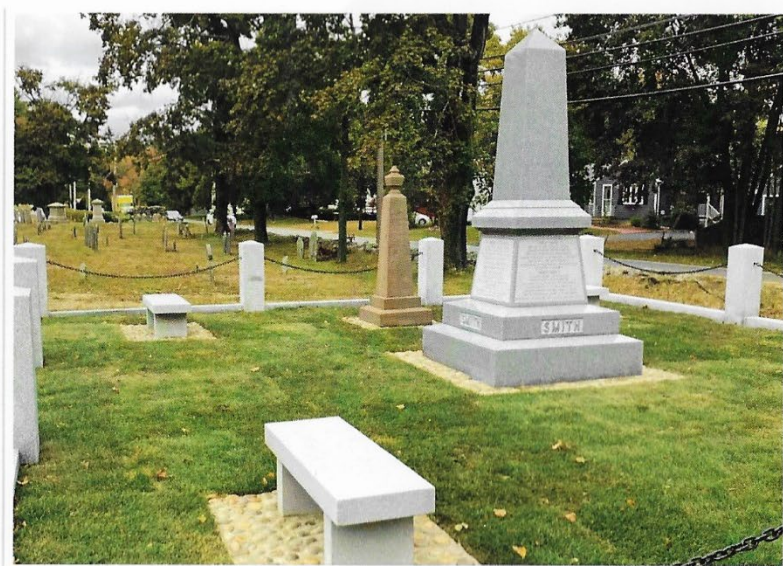


DEDICATION OF THE

# *Smith Family Memorial*

Pine Grove Cemetery | Topsfield, MA  
May 14, 2022



(Photo courtesy of Intellectual Reserve, Inc.)



# *Smith Family Memorial*

## DEDICATION PROGRAM

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Pine Grove Cemetery | Topsfield, MA

May 14, 2022

**Presiding** President M. Russell Ballard, Acting President, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

**Conducting** Elder Richard S. Hutchins, Area Seventy, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

**Welcome** Elder Richard S. Hutchins

**Music** "My Country 'Tis of Thee" sung by a Choir comprised of members of the New Hampshire Exeter Stake, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, under the direction of Brigitte Dumont, Isaac James, piano

**Invocation** Kim Wilson, Chairman of the Board, Ensign Peak Foundation

**Speaker** Anne Barret, President, Topsfield Historical Society

**Speaker** Heidi Swinton, Board Member, Ensign Peak Foundation

**Music** "Praise to the Man" by William W. Phelps, sung by the Choir

**Speaker** Elder LeGrand R. Curtis, Jr., First Quorum of the Seventy, Church Historian and Recorder, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

**Music** "Joseph Smith's First Prayer" by George Manwaring, Duet, Shauna Siebach and Shelby Pouliot, Isaac James, piano

**Dedication** President M. Russell Ballard

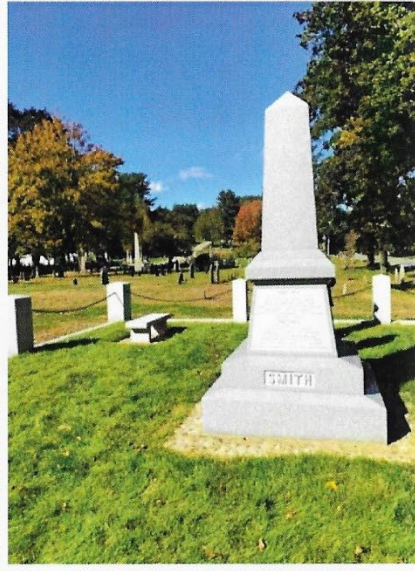
**Music** "We Thank Thee O God for a Prophet" by William Fowler, sung by the Choir

**Benediction** Gail Miller

## *Introduction*

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The ancestral roots of Joseph Smith Jr., the founder and prophet of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, extend deep into the soil of New England's village of Topsfield, Essex County, Massachusetts. For many years, organized groups, families, and individuals, tracing the ancestral history of the Smith family, have come to this peaceful community twenty miles north of Boston to search out the area where five generations of Smiths lived. Joseph Smith Jr.'s Topsfield ancestors include Robert Smith (1626–1693), Samuel Smith I (1666–1748), Samuel Smith II (1714–1785), Asael Smith (1744–1830), and Joseph Smith Sr. (1771–1840), his father.



(Photo by Jeffrey Walker)

The dedication of the Smith Family Memorial at the Pine Grove Cemetery in Topsfield on May 14, 2022, caps decades of friendships and partnerships with various groups in Topsfield and others to commemorate the Smith family, including:

- The monument erected by George A. Smith in the Pine Grove Cemetery in 1873.
- The memorial erected by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Sharon, Vermont in 1905.
- The markers placed near the Smith's Homestead and the Topsfield Congregational Church by the Ensign Peak Foundation and the Topsfield Historical Society in 2005.
- The Smith Family Memorial erected in the Pine Grove Cemetery by the Ensign Peak Foundation in 2020.

## *The George A. Smith Monument - 1873*

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George A. Smith is the grandson of Asael Smith and was called as one of the early apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by Joseph Smith Jr., his first cousin. He was with the Latter-Day Saints as they were driven out of New York, Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois arriving with the first group of Latter-day Saint pioneers to settle in the Utah Territory in 1847. In Utah, George A. Smith served as church historian and recorder and as a counselor in the First Presidency to then President Brigham Young who succeeded Joseph Smith Jr. after his martyrdom. In 1872-1873, George A. Smith, along with other church leaders, traveled to the Holy Land. As he returned to the United States and on his way back to Utah, he traveled to Topsfield to remember his Smith ancestors. It was then that he arranged for the erection of the red stone



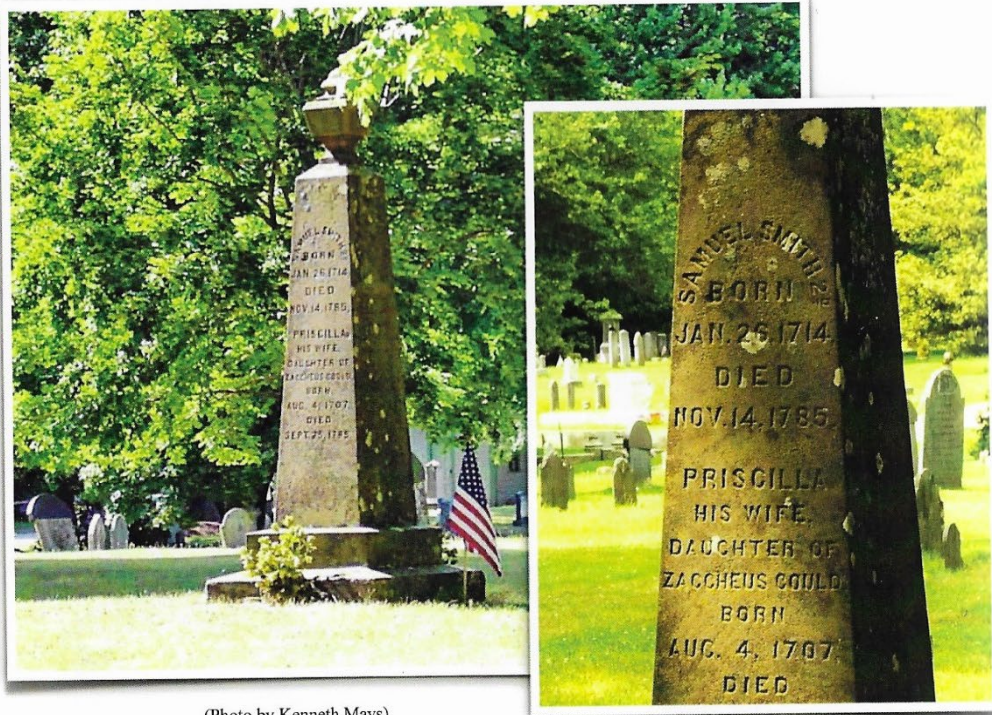
monument in the Pine Grove Cemetery identifying some of his ancestors who were interred there. It was an effort to clean the 1873 marker that led to the opportunity to create the Smith Family Memorial being dedicated today. The Smith Family Memorial incorporates the 1873 monument erected by George A. Smith.

One side of the marker reads:

*Samuel Smith. Son of Robert & Mary. Born in Topsfield, Mass. Jan. 26, 1666, Died July 12, 1748. Rebecca his wife. Daughter of John Cortice. Died Mar. 2, 1753. Et. 65 yrs.*

The other side of the marker reads:

*Samuel Smith. Born Jan. 26, 1714. Died Nov. 14, 1785. Priscilla his wife. Daughter of Zaccheus Gould. Born Aug. 4, 1707. Died Sept. 25, 1785.*



(Photo by Kenneth Mays)

George A. Smith remarked about visiting the gravesite of his ancestors,

"I have traveled to Egypt and the Holy Land, have seen the countries of Europe and met many of their most distinguished people, but I have encountered nothing that gives me more satisfaction than being here, in the graveyard of my ancestors on the ground where they walked and lived and labored three hundred years ago." (Contributor, Vol. 4, No. 1, (October 1882), 2-3).

## *The Memorial in Sharon, Vermont - 1905*

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The Prophet Joseph Smith was born at Sharon, Windsor County, Vermont on December 23, 1805. At the time, his family was living on the farm and in the home of his maternal grandfather, Solomon Mack. It is thought that the line between Sharon and Royalton Townships bisected the home. Because the room in which Joseph Smith was born was on the Sharon side, that is where the Prophet listed as his birthplace.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints purchased the Solomon Mack farm and some additional acreage located near Sharon, Vermont in 1905. The purchase was made for the church by Junius F. Wells. He likely originated the idea of commemorating the Prophet's birth at Sharon with a large monument. After approval from the First Presidency, Wells directed the erection of a granite monument and Memorial Cottage at the site.

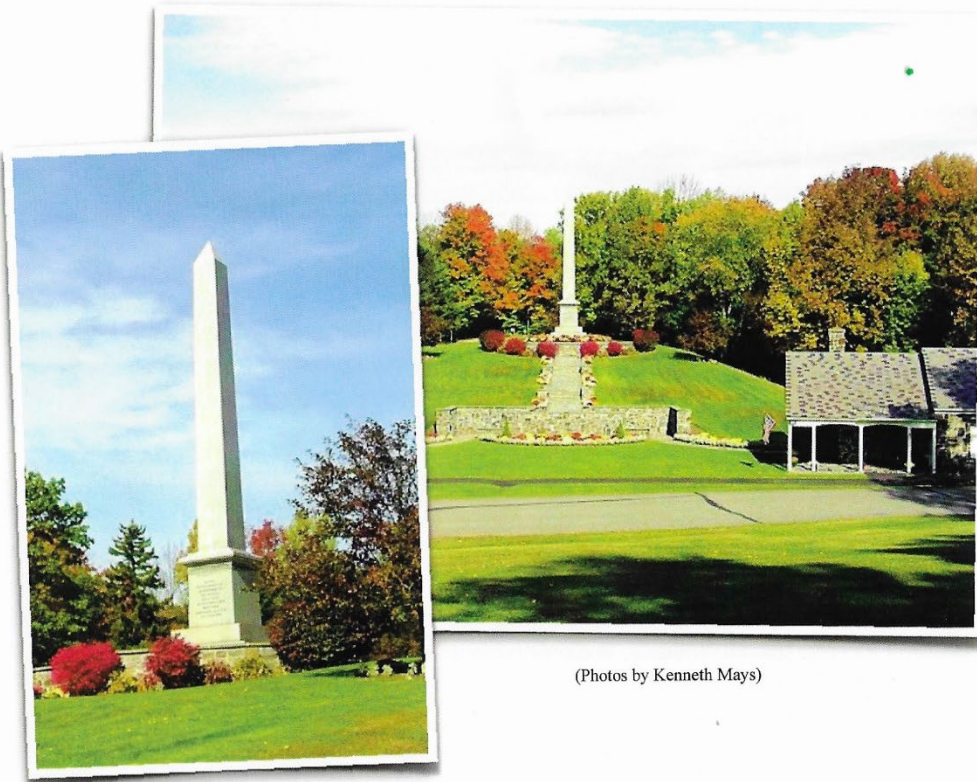
On December 23, 1905, the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Joseph Smith Jr., the monument in his honor was dedicated at his birthplace in Sharon, Vermont. The monument is just over 50 feet high. A single polished granite shaft or obelisk 38½ feet high represents one foot for each year of Joseph Smith's life. The total weight of the entire monument is more than 100 tons. (LaMar C. Berrett, ed., *Sacred Places: New England and Eastern Canada, Vol. 1* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1999), 97-105).



(Photo courtesy of the Church History Department)



The project at Sharon was the beginning of the church's efforts to identify and appropriately designate sites related to events of the restoration. Thanks to Wells's role in this and other historical sites, the Ensign Peak Foundation presents the Junius F. Wells Award to individuals who have done much to further this cause. The Vermont monument was dedicated by then church President Joseph F. Smith, great-grandfather of M. Russell Ballard who will dedicate the Smith Family Memorial today in honor of their common Smith Family ancestors. Today's dedication program in many ways mirrors the 1905 dedication of the Sharon monument.



(Photos by Kenneth Mays)

## *Smith Homestead. Topsfield. Massachusetts - 2005*

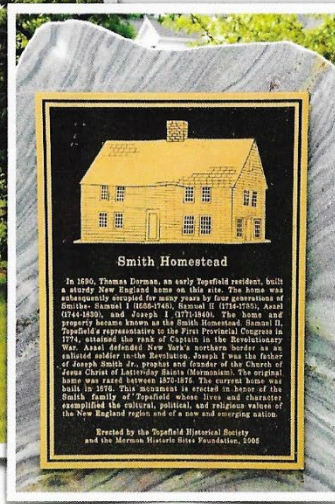
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The former Smith homestead, once the home to all but Robert Smith, is now an upscale New England residential neighborhood with spacious yards and pleasant homes. The present home, located at 22 Boardman Lane, is now a private residence that stands on the site where the original four-generation Smith home once stood. Also on the grounds is the original well that provided water to the Smith families who resided there. The original home built on the homestead was razed around 1875.



Robert Smith came to Massachusetts from England in 1638 and after his arrival married Mary French. He purchased two-hundred-and-eight acres of land which was partially located in Boxford Township and partially located in Topsfield. Samuel Smith I, upon his father's death in 1693, moved to Topsfield to what would become known as the Smith's Homestead. While living there, he became an influential citizen in the area.

Samuel Smith II was the next to inherit the homestead. He became known as "Captain Samuel Smith" and served in a variety of capacities in the community including grand jurymen, assessor and selectman, moderator of the town meetings, and delegate to the First Provincial Congress at Concord in 1774 and 1775. Asael Smith, Joseph Smith Jr.'s grandfather, married Mary Duty, and Joseph Smith Sr. was born at the Smith Homestead in 1771. Asael then inherited the homestead after the death of Samuel Smith II in 1785. (B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930), 1:2).



(Photos by Kenneth Mays)



A marker was placed on the site in 2005 and was dedicated by then Elder Russell M. Ballard, of the Council of the Twelve of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, on October 14, 2005. The inscription on the marker reads:

*In 1690, Thomas Dorman, an early Topsfield resident, built a sturdy New England home on this site. The home was subsequently occupied for many years by four generations of Smiths—Samuel I (1666–1748), Samuel II (1714–1785), Asael (1744–1830), and Joseph I (1771–1840). The home and property became known as the Smith Homestead. Samuel II, Topsfield's representative to the First Provincial Congress in 1774, attained the rank of captain in the Revolutionary War. Asael defended New York's northern border as an enlisted soldier in the Revolution. Joseph I was the father of Joseph Smith Jr., prophet and founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormonism). The original home was razed between 1870–75. The current home was built in 1876. This monument is erected in honor of the Smith family of Topsfield whose lives and character exemplified the cultural, political, and religious values of the New England region and of a new and emerging nation.*

*Topsfield Congregational Church  
Topsfield, Massachusetts - 2005*

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Situated on Topsfield's Common, three Congregational meetinghouses have provided a place for spiritual communion and worship for over three hundred years. The first church was built in 1703, the second in 1759, and the present one in 1842. In the second meetinghouse, the citizens of Topsfield voted to form a militia and support the Declaration of Independence. There in the shadow of this church the able-bodied men of the town trained and departed for Lexington, Boston, and beyond during the Revolutionary War. Five generations of the Robert Smith family of Topsfield were Congregationalists, including: Robert (1626–1693), Samuel I (1666–1748), Samuel II (1714–1785), Asael (1744–1830), and Joseph Sr. (1771–1840). Both Asael and Joseph Sr. were baptized in the second meetinghouse. Like many families in the area, the Smiths were noted for their revolutionary patriotism and religious devotion.

In 2005, the Ensign Peak Foundation joined with the Topsfield Historical Society in placing a marker on the grounds of the Topsfield Congregational Church to commemorate the historic significance of the church and the Smith family's connection to it. Various leaders, including then Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints participated in honoring the ancestors of Joseph Smith Jr., founder of the Latter-day Saint religion, who worshipped at the Topsfield Congregational Church. (For additional information regarding the Smiths in Topsfield see Joseph Fielding McConkie, "The Early Smiths of Topsfield," *Mormon Historical Studies*, vol. 6, no. 2 (Fall 2005), 5-18).

The inscription on the marker reads:

*Situated on Topsfield's Common, three Congregational meetinghouses have provided a place for spiritual communion and worship for over three hundred years. The first church was built in 1703, the second in 1759, and the present one in 1842. Five generations of the Robert Smith family of Topsfield, were Congregationalists, including: Robert (1626-1693), Samuel I (1666-1748), Samuel II (1714-1785), Asael (1744-1830), and Joseph I (1771-1840). Both Asael and Joseph Smith I were baptized in the second meetinghouse. Like many families in the area, the Smiths were noted for their Revolutionary patriotism and religious devotion. Joseph Smith Jr. (1805-1844), prophet and founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, is a descendant of the Topsfield Smiths.*



(Photos by Kenneth Mays)





Topsfield Congregational Church marker dedication, Topsfield, Massachusetts, 16 October 2005. Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and a Smith descendant participated in the dedication activities. (Photo by Fred Woods)

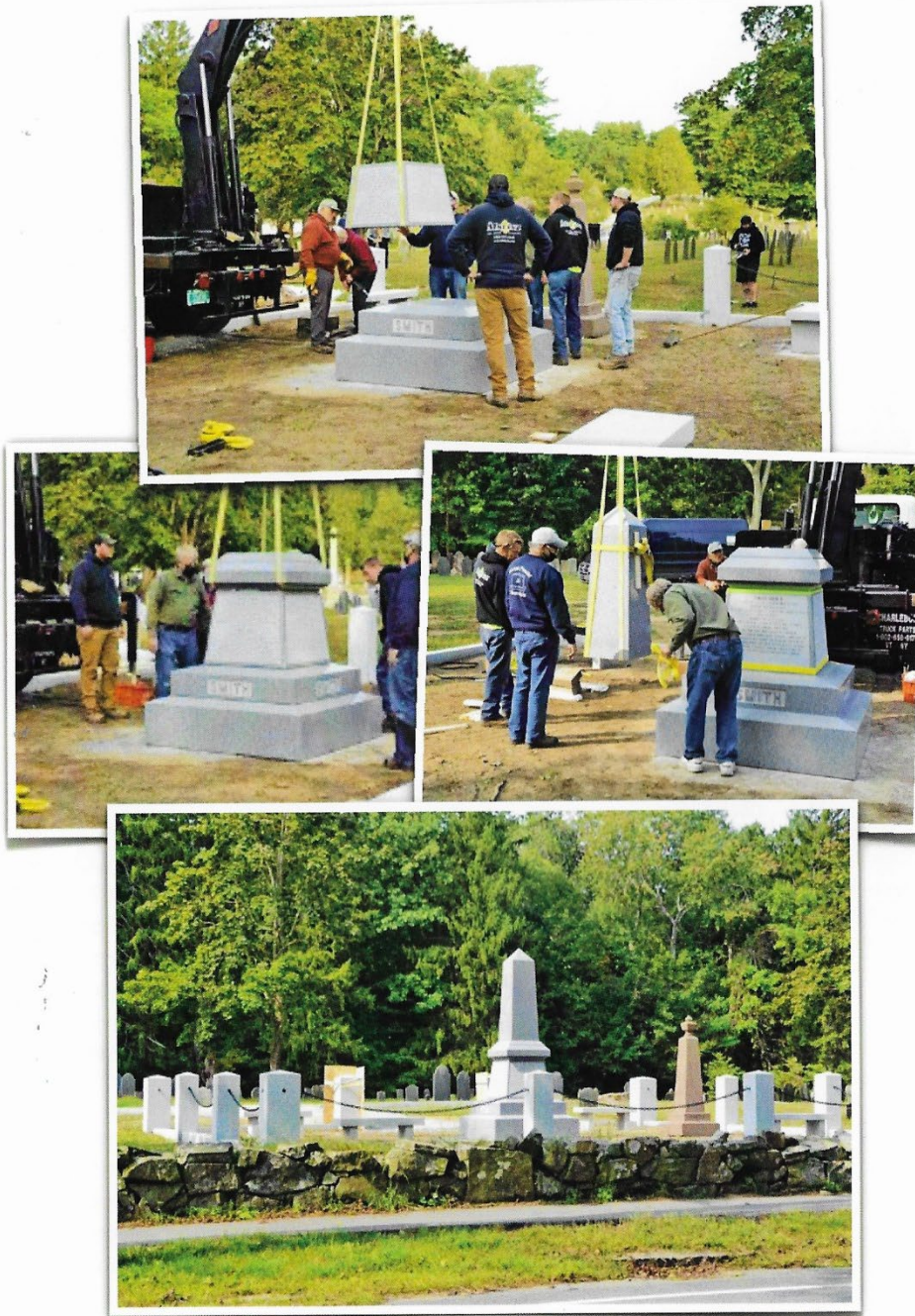
## *Smith Homestead. Topsfield. Massachusetts - 2005*

Through the years many who honor Joseph Smith Jr. as the founder and prophet of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have found their way to Topsfield to remember those of his ancestors who made Topsfield their home. Throughout the intervening nearly 150 years, the monument erected by George A. Smith in 1873 had become covered in lichens making its chiseled inscriptions difficult to read. Some of those who were frequent visitors to the Pine Grove Cemetery first sought permission from cemetery officials to clean the stone. From those early contacts emerged a vision of an enhanced memorial preserving the George A. Smith monument and providing a more complete record of those first five generations of Smith men and women who were the ancestors of Joseph Smith Jr. in America.

The Smith Family Memorial which we dedicate today retains the now cleaned and legible George A. Smith marker to which has been added a new marker patterned after the larger marker in Sharon, Vermont, appropriately proportioned to its place in the Pine Grove Cemetery. The new memorial including its perimeter pieces and benches have been fashioned out of the same Barre granite as the Sharon monument and contains a more complete record of the generations of the Topsfield Smiths.

The Pine Grove Cemetery is the oldest cemetery in Topsfield, Massachusetts still in use. It was laid out in 1663 and the first burials were likely around that time.

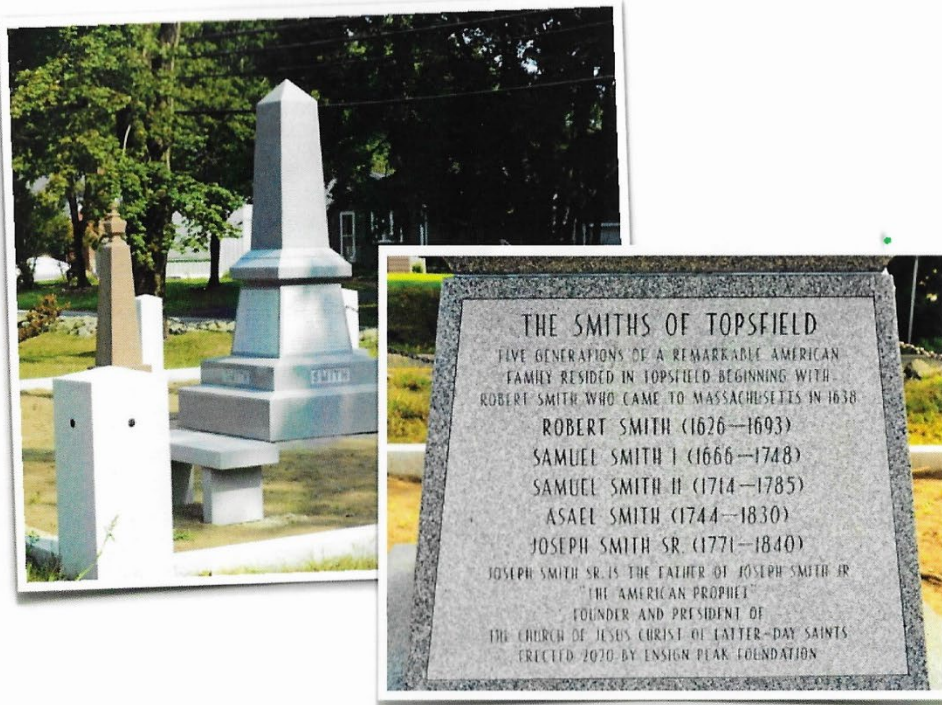
In September 2020, a new monument was erected adjacent to the monument erected in 1873. Funding was coordinated through the Ensign Peak Foundation.



(Photos by Kenneth Mays)



The new monument is situated just a few feet from the monument erected by George A. Smith in 1873. It has additional information about the five generations of Joseph Smith Jr.'s ancestors who lived in Topsfield.



(Photos by Elizabeth Walker)

The following is the information contained on the panels of the monument:

The West Panel

### THE SMITHS OF TOPSFIELD

Five Generations of a Remarkable American  
 Family Resided in Topsfield Beginning with  
 Robert Smith who came to Massachusetts in 1638

ROBERT SMITH (1626—1693)  
 SAMUEL SMITH I (1666—1748)  
 SAMUEL SMITH II (1714—1785)  
 ASAEL SMITH (1744—1830)  
 JOSEPH SMITH SR. (1771—1840)

Joseph Smith Sr. is the Father of Joseph Smith Jr.  
 "The American Prophet"  
 Founder and President of  
 The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

The South Panel

**ROBERT SMITH**

Chr. April 30, 1626 – D. August 30, 1693  
Born in Lincolnshire, England. Came to  
Boston as an indentured servant in 1638.  
Worked as a tailor. In time purchased a 208-acre  
farm known as the "Smith Homestead."  
Married Mary French (B. March 27, 1634. M. circa 1656  
D. circa 1719). Ten children.

**SAMUEL SMITH I**

B. January 26, 1666 – D. July 12, 1748  
Married Rebecca Curtis (B. Unknown.  
M. January 25, 1707, D. March 2, 1753). Ten children.  
Became Executor of the Smith Homestead.  
Carpenter, Landowner and held Offices of Public  
Trust in the Community known as a Gentleman.  
Both Families Attended the Congregational Church in Topsfield.

The East Panel

**SAMUEL SMITH II**

B. January 16, 1714 – D. November 14, 1785  
Married Pricilla Gould  
(B. August 4, 1707, M. May 27, 1734, D. September 25, 1744)  
Five Children.  
Married Pricilla Gould  
(B. April 6, 1714, M. October 8, 1745, D. May 27, 1797).  
A cousin to Samuel's First Wife  
of the same name who raised his children.  
Topsfield Selectman, Town Clerk. Member, Committee of  
Safety. Chairman, Tea Committee Delegate. Provincial  
Congress. Represented Topsfield Massachusetts General  
Court (Colonial Assembly). Captain, Topsfield Militia  
Member of the Topsfield Congregational Church.

The North Panel

**ASAEI SMITH**

B. March 7, 1744 – D. October 31, 1830, at Stockholm, NY  
Married Mary Duty (B. October 11, 1743,  
M. February 12, 1767, D. May 27, 1836). Eleven Children.  
Landowner, Cooper, and Revolutionary War Soldier.

**JOSEPH SMITH SR.**

B. July 12, 1771 – D. September 14, 1840, at Nauvoo, IL.  
Married Luck Mack (B. July 8, 1775,  
M. January 24, 1796, D. May 14, 1856). Ten Children.  
Cooper, Farmer, Teacher and Merchant.

Both Asael and Joseph were baptized and worshipped  
in the Congregational Church in Topsfield.



## *The Five Generations of Topsfield Smiths*

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**Robert Smith (1624–1693) and Mary French (1634–circa 1719).** Robert Smith was born in England and in 1638, at the age of fourteen, immigrated to Boston as an indentured servant and became a tailor. He lived in Boston, then moved north to Ipswich, where he likely met Mary French, a native of Boston. The couple married around 1656 and lived in Ipswich before moving to Rowley (later to become Boxford). Together the couple had ten children, nine of whom lived to maturity. Later, Robert and Mary became residents of Topsfield, which marked the beginning of the Smiths' legacy in the community.

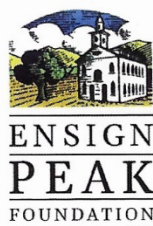
**Samuel Smith I (1666–1748) and Rebecca Curtis/Curtice (unknown–1753).** Samuel Smith I married Rebecca Curtis/Curtice in 1707 (possibly a second marriage), and were parents of ten children. He was a landowner, practiced the carpenter's trade, and was a citizen of influence—holding offices of public trust. When his father, Robert, died in 1693, Samuel became the executor of the estate, which became known as the "Smith homestead."

**Samuel Smith II (1714–1785) and Priscilla Gould (1707–1744).** Samuel Smith II married Priscilla Gould in 1734, and the couple had five children. Priscilla died in September 1744, a short time after the birth of her youngest child, Asael, Joseph Smith Jr.'s grandfather. The following year, Samuel II married his second wife, Priscilla Gould, a cousin of his first wife with the same name. She had no children of her own and reared the five children left motherless the year before. Samuel II was the most distinguished of the Topsfield Smiths, where he served as a Topsfield selectman (local government leader), town clerk, and a member of the Committee for Correspondence, Tea Committee, and Committee of Safety. Most notably, he represented Topsfield as a delegate to the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts in 1774 (the colonial assembly), and the Second Provincial Congress in 1775. He became a captain in the Topsfield militia.

**Asael Smith (1744–1830) and Mary Duty (1743–1836).** Asael (also Ashael) Smith married Mary Duty in 1767. In 1772, the couple moved from Topsfield to New Hampshire, during which time he served in the Revolutionary War. The couple and their ten children returned to Topsfield in 1786, where, three years later, their last child was born. In 1791 the family moved to Tunbridge, Vermont. The family later moved to Stockholm, New York, where he died in October 1830. In May 1836, his wife Mary left Stockholm to join the Latter-day Saints in Kirtland, Ohio, where she died on May 27, only a few days after her arrival, at the age of ninety-two.

**Joseph Smith Sr. (1771–1840).** Joseph Smith Sr. was born on July 12, 1771, in Topsfield. The following year, his parents, Asael and Mary, moved the family to New Hampshire for fourteen years, returning to Topsfield in 1786. During this time, Joseph Sr. became a member of the Topsfield Congregational Church. In 1791, at the age of twenty, he moved with his parents to Tunbridge, Vermont. In total, Joseph Sr. lived in Topsfield for about six years. It was not until after the family moved to Vermont that he met Lucy Mack. The couple married in January 1796. He labored as a cooper, farmer, merchant, and teacher. The couple had ten children, including Joseph Smith Jr., founder and president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and Hyrum Smith, patriarch of the church, and a counselor in the First Presidency.

(Edited from Alexander L. Baugh, "The Smith Family Memorial Monument in Topsfield, Massachusetts," *BYU Religious Education Review* (Fall 2021), 20).



The Ensign Peak Foundation is an independent 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to identify, preserve, and commemorate sites, events, and people of significance in Latter-day Saint history throughout the world.