

TWENTIETH CENTURY HISTORY
OF
CLEARFIELD COUNTY
PENNSYLVANIA
AND
REPRESENTATIVE CITIZENS

BY
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"Study History, for it is Philosophy Teaching by Example"

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where they lived the rest of their lives. The parents of Judge Smith moved to Northumberland county in 1867 and settled on a farm near Watsonstown, where they lived until 1879, when they moved into Watsonstown.

The subject of our sketch attended the common district schools of the neighborhood and also attended academies at Dewart, McEwensville and Watsonstown, also assisting on the farm until about sixteen years of age. He then spent one year clerking in a country store at Dewart, and afterwards went to Bloomsburg State Normal School and prepared for entrance to State College, Center county, which he entered in January, 1876, and graduated with the honors of his class in 1879. During the winter of 1879-80 he was elected principal of schools and taught the High School at Watsonstown, after which he began reading law in the office of Oscar Foust, Esq., of that place. In September, 1880, he entered the Law Department of the University of Pennsylvania, at Philadelphia, as a student at law, from which institution he graduated two years later in the Law Class of 1882. During said period he was also registered as a law student in the office of William A. Redding, J. Levering Jones and Hampton L. Carson, Esquires, of Philadelphia, and after his graduation, in June, 1882, on motion of J. Levering Jones, Esq., one of his preceptors, he was admitted to practice law in the several courts of Philadelphia, and later in the same month was admitted to practice law in the Northumberland County Court.

In September, 1882, he located in Clearfield and was admitted to practice the law in the several courts of Clearfield county on the 8th day of January, 1883. For several years he successfully practiced his profession alone,

ALLISON OPP SMITH, president judge of the Forty-sixth Judicial District of Pennsylvania, comprising Clearfield county, was born in Limestone township, Montour county, Pennsylvania, on October 23, 1857; second child of Simpson and Charlotte Opp Smith, both natives of Lycoming county, of pioneer stock and of families identified with the early and successful lumbering and agricultural development of the Susquehanna Valley. His grandfather Jonathan Smith was a native of Philadelphia county, and his great-grandfather Col. George Smith was a soldier in the Revolutionary war and represented Philadelphia county in the General Assembly of the State. His grandmother Ann Simpson, of Bucks county, Pennsylvania, a great aunt of General U. S. Grant, married Jonathan Smith in 1796 and they went direct to Lycoming county,

during which time he served as solicitor for Sheriff R. N. Shaw and Sheriff E. L. McCloskey, and later as county solicitor. In 1894, after the elevation of Hon. Cyrus Gordon to the Common Pleas Bench, he formed a partnership with Thomas H. Murray, Esq., under the style of Murray & Smith, and this partnership continued until the junior member was elected to succeed Judge Gordon on the Common Pleas Bench, which honor was won at the November election in 1903 by a majority of 2,016.

In politics Judge Smith has been a Democrat all his life and took an active and earnest interest in party affairs from the time of arriving at man's estate. He served as secretary of the Democratic County Committee for several years beginning in 1886, and in 1890 was elected county chairman and had the distinction of polling the largest majorities for his party candidates that year ever given in the county. In 1896 he was appointed and served as councilman from the First Ward of Clearfield borough, and in 1897 was elected to the office of burgess of Clearfield and served three years in that position. In 1900 he was elected school director and was filling that position when elected to the bench.

As a lawyer Judge Smith soon won his way to the front at the Clearfield bar. He was recognized as possessing a clear, keen, logical mind, which combined with his industry and high character won him the respect and confidence of his clients. While a member of the firm of Murray & Smith he had a wide experience in the practice of corporation law, as that firm represented nearly all the railroads of the county and they also represented a large number of the leading mining corporations. Since going on the bench Judge Smith has

gained much prominence in judicial circles all over the State. At his first license court he created a precedent in the conduct and control of the court over the granting of liquor licenses, first, by largely reducing the number of licenses and refusing nearly fifty per cent of the applicants and, second, by establishing what is believed to be wholesome rules for governing the sales of liquor and the maintenance of licensed hotels. Similar rules have since been adopted by a considerable number of the judges of the State and the wisdom of their establishment is apparent to anyone who has occasion to patronize the hotels of Clearfield county. Since he went upon the bench the criminal business has largely decreased, notwithstanding a large increase of population, composed of the people of southern Europe who know little of the laws and customs of this country. This decrease in the criminal business is popularly believed to be largely due to the strict enforcement of the law in both the license and criminal courts as administered by Judge Smith. The general business of the courts under Judge Smith has been conducted with great promptness and dispatch and no one can complain of any delay in the administration of justice. Four times a year all cases at issue, whether in the civil or criminal courts, whether in equity or on the argument list, by order of the court are listed for trial and hearing and a prompt disposal of the same enforced so far as can be done by an early trial and decision.

Judge Smith is a member of the Presbyterian church and has for many years been on the board of trustees. He also belongs to the Masonic fraternity of Clearfield and has gone through all the chairs of the Blue Lodge and is a member of the Chapter. Although al-

ways busy with his professional duties, he has at all times been closely identified with movements intended to advance the interests of the community, commercially and morally. In 1889 he was an organizer and the first secretary and treasurer, as well as director, of the Electric Light Company at Clearfield, with which he was connected until soon after he went upon the bench. He was also an organizer, director and president of the Paterson Clay Products Company, manufacturers of all kinds of paving and building brick. He was one of the organizers of the Clearfield Y. M. C. A. and on its board of directors ever since its organization and is now president of that body, to the maintenance of which worthy institution he gives largely of his time and means. In 1904 he was chairman of the Clearfield County Centennial Association Committee, which conducted to a successful conclusion the celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the formation of Clearfield county. He has been a member of the Pennsylvania Bar Association since its organization in 1894, and is now one of the vice-presidents of that body. He is also a non-resident member of the Pennsylvania Society of New York.

Judge Smith was married in Clearfield, on October 17, 1888, to Margaret Helen, youngest daughter of the late Senator William A. Wallace. They have one son, William Wallace, and three daughters, Charlotte, Margaret and Rebecca.