

Copied from OUR SMITHS Genealogy of Our Smiths by Mrs. Jeannette (Nettie) Shirley

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Our Smiths were of Scotch-Irish descent. It is thought they came from Ireland. (Somewhere near the Scottish border) to the Colonies in North America.

General characteristics of Our Smiths were: Medium height, medium stout to tall build, blue and blue-grey eyes, heavy dark eyebrows and black or dark brown hair. Brave, intelligent, energetic, industrious, thoughtful, not easily discouraged, progressive, cheerful, jolly, witty, liked to joke, loved to sing, honest, peaceful, Christian people. Early days they were mostly farmers, pioneering in several states each time moving to better themselves.

According to some of the older generations, Virginia was their first place of residence in this country, just when they came there we do not know. Some of Our Smiths never left Virginia, but others went to the Carolinas and lived awhile.

Our first actual record finds some living in Spartanburg District, South Carolina, in the person of Solomon Smith and his wife Martha. They are the first that we have names and dates of in 1930, so they will be our real ancestors. We hope that some of our kin will some day find records even farther back, in Virginia.

SOLOMON AND MARTHA SMITH

Solomon Smith was born in Virginia, when we do not know. Older ones of his children and grandchildren often heard him speak of his brothers and sisters in Virginia, also his parents.

Martha _____ was born in 1775. Solomon and Martha were married in 1799, Spartanburg District, South Carolina, and lived there about 20 years afterwards. Eight of their children were born there: the youngest, Martin Miles Smith, was born after they came to Tennessee.

Solomon and family lived on a farm in South Carolina, but being possessed of pioneer spirit and a desire to give their children the advantages of a new country, they moved in 1819, with their entire family, to Tennessee. They made their home there for 10 years on a farm, 16 miles east of Fayetteville, Lincoln County, Tennessee. While living there slavery was introduced into the United States, but they being very opposed to human slavery, took no part in slave trading.

Again feeling they could better the condition of their family by moving farther west, in the fall of 1829 they went to Illinois in primitive fashion, in a prairie schooner drawn by a yoke of oxen. The six younger children came with their parents to Illinois, while the three older boys, Willis, Chaney and William, had married girls in Tennessee so remained there. However, Willis and wife and three children, Charles, Wibb and Sol, came a few months later.

Solomon and Martha and family settled first on a farm three miles north of Salem, Marion Co., Ill., later moved on a farm near Iuka, east of Salem. Here they made a comfortable home and reared their family to adulthood, living a quiet, peaceful and happy life. A neighbor and intimate friend of theirs said: "They were accommodating, peaceful and highly respected by all who knew them."

They united with the Baptist Church, remaining faithful and active until the Lord called them Home.

The exact date of Solomon's death is not known (someone had penned in 1846 mls) but he died before his wife Martha died. She died Aug. 11, 1848, Marion County, Illinois at age 73 years. They are laid to rest in Stringtown Cemetery one mile south of Iuka, Ill., and eight miles east of Salem. Stringtown is now known as Middletown. Stones (sand stones) mark the graves of Solomon and Martha Smith. (Note by Mary Lou Shaw: I visited this cemetery on Oct. 17, 1991. It is now known as McGuire Cemetery. Photos from that day are posted with my Garner Family Tree).

To this union were born nine children, six boys and three girls: Willis, Chaney, William, Elizabeth, Polly, John, Sarah, Solomon and Martin Miles Smith. They are represented by their descendants in nearly every state of our Union and three families live in foreign countries.