URIAH SMITH

Birth: 1832 West Wilton, New Hampshire
Death: 1903

Family: Father - Samuel Smith
Mother - Rebekah Spalding Smith
Sister - Annie R. Smith
Brothers - Samuel, John
Spouse - Harriet Stevens Smith

Accomplishments: Poet, artist, hymn writer, editor of *The Review and Herald*, inventor, author
What choices would you make about your life if you were 14 years old and your leg has just been amputated? If you were 19 and a college invited you to teach with free room and board plus an excellent salary; besides that some of your art work was just published, what would you do? Uriah Smith faced those problems.

Uriah was Annie Smith's youngest brother. Both siblings shared interests in art, writing and reading. When he was 13 years old Uriah's leg was amputated above the knee because it was badly infected. Can you imagine the pain he had to endure during the 20 minute operation and bandaging. It is said that his mother held both his hands through the ordeal. When his leg healed he was fitted with a cumbersome wooden one. It was so uncomfortable that Uriah's creative mind set to work to fashion a better one that was lighter in weight and had movable joints. He succeeded in creating a workable design. He patented the design in 1863! Also, in 1875 he patented a folding school desk seat. See the diagrams.
It is an interesting fact that Uriah Smith's woodcut illustrations were printed in the Review and Herald when he was not yet a committed Christian. He was 19 years old and was planning to study at Harvard. It was some six months after his work was printed that he began attending religious meetings. Before the year, 1852, was through he had committed his life to God. During the spring the following year a long poem was printed in the Review and Herald. It warned about prophecy being fulfilled during his lifetime.

Uriah joined his sister Annie in Rochester, N.Y. and began working in publishing. It was the beginning of 50 years work for the Review and Herald.

His camouflage horseless carriage was quite amazing.


URIAH SMITH
Perennial Editor of the Review

May 2, 1832 - March 6, 1903

Few Seventh-day Adventists have known their Bibles better than Uriah Smith. He was a quiet, reserved man who impressed people by his learning and appearance. A man of noble countenance, he commanded respect.

In December, 1852, he accepted the light of the message taught by the Sabbath-keeping Adventists. The following year he associated with the publishing interests of the "little flock" of believers in Rochester. For about a half century he was the editor or on the editorial staff of the church paper, the Review and Herald. Uriah Smith was the first Secretary of the General Conference, accepting this post at the organization of the General Conference in the spring of the year 1863.

He is best known for his book, The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation, which has circulated by the thousands of copies. He was the first Bible teacher at Battle Creek College.

Uriah Smith was born in a fine-looking house in the little town of West Wilton, New Hampshire. He was as solid in his character as any New Englander, true "grit of the granite state." The birthplace of Uriah Smith and his sister Annie still stands in this tiny New England town. It is now called the Eagle House and may be visited by interested tourists.

A short time before his death, the main building of the Review and Herald burned down. This was a grave tragedy. The heart and soul of Uriah Smith was bound up with this institution. His whole life had been dedicated to its development.

Elder Smith was often seen walking down the streets of Battle Creek with his cane, limping along on his artificial limb, for he had suffered an amputation as a teen-age boy. His inventive genius led him to create an artificial limb which he used during much of his lifetime. He was versatile and intelligent, as were most of the pioneers. The early workers were people of stature-high caliber. God chose the best that He could find to do the most important work given to men and women in these last days.

A Story About Uriah Smith

When Uriah was just twelve years old a local infection brought on by an illness required the amputation of his left leg above the knee. His courageous struggle with pain and shock built into his frame of clay those steel girders that made him the solid man he was.

Think what it meant to lose a leg in those days. There were no white-robed surgeons and nurses to minister to the patient, no merciful anesthetic, and no competent hospital care. A noted surgeon of nearby Keene, Dr. Amos Twitchell, cut off the leg and bound it in twenty minutes. Uriah's mother held his hands. Then she and his loving sister took care of him.

This injury of his early years brought confinement to Elder Smith in later life. He was not able to get out and move around like the other ministers. He just couldn't. So what did he do? Settle down to discouragement? No. His injury was a blessing to him for it brought out his inventive genius. For a while he used the clumsy artificial limb that they provided for him, with a solid foot, but he didn't like it, so he set to work and invented a pliable foot, got a patent for it, and with the money he received from its sale, he bought his first house in Battle Creek.

W. A. Spicer gives us his impression of Uriah Smith:

"As a boy I always passed Elder Smith's editorial room in the old Battle Creek Review and Herald office with somewhat of awe: for there was a notice on the door in dark purple-colored ink and in large letters:

"Editor's Room.

Busy? Yes, always.

If you have any business,

Attend to your business,

And let us attend to our business."

--Pioneer Days of the Advent Movement, pages 245,246.

Yes, Smith was a man who was on the march. He was busy with the Lord's business and he wanted others to be about theirs, but he was a graceful and a tender-hearted man. If you don't think so, read the last chapter of his book, The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation. It will thrill you. It is so full of heart longings for the new earth, our eternal home.
URIAH SMITH
1835 - 1903

Just five dollars a week,
as the editor-in-chief,
so Uriah Smith began.
Writer, inventor, preacher, teacher;
he was a talented man!
For fifty years at the Review,
with little help and dollars few.
No sacrifice is too great.
Send the gospel, at any rate!
Messages from God to heed,
Always, Jesus Christ must lead.
-Lynne E. Buhler

Hi young people! I am so glad you are learning about the early church and my friends who were so instrumental in establishing the Advent message. I have been asked to share with you a little about myself. Well students, for fifty years I was lucky enough to be of service for the Lord in the Seventh-day Adventist Church as an editor and author. But I’m getting ahead of myself. I need to start at the beginning. I began my life in a little town of West Wilton, New Hampshire in 1832. You can still visit the fine-looking house in which I was born. In 1843 I became interested in the Advent Movement which was spreading like wildfire around my home town. Two years later at the age of 13, had my left leg amputated above the knee, because of an infection. I invented for myself and others who had lost a leg, a more practical and less painful artificial limb which I used during much of my lifetime. That artificial limb was just one of my many inventions throughout my lifetime.

In 1857 I married Harriet Newall Stevens. She was as lovely as my
older sister Annie, who was quite a song writer. After becoming a Sabbath keeping Adventist I went to work at the Review and Herald office with Annie. I so enjoyed those years working in Rochester, New York, with my sister. I remember my first contribution to the Seventh-day Adventist literature work. It was a 35,000 word poem entitled "The Warning Voice of Time and Prophecy". How many of you students would like to write a poem that long? It was so long that it had to be published as a serial in the Review and Herald back in 1853. I loved being a worker in the publishing office. In fact, I maintained an almost unbroken connection with the institution of the Review and Herald until the time of my death.

In 1855 the Review and Herald moved to Battle Creek, Michigan. That same year at the age of twenty-three I became editor. I did not enter upon that position for ease, comfort, or worldly profit; for I had seen, by my connection with the Review, that none of those pleasures were to be found there. In fact I published a disclaimer quite the same in the first issue printed as the new editor. The primitive equipment in use back then could have dampened a my spirit. In helping prepare the first tracts I would use my straight-edge and my pocketknife to trim the edges. I want you to know students, "we blistered our hands in the operation, and often the tracts in form were not half so true and square as the doctrines we taught."

In the early years severe financial problems faced me as the new, young editor. However, I managed the Review through those rough
times to where the paper flourished and grew. In those days I was the editor, proofreader, business manager, and bookkeeper. Because of all that responsibility I found my physical resources taxed to the limit. As a result, in 1869 I took some time off to recuperate. My friend J. N. Andrews became editor of the paper in my absence. Then the next year James White was elected editor and I became associate. But 12 months later I became editor once again. James and I didn’t always agree on the way to handle certain problems in the office. One time in 1873 following a disagreement with James over administrative policies I was relieved of my position. After six months I was reinstated to my former office, and James and my friendship was re-established and maintained from then on.

I mentioned earlier of my love of inventing. Other then my flexible knee and ankle joints I invented a school desk with an improved folding seat. Because of the patent on my desk I received $3000. Maybe that doesn’t sound like a lot of money to you young people today, but with that $3000 I was able to build a new house.

In 1876 I was treasurer of the General Conference for a year. In 1890 I devoted more time to writing and traveled extensively, speaking frequently at camp meetings. A year later I again returned as editor of the Review. By the way, students, for a time, I was an instructor of Bible at Battle Creek College.

Some people say that I was one of the most fluent writers the
denomination has ever had. I am probably best remembered for my book generally known by the short title Daniel and the Revelation. Some of the other books I wrote were: Both Sides on the Sabbath and the Law, The Visions of Mrs. E. G. White, and The Sanctuary and the 2300 Days, along with many others.

During my life I urged the separation of Church and State, advocated noncombatancy, and vigorously opposed slavery. I did not approve of Seventh-day Adventist's seeking political office and campaigned tirelessly against Sunday laws.

I have been told that I was a handsome man of charming manners and more powerful in pen than in speech.

The last words I ever wrote were directed to the General Conference on 1903. It summarizes my life long purpose; "I am with you in the endeavor to send forth in this generation this gospel of the kingdom, for a witness to all nations. And when this is completed, it will be the signal for the coronation of our coming King."

Adapted from:

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Direction:

Direction:
Help Uriah Smith and the Review make the move from Rochester, New York to Battle Creek, Michigan. Help direct Uriah on his trek.