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MAJOR GENERAL SAMUEL SMITH

Maj. Gen. Samuel Smith, American

"NOW LIES HE THERE WITH NONE SO POOR TO DO HIM REVERENCE." Shakespeare tells us that so spoke Marc Anthony shortly after the Ides of March in the year 44 B.C. over the dead body of his friend Julius Caesar, in the Roman Forum.

Baltimore's own Maj. Gen. Samuel Smith was a fine soldier in the Revolutionary War. Twice wounded, he won commendation and a sword from the Congress. He commanded a company in the immortal Maryland Line, which saved Washington's army during the retreat from Long Island, and all the way to White Plains. His defense of Fort Mifflin on the Delaware River below Philadelphia, was of the highest order. During this defense, he wiped out more than two-thirds of a storming force of Hessian mercenaries, including their hated leader.

In August of 1814, when the National Capital had been plundered and burned, and the invading British declared they would "wipe out that Nest of Pirates" (Baltimore) on their victorious march to join the British General Prevost coming south by way of Plattsburg, whom did the City Fathers call on to meet this peril? None other than good old Sam Smith, now 62 years old.

Gen. Ross and Admiral Cochrane had with them Wellington's Invincibles and Nelson's veteran seamen of Trafalgar and the Nile, and they were armed with the terrible Congreve rockets; but Sam Smith's men were fighting for their homes, and they were armed with rifles and the red badge of courage. In Sam Smith they had a commander who was used to knocking off redcoats, and he knew the inveterate habit of the army to depend on the fleet. He knew he had to anticipate their strategy and meet the enemy within a limited area, as he had neither the forces nor the defenses to protect the entire

perimeter of Baltimore Town. This he did, and without committing his entire force to a pitched battle, he forced the retreat of the British. Meanwhile, Lt. Col. George Armistead with a small Regular force, reinforced by Maryland and Washington, D. C. men, had withstood the terrific bombardment of Ft. McHenry, and the British were licked.

Baltimore's proud boast is that of all the important eastern cities, she alone never has been conquered by an enemy. Sam Smith preserved this record in 1814.

Although we had sent our best to the peace conference at Ghent (John Quincy Adams, Gallatin, Bayard and Henry Clay), the British Commissioners were fourth-raters, who acted as mere messenger boys for the British Government. They delivered their arrogant ultimatum and said take it or leave it. The terms were humiliating, and if accepted would have reduced us to a minor nation. However, when news of the twin defeats of Plattsburg and Baltimore reached the British Ministry, they quickly came down off their high horse and concluded a reasonable treaty, which was ratified on December 24th, 1814. (At this very moment 26 delegates from the New England states, except Maine, were meeting in the secret, ill-famed Hartford Convention.)

The defeated British sailed away to take part in the widely publicized Battle of New Orleans, where Andy Jackson soundly thrashed them. The battle was fought January 8th, 1815, two weeks after the Treaty of Ghent was ratified, and while we proudly praise Jackson and the Americans, the battle had no effect on the treaty. Maryland has been lax in claiming the credit due her sons; but be that as it may, *old Sam Smith changed the course of history at Baltimore in mid-September, 1814.*

Yet, in the year of grace 1948, in the quaint Westminster Churchyard at Fayette and Green Streets, in a crumbling tomb, NOW LIES HE THERE WITH

NONE SO POOR TO DO HIM REVERENCE. No, don't say NONE, for the Civic Affairs Committee of the 29th Division Association has undertaken this labor of love and appreciation, — to restore his last resting place; and they have invited all Marylanders to participate. Modest contributions are solicited. The names of contributors will be recorded and preserved in the restored tomb. You may send subscriptions to the undersigned at 3425 Guilford Terrace (18).

As always, Twenty-niners will serve without pay and will meet their own expenses; and contributors may rest assured that every dollar subscribed will go entirely towards the restoration of Sam Smith's tomb.

JOSEPH J. PHILBIN, *Chairman*

J. A. MULLENDORE, *Vice Chairman*

The Veteran Corps, 5th Regiment Infantry, M.N.G. has joined in this work with the 29th, and has named Brig. Gen. Frank A. Hancock, Chairman, and Herman I. Sterner, Co-Chairman of its Committee. They will gladly accept subscriptions at 823½ W. Lombard St. (1).