

## Alexander Smyth (1765 – 17 Apr 1830)

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*The National Intelligencer, April 19, 1830*

It is our unpleasant duty to announce the death of General Alexander Smith, a Representative in Congress from the State of Virginia. He breathed his last at his lodgings in this City, at one o'clock on Saturday, after an illness of but a few days' duration. It is scarcely two weeks since he delivered a speech of considerable length in the House of Representatives; and it seems to us to be less than a week since we saw him in apparent health.

Of the life of Gen. Smyth, an account may be expected from the pen of some one of his friends. As a public man, from whom we often differed very widely, we have always regarded him as upright and conscientious. His manners were urbane and courteous, and his private life retiring and unobtrusive. His age we presume to have been about sixty-five.

The funeral of Gen. Smyth is to take place, with public honors, this day. The procession will move from the Capitol at 12 o'clock.

*The National Intelligencer, Tuesday, April 20, 1830*

The funeral of the late General Alexander Smyth took place yesterday, with all the customary ceremonies and marks of respect. Pursuant to the order taken by each House of Congress, the members and officers of both Houses attended the funeral. It was also attended by the President of the United States (Jackson), and the other officers of the Executive branch of the Government, the Foreign Ministers, etc. The body being brought from the late lodgings of the deceased, to the Hall of the House of Representatives, the usual religious services were performed by the Rev. Mr. Post, Chaplain of the House -- those at the grave by the Rev. Mr. Johns, Chaplain of the Senate. The following gentlemen acted as Pall Bearers:

Mr. Mitchell, of Md.	Mr. Thompson, of Georgia
Mr. Drayton, of S.C.	Mr. Desha, of Tenn.
Mr. McIntire, of Me.	Mr. Vance, of Ohio.

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### **In Senate**

After the sitting was opened--

A message having been received from the House of Representatives by their Clerk, announcing the demise of the Hon. Alexander Smyth, one of the Representatives in Congress from the State of Virginia--

Mr. Tyler, of Virginia rose and addressed the Senate as follows:

The death of Alexander Smyth, just announced to us, leaves a considerable void in society. For the long period of probably forty years, he has been engaged in public life. His services in the Virginia Legislatures will long be remembered, while his career in the House of Representatives will best attest his character. Possessing fine talents, with a mind logical and precise, his manners were retiring and unobtrusive. If he did not possess the suaviter in modo, he undeniably possessed the fortiter in re. His speeches delivered in the various stations which he has filled, will survive as the best monument of his virtue, industry, and his intellectual firmness and strength. With high claims to public proferment, he preferred to rest for his support upon the people of the district in the service of which he has died, and

that people have over and over again awarded to him the highest meed of their approbation, and know best how to estimate his services. As a mark of respect to his memory, I move the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Senate will attend the funeral of the Hon. Alexander Smyth, late a member of the House of Representatives from the State of Virginia, this day, at 12 o'clock; and, as a testimony of respect for the memory of the deceased, they will go into mourning, and wear crape round the left arm for thirty days.

The resolution was unanimously agreed to; and then, on motion of Mr. Tazewell, of Virginia, the Senate adjourned.

#### *House of Representatives*

The journal of Friday having been read, Mr. McCoy of Virginia, rose and announced to the House the decease on Saturday last of his colleague, Mr. Alexander Smyth. Mr. McC. said the character of the deceased was too well known to need any eulogy from him, and he would content himself with offering the following resolution:

Resolved, That a Committee be appointed to take order for superintending the funeral of Alexander Smyth, deceased, late a Member of this House from the State of Virginia.

The resolution was unanimously adopted, and Messrs. McCoy, Roane, Claiborne, Alexander, Taliaferro, Gordon and Craig, were appointed the committee.

On motion of Mr. McCoy, it was also

Resolved unanimously, That the members of this House will testify their respect for the memory of Alexander Smyth, by wearing crape on the left arm for the remainder of the present session.

Resolved unanimously, That the members of this House will attend the funeral of the late Alexander Smyth, this day at 12 o'clock.

On motion of Mr. McCoy, The House then adjourned.

#### *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress 1774-1989*

A Representative from Virginia; born on the Island of Rathlin, Ireland in 1765; immigrated to the U.S. and settled in Botetourt County, Virginia in 1775, completed preparatory studies; studied law; was admitted to the bar and commenced practice in Abingdon, Va.; moved to Wythe County, Va.; member of the State house of delegates in 1792, 1796, 1801, 1802 and 1804-1808; served in the State senate in 1808 and 1809; served in the U.S. Army as colonel of a regiment of riflemen from July 8, 1808 to July 6, 1812 and as an inspector general with the rank of brigadier general from July 6, 1812 to March 3, 1813; resumed the practice of his profession; again a member of the State house of delegates in 1816, 1817, 1826 and 1827; was elected to the 15th through 18th Congresses (March 4, 1817 to March 3, 1825); elected to the 20th and 21st Congresses and served from March 4, 1827 until his death in Washington, D.C. April 17, 1830.