

Information about Loyalist Elias Smith of Port Hope

Surname: Smith

Given name: Elias

Rank: Captain

Where Re-settled To Montreal in 1794. Port Hope, On. 1800.

Source: UEL list

Notes:

Regiment : Elias's name was not found on regular regiment lists.

Enlistment date: 1774 at Boston

Date of Birth: 26 Oct. 1736

Place of Birth: New York State.

Settlement before the war: New York City .

Date and Place of Death: Feb. 5, 1820. Port Hope, Ont.

Place of Burial: St. Mark's Cemetery in Port Hope, Ont.

Wife's Maiden Name: Mollenaer (anglized to Miller in Canada)

Given Name: Catharine

Children: David born 1765. Birthplace unknown

Catherine born 12 Mar. 1767. Bapt. Dutch Reformed Church. N.Y.C.

Esther 15 June 1771 Birthplace unknown

Peter Smith born 25 Sept. 1773, Halifax, N.S.

Elias Smith born 5 May 1776. Birthplace said to be N.Y.C. but not confirmed.

Sarah born 18 Dec. 1780. Birthplace N.Y.C. Bapt. Old Trinity Church,

Mary born 16 Apr. 1783. Bapt. Old Trinity Church, N.Y.C.

John David born 20 Oct 1786. Bapt. Old Trinity Church, N.Y.C.

Eliza born 15 Aug. 1789 Bapt. Old Trinity Church

Two children, Elias born 4 Feb. 1769 and Elizabeth born 4 Feb. 1779.

Both died prior to the outbreak of war.

Susannah born c1757 is listed as daughter and with her family migrated to

Quebec with Elias's family in 1783. No information about her mother has been located.

Biography: Our knowledge of the Smith family has been greatly increased by the work of Joseph Shuter Smith, a grandson of Elias who in the early 1900s undertook the task of tracing the genealogical history of the family. The genealogy he compiled begins with Elias's birth in 1736 at Goshen, Orange County, N.Y.S and ended in 1909 in Port Hope. It is said that he wrote hundreds of letters in his efforts to trace the family lines of his grandparents, Elias and Catharine Smith, which he recorded in a "the little red book", which has long since disappeared. From various records it appears that Elias arrived in N.Y.C. in 1761 as a master-carpenter. By 1768 he was engaged in construction work for the city and held leases on several lots on Queen Street in Manhattan. That he was an active participant in the life of the city is evident from his name on the Poll list and of the

Burghers and Freemen and he was a shareholder in the Bank of New York when it was incorporated.

In a letter to Sir Guy Carleton in August 1783 Elias advised him of his intentions to move his family to Canada. The attached list of 37 names consisted of the families of Elias Smith and Moses Sherwood whose wives, Catharine and Elizabeth were sisters and of the Captain, staff and slaves. In his book, *Voyage of a Different Kind*, Larry Turner points out that records identify only seven ships making this difficult voyage directly from N.Y.C. to Quebec in the fall of 1783, only six of which traveled under the leadership of Michael Grass and Peter Van Alstine. The seventh known as the *Industry* was captained by Joseph Bagley under the directions of Elias Smith.

May 1784 saw both families returning to New York “for business purposes” and it is here that the Smiths appear to have spent much of the next decade. No evidence has surfaced that the Sherwoods ever returned to Canada. Petitions beginning in 1788 indicate it was Elias’s intention to return to Lower Canada and establish a major trading business. In 1793 he purchased property at 92-94 St. Paul’s Street in Montreal which became the family’s home, his business centre and the base from which he carried out his responsibilities in the settlement of Port Hope. A letterbook consisting of 212 letters stands today as mute testimony to the many and varied demands faced by Elias and many other early pioneers. While Elias’s older children were among the early settlers at Port Hope, the parents and younger ones did not make the move from Montreal until Elias sold his merchantizing business in 1800-1801.

Proven Descendants

Kawartha Branch 1981 09 4

Regina Branch 1988 10 10

Military Information

In his many documents Elias Smith made no claim to a regimental attachment.

A petition submitted by him in 1797 to the Executive Council states: “That your memorialist, at the commencement of the American War in the Year 1774, joined the British Army at Boston, and was appointed Master Carpenter, Contractor, and Paymaster to the Artificers, a role he filled from 1774, until the year 1783...” Elias was jointly responsible to the Dept. of the Paymaster-General and the Corps of Engineers under Capt. John Montessor. In a petition he outlined the various campaigns in which he was involved under General Howe and in 1780 when New York was under threat of an attack by the enemy Elias was appointed to form an Independent Company of Associated Loyalists from the Engineer’s Dept to strengthen the defence of the Garrison.

Loyalist Genealogy

Loyalist: Smith, Elias born 1736 10 26: died 1820 02 20: Marriage 1764 05 30.

Wife: Molinaer, Catharine, born 1745 08 27: died 1826.03.03.

Daughter: Catharine born 1767.03.12. died 1848 08 29. Marriage c 1788

1st marriage James Sculthorp, 2nd marriage--Marsh; third marriage John Cornelious Low.

Granddaughter: Catharine born 1793 08 25: died 1873 10 14: married 1820.01.

Husband: James Walton Fox born in Ireland 1790 12 17: died 1841 08 17.

Great Grandson: Charles George Fox born 1835 07 31: died 1928 11 8.

Wife: Sarah Mathews, loyalist descendant of Jacob Powley of Kingston.

Great Great Grandson: Walton Mathew Fox born 1883 01 10, died 1963 06 27

Wife: Ethel Mary Wright born in Ont. 1892 18 25 died in Sask. 1992 04 12

Great Great Great Granddaughter: Phyllis Hope Fox born Sask. 1917 10 19. Married 1948 09 08 to Rodney Francis White born 1922 09 26: died 1995 03 30. Loyalist descendant of Dr. James McNabb who died at Machiche in the spring of 1780

FOUNDING OF PORT HOPE

Peter Smith, a fur trader, occupied a house here at "Smith's Creek" by 1788. The first permanent settlers were Loyalists brought to the township by 1793 by a group of associates headed by Jonathan Walton of Schenectady, N.Y. and Elias Smith, formerly of New York City. Walton and Smith were granted land after promising to build mills on the creek. The mills were operating by 1797 when Smith moved here, and in 1800, he laid out a town plot. The community's name, "Port Hope", was adopted at a public meeting in 1818, despite local pressure to call it "Toronto".

Submitted by Phyllis White.