground. Every board and stick of timber used in building the house, except the frame, was rived from one massive white-oak which grew nearby, the stump around which the children played is yet visible.

The body of the Powledge house was weather-boarded with four-foot boards laid on upright, shingled as was the roof. The flooring was hewn puncheons roughly dressed with a foot-adze, as were the door and window frames, being rived out with a mallet and froe, all from the massive bole of that one white-oak tree. Gideon Powledge lived well in that primitive house, in primitive style and in primitive comfort, dispensing a primitive and generous hospitality until 1845 when he raised a more comfortable set of log cabins about a quarter of a mile further west, and resided there until 1850 at which time he built the present house about three hundred yards east of the Chewacla Church. There were no sawmills in the country at that time, and few mills of any sort for miles about. In 1840 Mr. Powledge built a gristmill on the little creek at the present ford and, thereafter, a cotton gin and screwpress baling machine, all of which was carried away some twenty years ago by an immense freshet and flood. Since construction of those water-powered mills, the little stream has been called Powledge's Mill Creek. In 1852, Mr. Powledge sold his Lee County, Alabama, holdings and moved back to Georgia. First to Pike County and then to Cobb County before relocating in southern Talbot County near the community of Geneva where he again established a milling enterprise.

Gideon's beloved wife died in Talbot County in 1863 and is most likely buried in the Geneva Cemetery in one of the old unmonumented graves. Martha Powledge was by all accounts a most excellent person of gentle qualities that endeared her to friends and neighbors alike and ever ready to defend her faith. Martha Powledge was a Christian mother who would never permit the family altar to be neglected when Gideon was away, and would gather the Powledge children around and lead the service herself. And even now, "*being dead, she yet speaketh!*" Gideon Powledge, in his prime, was a remarkable man and the possessor of wonderful powers of both body and mind. Being a blacksmith, his physical powers were highly developed. He has been known to set cast-steel to one hundred axe-heads and temper them with water in succession. He could shape an adze with a hand-hammer as perfectly as if it were cast from a mold and swing a ten pound sledge with his right hand as easily as most men could use a hand-hammer. At frontier "log rollings" in the old days, Mr. Powledge never met the man of his own weight who could "pull him down" in rural exhibitions of strength.

Of fine intellect and pure hearted, Gideon Powledge was licensed to preach by the Methodist Episcopal Church early in his life and, being of Dutch (*German*) ancestry, his delivery was peculiar in its earnest and attractive appeal, and drew the attention of a congregation at the outset and held it to the end. He was always able to meekly and respectfully give a biblical explanation of any passage of Scripture that might be submitted. Like most frontiersmen, he did not have a classical education, but Gideon Powledge was thirty years ahead of his contemporaries in Christian theology. It was proposed by some of the best critics of the day that some of his sermons contained the most perfect understanding of theology that they had ever heard from any uninspired source.

But a few dissented: Reverend Powledge was accused by “Old School” Methodists to be unorthodox, biased towards Pelagianism in doctrine [*that children dying in their innocence are not damned by Adam’s original sin—there was also a lingering element of “calvinistic” fatalism in some of the older “converted” Methodist preachers*]. The accusation was serious, and at the Quarterly Conference held in 1847 or 48 his character was deemed acceptable but his views were rejected, thus his license to preach was withheld. At a special conference called to review the matter, the charge was dismissed. Subsequently endorsed by Dr. Lovick Pearce, his license was renewed and delivered to him as faultless. But this experience hurt him, and he never quite felt at home again, and within a few years he sold out and moved away.

But as a man and a Christian of the noblest order, Reverend Powledge held and yet holds the confidence and respect of all classes. In the pioneer years of settlement, he stood almost alone as a standard-bearer for the Methodists but soon came the Reverends James Durr, James W. Capps and William Mizell, making four as noble pioneer preachers that ever blazed the trail for advancement of Christian civilization in our state. Alas, they have all gone to glory except “Uncle Gideon” who yet lives and preaches the gospel of our Lord and Saviour. Six children of the Reverend Powledge are living, four in Lee County, and two in Florida with him, and all represent him well. Mrs. Russell Cole of Opelika, Alabama, and Mrs. Robert Smith of Talbot County, Georgia, are grand-daughters.

Gideon Powledge moved to Tampa, Florida, around 1867, but his son, Moses John Powledge, came in 1869. His youngest son, Phillip Lucious Powledge, came later. They would eventually prosper as pioneer citrus growers and merchants. The Powledges were relatives of Aaron Gideon Zipperer, a pioneer “Cracker” cattleman and stepson of the notable Jacob Summerlin, Jr. Gideon Powledge, Jr. (*my 2nd great-grandfather*) died testate 20 November 1890 in Clearwater, Pinellas County, Florida, at eighty-three years of age. *We had no knowledge of that Florida residency until my brother, Ralph Phillip Smith, and his wife, Joyce, contacted some of our grandmother’s Alabama relatives. Being a “Salzburger” descendant of Martin Paulitsch and Ursula Schweighoffer, I am indebted to a number of Powledge reseachers and have immensely benefited from their pioneering works, especially that of Mr. Stephen Robert Renouf.*

The family’s name was *Paulitsch* but our phonetic spelling echoes its Germanic pronunciation. The first of the family in America apparently were siblings: *Johannes Martin, Anna Barbara and Johannes Phillip Paulitsch* who were born in Ulm, Germany. Displaced Lutherans, they arrived at Savannah, Georgia, 29 October 1750, as members of the 1st Swabian group, sailing from England on the 13th transport ship, *Charming Martha*. The family was resettled as part of the Salzberger community at New Ebenezer (*near Savannah*), and at Bethany in 1757. All three married in Ebenezer: *Martin to Ursula Schweighoffer*, 22 April 1754; *Anna Barbara to Conrad Rahn*, in 1752; and *Phillip to Anna Magdalena Vetterli*, circa 1757. The German custom of giving “first” names which honoured a saint were often used for more than one child. Thus in life, the Paulitsch brothers were formally addressed as “Martin” and “Phillip” Paulitsch.

Martin Paulitsch married Ursula Schweighoffer at New Ebenezer, 22 April 1754. Ursula was born in 1732 near Salzberg, Germany (*Austria*), during the time when Lutheran dissenters were persecuted by the nation’s Roman Catholic officials. Ursula’s father, Paulus Schweighoffer, fled Germany in November 1733 with his family by walking cross-country to the Rhine River, and then by barge over to Rotterdam, Holland, and by ship to Dover, England. From England they set sail on *The Prince of Wales* to Savannah, Georgia, arriving there 28 December 1734.

A “true” Salzberger, Paulus Schweighoffer was born circa 1685 near Mietosil, Salzberg District, in Germany. He married Margaretha Prindlinger who was born circa 1682 in Binfgan, Pintzgau, Germany. Paulus reportedly died at fifty years of age in Ebenezer, Georgia, 21 March 1736. Margaretha allegedly died 04 June 1766 at eighty five years of age. She and Paulus were likely buried in the Old Ebenezer community cemetery, the overgrown site of which is three miles east of Rincon, Georgia. One researcher mistakenly credits Margaretha Sweighoffer (*nee Prindlinger*) with founding the first orphanage in Georgia, but understandably so considering her name, Margaretha, and association with the orphanage. Newly widowed with several young children in 1737, Margaretha was most likely the presiding “house-mother.”

The orphanage was established in 1737, but it was Margaretha (*nee Gunther*) and Ruprecht Kalcher who were empowered by the community’s leaders to do so. Not only did the Kalchers care for orphans and the children of sick parents, they also boarded school children from distant homes. Unaided widows with children and needy adults who had no families to care for them were likewise taken in.

Margaretha, widow of Paulus Schweighoffer and daughter of Martin Prindlinger, is the mother of three children: ***Maria Schweighoffer*** (1726) married Christian Riedelsperger; ***Thomas Schweighoffer*** (1728) married Hannah Fleorl; and ***Ursula Schweighoffer*** (1732) wed ***Johannes Martin Paulitsch***, from whom I am descended. ***Johannes Phillip Paulitsch*** (1736) wed Anna Magdalena Vetterli (1736) c1757 in Ebenenezer. Of four children, only two survived: ***Anna Magdalena Paulitsch*** (18 Dec 1758), married Jonathan Gotlieb Fetzer. ***Johannes George Paulitsch*** (12 Apr 1764) married Sarah Salome Steiner, 07 September 1795. They had two children: David Powledge was born 1797 and died single c1827, thereby ending the Phillip Paulitsch male lineage, and Sarah Salome Powledge who was born c1800, and wed Gideon Zipperer, 23 January 1823. Sarah Powledge and Gideon Zipperer had three children: ***John Jacob Zipperer*** in 1824, who wed Frances Knight in 1841 (*their one child, Aaron Gideon Zipperer, was born 13 April 1842 in Alachua County, Florida*). John Jacob Zipperer died 11 June 1844 in Hamilton County. Frances then married Jacob Summerlin, Jr. (*who would become the celebrated pioneer Florida cattleman*).

Salome Zipperer was born c1825 and married Josiah T. Baisden in Florida, and **Sophia Zipperer** who was born c1826. Gideon Zipperer died in Effingham County sometime before 27 October 1827 when Emmanuel and Salome Zipperer asked to be administrators of his estate. Sarah Powledge, Gideon Zipperer's wife, died during the c1826 birth of Sophia, and her father, George Powledge, was appointed guardian over Sarah's three Zipperer children. George Powledge went first to Lowndes County, Georgia, with the orphans--John Jacob Zipperer, Salome Zipperer, and Sophia Zipperer, but around 1840 he moved with the children to Hamilton County, Florida. Johannes George Powledge died 28 January 1852 in Hamilton County at the home of his grand-daughter, Mrs. Salome Zipperer Baisden. He was 87 years old.

Aaron Gideon Zipperer, the son of John Jacob Zipperer and Frances Knight (*and stepson of Jacob Summerlin*), prospered as a south Florida cattleman under the fatherly tutelage of Jacob Summerlin, Jr (the "*King of Crackers*"). It was in Florida's cattle-country where the descendants of Phillip and Martin Powledge would meet when the Rev. Gideon Powledge and his two sons, Moses John and Phillip Lucious, who also settled near Tampa around 1867. Recorded on page 25 of the Hillsborough County "Marks and Brands" book dated 17 April 1874 is Gideon Powledge's livestock mark (a "*sharp in one ear; smooth crop with 2 splits and sharp in the upper side of the other ear*"), and brand (**96 P**). Moses John Powledge's mark was a ("*smooth crop in one ear; crop and underbit in the other ear*"); brand: (~~Ø~~) 25 March 1874.

Martin Paulitsch and Ursula Schweighoffer had 5 children: Sulamith Paulitsch (born 03 Oct 1757); Hannah Elizabeth Paulitsch (born 15 Jul 1759); Gratiola Paulitsch (07 May 1761); Daughter (stillborn 25 Mar 1862); Jonathan Paulitsch (born 21 Jul 1763) and **Gideon Paulitsch** (born 04 Feb 1766). Martin Paulitsch died circa 1770/1, as Ursula had wed Martin Dasher (*a widower with four young children*) by 1772. **It is possible that Ursula and Martin Dasher had children.**

Gideon Paulitsch, Sr., was born 04 February 1766 near Bethany, Georgia, and died there 12 August 1827. Gideon was still a young boy when the British burnt the settlement during the American Revolution but, as did the other old settlers, he rebuilt his life and livelihood in a new country strictly as an American.

The days as displaced Salzburger refugees in a foreign land were no more. The Swiss, German, and Austrian ethnicities quickly blended with the new American identity, thus infusing the new State of Georgia and the Territory of Florida with invaluable “Old World” trade skills, handcrafts and an energetic people.

Gideon Paulitsch married Maria Hannah (c1778-1828) at Ebenezer circa 1794-95, as John Martin Paulitsch was born early in 1796. The exact birthdates of five other documented children are not known, but are approximately as listed:

- 1) **John Martin Paulitsch** (08 Feb 1796-03 Mar 1881) wed Frances Ward Foy
- 2) **Ephraim Paulitsch** (c1798/04--?), Georgia Land Lottery winner, 13 Feb 1824
- 3) **Phillip Paulitsch** (c1798/04--?), Georgia Land Lottery winner, 08 Oct 1825
- 4) **Gideon Paulitsch, Jr.** (c1807--20 Nov 1890) wed Martha Susan Godfrey
- 5) **Christan Paulitsch** (c1800/9--?), no further record
- 6) **Eliza Paulitsch** (c1800/9--?), no further record

As evidence that the Salzburger community had assimilated as Americans, by 1804 the germanic name, Paulitsch, was being spelled “Powledge” as it will be from this point onward, as the main theme of this essay concerns the Smith descendants of **Gideon Powledge, Jr.**, through **Elizabeth Stevens** and **Robert Lee Smith** of Upson County, Georgia. **Gideon Powledge, Jr.**, was born c1807 near Bethany, Effingham County, Georgia, but was residing in Macon, Bibb County, Georgia, for some time prior to his 28/29 January 1828 marriage with **Martha Susan Godfrey**, daughter of Francis Harrison Godfrey and his first wife, Mary Parkinson (*daughter of John Parkinson, Esq.*). Martha Susan Godfey was born 1808/09 (*in Screven County?*) and died at Geneva, Talbot County, Georgia, in 1863. Martha was a sister of Lucy Virginia Godfrey who married Phillip Powledge (*Gideon Powledge’s brother*) 25 June 1825 in Bibb County, Georgia. 22 year old Lucy died 17 September 1827, allegedly leaving a son, Francis Harrison Godfrey Powledge (*but the claim is problematic, likely a result of being the only grandchild mentioned in Francis Godfrey’s LWT--It’s unlikely that two children were named Francis Harrison Godfrey Powledge*).

The ten children of Gideon Powledge, Jr., and his wife, Martha Susan Godfrey, are as follows:

1) **Mary Frances Powledge** was born in Macon, Georgia, 29 November 1828, and died 1851 in Barbour County, Alabama. She married Samuel Trotter 30 September 1846 in Chambers County, Alabama (*issue: Mary Trotter Darby; Gideon Trotter*).

2) **Francis Harrison Godfrey Powledge (CSA)** was born 03 June 1831 in Talbot County, Georgia (*at Talbotton*), and died 06 May 1916 at Opelika, Lee County, Alabama. In 1852, Francis Powledge married Cassandra Saphronia Cooper. She was born 13 May 1833 in Wilkes County, Georgia. She was the daughter of Joseph W. Cooper and Julia Ann Elliott. Cassandra Powledge died 25 June 1908 in Aubrey, Texas.

3) **Caroline L. Powledge** was born 10 February 1834 in Talbotton, Georgia, and died September 1896 in Lee County, Alabama. About 1850, **Caroline wed Hubbard Wallace Stevens**, lawyer and son of Theophilus and Sarah Celia DeVane Stevens. Hubbard Wallace Stevens, was born 16 November 1825 in Putnam County, Georgia, and died April 1902 at his son's home in Alexander City, Alabama.

4) **Moses John Powledge (CSA)** was born 14 March 1836 in Sumter County, Georgia, and died in Pinellas County, Florida, 18 June 1916. Moses wed Sarah D. Allen (*the sister of Nancy Allen, his step-mother*) 30 July 1868 in Hernando County, Fla. Moses and Sarah Powledge had four children: William Fletcher (11 July 1869), Minnie A. (1872), Carrie S. (06 January 1876-14 July 1911) and Gideon (1887).

5) **John Fletcher Powledge (CSA)** was born 07 March 1839, the first child to be born in Macon (*now Lee*) County, Alabama, and died in Lee County 04 June 1887. John married Celia Ann McCulloh on 02 December 1867 in Lee County, Alabama. Celia was the daughter of Ann Jane Stevens and Briant McCulloh (and John's cousin). Celia was born 19 July 1846 and died 28 Oct 1925. John and Celia had only one child, Briant Homer Powledge, born 24 December 1870, who never married.

NOTE: *Moses John Powledge enlisted 18 Oct 1861, Pvt. Co. D, Georgia State Troops(Talbot County). Mustered out at Savannah as 2nd Corp., 02 Apr 1862. Re-enlisted as Pvt., Co. B, 32nd Regt. Inf(GA), appt'd hospital steward 1864, surrendered 25 Apr 1865 at Greensboro, NC. Francis H.G. Powledge enlisted in Sumter County ("Muckalee Guards") as Pvt. Co. A, 12th Regt. Inf(GA), Army of Northern Virginia. Appt'd hospital steward, and chaplain, 06 May 1864. 17 Apr 1865, paroled at Burkesville, VA. John Fletcher Powledge enlisted 11 Jun 1861, Co. E, 9th Regt. Inf(GA), appt'd 3rd Sgt. & 2nd Sgt Army of Northern Virginia (wounded), surrendered at Appomattox, VA 09 Apr 1865.*

6) **Martha Susan Powledge** was born 25 November 1841 in Macon County, Alabama, and died 1871 in Pike County, Alabama. One source alleges that in 1855 Martha married Samuel Trotter, the widower of Martha's sister, Mary (*who supposedly died 1851*). However, in her father's 1882 LWT, Martha was referred to as "the late Martha Potts" whose five unnamed children received 1 ¼ share of Gideon's estate (*the five children's father could have been either Trotter or Potts*).

7) **Christian E. Powledge** was born 29 March 1844 in Macon(?) County, Alabama, and reportedly died there as an infant on 15 January 1845.

8) **Louisa Powledge** was reportedly born around 1845-46, and died before 1860. **Comment:** "*Louisa*" may not have existed—"Louisa" may actually be Caroline L. Powledge's middle name.

9) **Laura Virginia Powledge** was born 27 February 1848 in Lee County, Alabama, (*at Powledge Station*), and died 12 September 1891. Laura married Calvin Homer McCulloh in Lee County Alabama, 01 September 1868. McCulloh was also born in Lee County, Alabama, 24 July 1843, and died there 30 November 1925. **Note:** Laura was named in remembrance of her mother's sister, Laura Virginia Godfrey, who married her father's brother, Phillip Powledge.

10) **Phillip Lucious Powledge** was also born at Powledge Station in Lee County, Alabama, on 09 April 1850. Phillip wed Lizzie Means of Troup County, Georgia, on 14 November 1871. Phillip would afterwards join his older brother, Moses, and father in Pinellas County, Florida. He died 30 May 1911 near Clearwater. Sometime before 1870, Gideon Powledge married Nancy C. Allen, sister of Sarah Allen, Moses John's wife, as they were named on the 1870 Hillsborough County, Florida, census. Gideon was a pioneer grove owner, merchant, and cattleman in the Tampa area. In 1874, Gideon and Moses John registered livestock marks and brands at the Hillsborough County courthouse. Gideon died at 83 years of age on 20 November 1890, and Moses John died 18 June 1916. They and their wives, Nancy and Sallie, are buried in the Largo Cemetery, Pinellas County, Florida, as are two of Moses and Sallie's children and Phillip Powledge (30 May 1911). **Note:** *Someone has graciously posted Gideon Powledge's family on "Find-a-Grave."*

THE STEVENS FAMILY

Caroline Powledge married Hubbard Wallace Stevens c1851 in Chambers (*or Lee*) County, Alabama (*county lines were shifting*). Hubbard Stevens was born in Putnam County, Georgia, 16 November 1825. He died in Alexander City, Alabama, in April 1902. Hubbard was educated at LaGrange College in LaGrange, Georgia, in law and admitted to the bar, but never practiced as an attorney. However, he was listed as a lawyer in the 1850 census of Chambers County, where he was enumerated with his parents, Theophilus and Sarah Celia Stevens. In the 1860 census Hubbard is listed as a school-teacher, and owning \$1900 in real estate and \$4500 in personal property, a fortune at the time. He also owned two male slaves, Ben and Henry, who were an inheritance from his late father's estate, and two female slaves.

Hubbard Stevens was a Confederate veteran of the Civil War. He had enlisted at Columbus, Georgia, in Company "B" of the 28th Georgia Seige Artillery, Bonaud's Battlion. Hubbard served as a lieutenant, and later promoted to captain. Before the War, he was a political affiliate of the Whig party, but later became a Democrat. Hubbard and his wife, Caroline Powledge, were active members of the Primitive Baptist Church. In the 1880 census, he is listed as a farmer in Bethel Township, Lee County, as was his married son, Charles Oliver Stevens, who (*with his bride, Flora*) resided with his parents.

Hubbard and Caroline Stevens bought land in Chambers County, Alabama, in 1866 and 1867, but sold lands in 1867, 1871, 1872, and 1891. Caroline died during the month of September 1896. In April 1897, Hubbard applied for a pension due his wartime service but was denied. On 28 April 1898 he reapplied, and having recently broken his thigh, Hubbard was residing with his son, Phillip, also a lawyer, in Alexander City, Alabama. In 1900, he was serving as Justice of the Peace for his area. Hubbard Wallace Stevens subsequently died in April 1902. **NOTE:** *Stephen Robert Renouf has done extensive research on the Hubbard Stevens family, and has composed an excellent family history touching on his immediate ancestors, and which includes my own. Accordingly, the following information was provided by Stephen.*

Hubbard Wallace Stevens and Caroline Powledge had six known children, to wit:

(1) **Phillip Orlando Stevens** was born 11 November 1852 near Berlin in Chambers County, Alabama. Phillip Stevens read law in the offices of Troy and Tompkins in Montgomery, Alabama, for eleven months he but returned to Opelika to study with Judge J.M. Chilton and was admitted to the bar in 1880. He practiced law in Opelika from 1880 to 1885, and Alexander City thereafter. Phillip married Etta Bailey, a daughter of J.J. Bailey, on 17 February 1888. Phillip entered politics as a Democrat and was elected State Senator for District 10 in 1898, representing Tallapoosa and Coosa Counties. Phillip had joined the Missionary Baptist Church, thus breaking from the Primitive Baptist Church denomination.

(2) **Etta Stevens** was born circa 1855. She apparently died in early childhood.

(3) **Charles Oliver Stevens** was born 01 April 1857 near Opelika in Lee County, Alabama. Charles became a house carpenter in 1884, and worked forty years at his vocation most of which was in California. Charles married Amaryllis Flora Robinson on 18 December 1879 at the Robinson place near Waverly. Charles and “Rilla” Stevens had seven children: **Calvin Eden**, 01 October 1880; **Mattie Lou**, 02 June 1882; **King Clovis**, December 1884; **Roy**, 05 August 1888; **Phillip Oliver** in January 1892; **Jesse Etta**, 29 August 1894; and, **Carlisle**, 01 November 1897. Charles Oliver Stevens died 03 April 1934 in Berkeley, California.

(4) **Martha Susan Stevens** was born in 1858 in Chambers County, Alabama. Martha married Matthew Carter on 24 December 1879 in Lee County, Alabama.

(5) **Capitola T. Stevens** was born in Chambers County, Alabama, on 05 September 1859, and died 09 March 1914. Capitola Stevens married Russell LaFayette Cole in Lee County, Alabama, 25 December 1878. Russell Cole was born 29 June 1858, and died 16 December 1944 (*Rosemere Cemetery, at Opelika*).

(6) **Elizabeth M. Stevens** was born near Salem, Lee County, Alabama, on 05 September 1869. Elizabeth married my grandfather and namesake, **Robert Lee Smith** (*of Upson County, Georgia*), 16 October 1889 at her home in Loachapoka, Lee County, Alabama. She returned with Robert to his father’s Upson County plantation where three of their five children were born, but that residential arrangement would not endure.

Robert's mother died in 1902, and the plantation was sold with the proceeds divided among the siblings, per his father's 1890 Will. But losing the Upson County farm was to lose both home and livelihood. Robert and Elizabeth then moved to Prattsburg, Talbot County, where the fourth child was born, and back to Upson by 1905. But in 1906, Robert and Elizabeth moved with four children: **Ralph Phillip** (1890), **Charles Cole** (1892), **Paul Herbert** (1894) and **Robert Howell** (1902), to Brooks County, where **Annie Lee** was born in 1908. The Brooks County move was a total break from both families, Stevens and Smith.

Robert Lee (*as Grannie spoke of him*) scratched out a bare living growing cotton for twelve years with just the help of his three older boys. But there was no future in working rented farmland, and hardtimes got even harder. At fifty-seven my grandfather was an old man, worn down by a lifetime of grueling labor, and in December of 1918 he fell mortally ill with the flu and died 22 January 1919. My grandmother, Elizabeth, died forty years later on 28 January 1959 in Florida, at eighty-nine. Robert and "Grannie" are buried in Brooks County, four miles east of Quitman, in the Lebanon Primitive Baptist Church cemetery. The old church is gone but the remote old cemetery (*and my memories of Grannie's funeral*) are well-kept.

By 1918 the boll weevil was everywhere, its larvae ravaging cotton fields and destroying any possibility of harvesting a cotton crop. That put Charles (*my father*) on the road. As cotton was the "money crop" in south Georgia, he left to find work elsewhere, and came to Putnam County, Florida. Papa claimed that he had boarded the wrong train, as New Smyrna was his destination but he arrived in East Palatka. That claim seemed strange to me, growing up in East Palatka, but I have recently figured that "wrong train" story out. I knew the Florida East Coast Railroad went directly to New Smyrna from St. Augustine, and I knew the East Palatka loop also went to New Smyrna. Therefore I could not understand his mistake, but Papa's "wrong" train was in Valdosta, Georgia, not St. Augustine! Instead of taking the Georgia Southern and Florida route to Jacksonville, and then taking the Florida East Coast line to New Smyrna, Papa had boarded the southbound Georgia Southern passenger train to Palatka where the FEC railway maintained a freight transfer depot.



Passengers boarded across the river in East Palatka, not at the freight depot in Palatka! Accordingly, Papa didn't really take the wrong train as either would have taken him to New Smyrna, but he did have a two mile hike to the East Palatka depot in order to board a southbound FEC passenger car. But East Palatka was a bustling little farming town in 1919, and Papa liked it. He found grovework at Esperanza, and as a mill foreman at the "Farm Manufacturing Company" barrel factory south of Hastings (*potatoes were then shipped in wooden barrels*) and decided to stay. He was soon thereafter employed by the FEC as a heavy construction carpenter repairing railway bridges and company buildings. As that job was always at distant worksites, and as Papa married my mother in 1933, he left the railroad c1935 to provide a homelife for her.



Looking back, I wished that I had asked more about Papa's life, but *auld lang syne* are times of youth, and cannot be relived. The faded memories that I now cherish must suffice, for "*as a child, I thought as a child*" and thus unaware of loss as I blissfully gamboled over the fields of childhood ignorance. Yet, my essays are not feeble attempts to resurrect the past, but to preserve our family's footprints in the drifting sands of time as long as possible for the benefit of those yet to pass our way. And, as I ever near that fabled "three score and ten" mile-marker, mere weeks away, I can sense the presence of ghosts, of kindred spirits.

Of, in the stilly night,

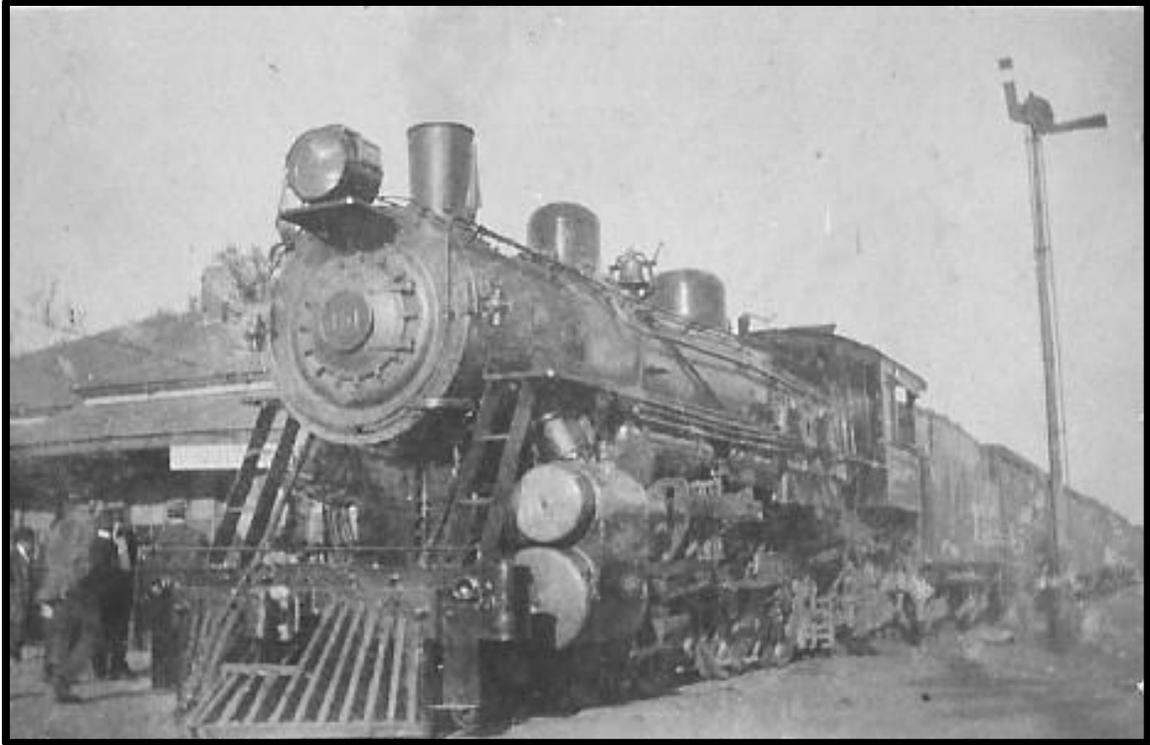
Ere slumber's chains have bound me,

Fond memory brings the light

Of other days around me:

(Thomas Moore)

And perhaps in the "fond memory" of a printed page, generations yet born may glimpse the foreshadows of themselves cast long 'ere they ever drew the breath of life! *That is my goal. Robbie Smith, June 2013.*



Railway Station at Quitman, Georgia. Photograph taken by Charlie Cole Smith, circa 1920.



Elizabeth Stevens Smith (L) and Robert Lee Smith (R) on farm near Quitman, Georgia, c1918.

EPILOGUE

OF FAITH AND FAMILY:

It is humbling to be a descendant of such God-fearing ancestors as we have, and it is because of their faith that we, the children of their unknowable future, yet follow their guide on our rocky road to Zion. And in those tremulous hours of spiritual darkness common to all men, the “*faith of our fathers*” shall stay our courage and brighten that day of sorrow. Thus shall it then be said of us: ***they too walked through the valley of the shadow of death, and feared no evil!*** And that shadowed valley is why it is so important to me to perpetuate our ancestral legacies. Having been born at a time when moral philosophy corrupted faith and men were idled by machines, I grew up in an era of displaced values but I yet identify with the hardscrabble people of my childhood and the fields and forests where I acquired the working skills of my father. As I wander abandoned old homesteads in melancholy reverie, I yet can see our pioneer forebears grubbing out a living from the land, and the boys and men taking up arms to defend hearth and home. And that have I likewise done and my hands bear testimony of toil, ***but the esoteric revelations of my heart testify of faith!***

Robbie Smith