

A CONCISE BIOGRAPHY

OF

MAJOR GENEVIEVE MARION SMITH, ANC

Prepared by

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Forest Glen Section  
Walter Reed Army Medical Center  
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The information contained herein was carefully compiled from available records and is believed to be accurate. Anyone knowing of additions, deletions, or corrections should contact the Historical Unit.

MAJOR GENEVIEVE MARION SMITH, ANC

Born: 25 April 1905  
 Died: 27 July 1950  
 Entered service from Iowa  
 Service number: M-546 (M-702306 (AUS))

FAMILY DATA

Father: Thomas A. Smith (deceased)  
 Mother: Mary Kennedy Smith (deceased)  
 Sister: Mrs. Catherine S. Horsfield, Epworth, Iowa  
 Sister: Mrs. Veronica Dagenais, 12944 Maple Avenue, Blue Island, Illinois  
 Sister: Mrs. Alice Arensdorf, 1248 Lodi Place, Hollywood 38, California  
 Brother: Thomas K. Smith, Epworth, Iowa  
 Brother: Joseph S. Smith, Epworth, Iowa

EDUCATION

Visitation Academy, Dubuque, Iowa, and Cascade High School, Cascade, Iowa,  
 1919-1921 (Course completed while at Fitzsimons General Hospital, Denver,  
 Colorado)  
 E.H. Mercy Hospital, Dubuque, Iowa, 1925

PROMOTIONS

2nd Lieutenant, 10 August 1929, Reserve Army Nurse Corps  
 Relieved from active service (Reserve) 9 September 1932; took oath of office  
 in Regular Army Nurse Corps 10 September 1932  
 1st Lieutenant, 25 March 1941  
 Captain (temporary), 6 March 1944  
 Major (temporary), 23 June 1944  
 Captain, Regular Army, 25 September 1947 (Date of Rank, 10 August 1937)  
 Major, Regular Army, 22 December 1948

MILITARY SERVICE

Aug 1929 - May 1934	General duty, Fitzsimons General Hospital, Denver, Colorado
Jun 1934 - May 1936	General Duty, Tripler General Hospital, Honolulu, Territory of Hawaii
May 1936 - Aug 1936	Enroute to the United States; leave

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Aug 1936 - Jun 1941      General duty; later, nurse in Genitourinary Clinic; finally, Chief Nurse, 5 April 1941; Letterman General Hospital, San Francisco, California

Jun 1941 - Sep 1942      Assistant Chief Nurse, Hoff General Hospital, Santa Barbara, California

Sep 1942 - May 1943      Chief Nurse, Station Hospital, Fort William Henry Harrison, Helena, Montana

May 1943 - Aug 1944      Chief Nurse, Oakland Area Station Hospital, Oakland, California

Aug 1944 - Sep 1945      Chief Nurse, 139th General Hospital, France

Sep 1945 - Oct 1945      Assistant Chief Nurse, 21st General Hospital, France

Oct 1945 - Nov 1945      Assistant Chief Nurse, 175th General Hospital, Reims, France

Dec 1945 - Jun 1946      Assistant Chief Nurse for one month; then, Administrative Nurse, 121st General Hospital, Bremen, Germany

Jun 1946 - Sep 1946      Administrative Nurse, 386th Station Hospital, Kassel, Germany

Sep 1946 - Nov 1946      Enroute to the United States; leave

Nov 1946 - Oct 1948      Nursing Supervisor, Percy Jones General Hospital, Battle Creek, Michigan, with three months at Brooke Army Medical Center to take a course in Hospital Administration

Nov 1948 - Jul 1949      Chief Nurse, 10th General Hospital, Fort William McKinley, Manila, Philippine Islands

Jul 1949 - Jul 1950      Chief Nurse, 155th Station Hospital, Yokohama, Japan

27 Jul 1950              Killed in airplane crash

AFFILIATIONS

American Red Cross

Alumnae Association of Mercy Hospital School of Nursing, Dubuque Iowa

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AWARDS

American Defense Service Medal  
 American Campaign Medal  
 European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal  
 World War II Victory Medal  
 Army of Occupation Medal

APPRAISALS

The nursing career of Major Genevieve M. Smith was one of growth and progress. When she entered the Reserve Army Nurse Corps in 1929, she had completed only three years of high school study. During her tour of duty at Fitzsimons General Hospital, she finished her high school education and was eligible to become a member of the Regular Army Nurse Corps in 1932. While on general duty at Fitzsimons, she exhibited excellent nursing ability and maintained a most admirable relationship with her fellow workers.

At Tripler General Hospital, and later at Letterman General Hospital, Miss Smith was commended for her cooperation, reliability and composure. Her good ward and clinic service warranted her promotion to Chief Nurse in 1941.

Lieutenant Smith next went to Hoff General Hospital in Santa Barbara, California. Here she impressed her superiors with her personality as well as with her efficient work, agreeably performing any task which was asked of her.

Several months after assuming her duties at Oakland Area Station Hospital, Miss Smith was recommended for promotion to the rank of Captain. Colonel Albert E. McEvers, Commanding Officer, said that her demonstrated initiative, thoroughness, forcefulness and outstanding performance merited such promotion. Miss Smith's unassuming manner sometimes created the impression that she lacked confidence in herself, but her sincere attention to duty and able supervision resulted in the successful conduct of her mission.

Major Smith served creditably in Europe during World War II. A year after cessation of hostilities she returned to the United States and was assigned to Percy Jones General Hospital as Nursing Supervisor. Her superior officers, Lieutenant Colonel E. Valine Messner, ANC, and Lieutenant Colonel Pauline Kirby, ANC, considered her alert, well groomed and dignified. They stated that Major Smith grasped situations easily, quickly adapted herself and had a good knowledge of administrative procedures; that she commanded respect by her fairness in dealing with personnel and by her logical solution of problems. These opinions were concurred in by Colonel Robert M. Hardaway, Commanding Officer of the hospital.

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While stationed at the 10th General Hospital in Manila, Major Smith was esteemed for her zeal, consideration of others, cheerfulness and tolerance. Industrious and alert, she put her wide background of administrative work to good use. Besides directing Army Nurse Corps personnel, she supervised female civilian employees whose primary function was the care of patients.

As Chief Nurse at the 155th Station Hospital in Yokohama, Japan, Major Smith achieved a smooth-functioning and highly efficient nursing service with a minimum of problems presented to the Headquarters. Businesslike and thoroughly professional in bearing, judicious in speech and ideas, she reflected a positive capacity for accomplishment.

Shortly after the beginning of the Korean War, Major Smith was chosen to become Chief Nurse of Eighth United States Army in Korea. She lost her life on 27 July 1950 when the airplane in which she had departed from Haneda Air Base, Japan exploded in mid-air near Oshima Island, Japan after four hours in flight.

Major Smith's last commanding officer was Colonel James E. Graham, now Brigadier General and Director of Personnel and Training, Office of The Surgeon General, Washington, D.C. In his final evaluation of Major Smith soon after her untimely death, General Graham called her a "well-trained, mature nurse who possessed a pleasing personality and had the ability to get along well with people; outstanding leadership and administrative ability; fair and just in all her dealings; cooperative, loyal, and dependable."

During a telephone conversation on 13 April 1962, General Graham reminisced about Genevieve Smith. He recalled that her position as Chief Nurse did not prevent her rolling up her sleeves and going to work like anyone else. He said that he had never known a nurse who could do "so many things so well without getting bogged down." He called her "a tremendous woman" and explained that she had been selected for the aforementioned important post because she was "the most capable person to organize the nursing services in Korea."

The Historical Unit also contacted Vivian Shepherd Moore of Falls Church, Virginia, who retired from the Army Nurse Corps on 1 September 1960. Mrs. Moore, wife of Major General Ned D. Moore, Office of The Secretary of Defense, served as Administrative Assistant to Major Smith at the 155th Station Hospital in Yokohama. She said that Major Smith was "one of the most wonderful" Chief Nurses she had known, and deemed it a privilege to have worked under her. She felt that one reason for the high morale among the nurses was the fact that Major Smith never interfered or held a tight rein if the nurses were performing their duties conscientiously and well. However, if they failed to live up to the high standards which she set for them, she did not hesitate to reprimand them and take corrective action. But even as a disciplinarian she was tactful and just, so that she did not incur resentment or insubordination.

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Mrs. Moore also recalled that Major Smith had a premonition of disaster, saying that she "wouldn't come back from Korea." She was not afraid of death but, true to her general character and specific sense of responsibility, she hoped to retire at the end of the Korean War. Her sisters and brothers had been caring for their aged mother and she felt that it was now "her turn" to shoulder the obligation.

Thus the tragedy of 27 July 1950 deprived a family in Iowa of a fine and loyal member and cost the Army Nurse Corps one of its most outstanding administrators.

*3rd of 1950  
Korean War  
Korea  
file Korea*

**SMITH, GENEVIEVE M.** N 546 R/A

**BEGAN MILITARY SERVICE:** 10 August 1929

**WORLD WAR II SERVICE:**

1944 - 1946	Chief nurse 189th G. H. during Rhineland campaign
	21st G. H. )
	178th G. H. )
	121st G. H. ) administrative nursing
	386th Sta. Hosp. )

**POSTWAR U.S. SERVICE:**

1946 - 1947	Surgical supervisor, PJGH Ward Supervisor, PJGH
1948	Hospital Administration Course, MFSE

**FAR EAST COMMAND:**

October 1948	Principal chief nurse, U.S. Army Philippine Scout Hospital, Manila
1949	Chief nurse, 155th Station Hospital, Yokohama
K - 1950	Acting chief nurse, 8th Army

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**EXCERPTS FROM EFFICIENCY REPORTS:**

"A superior nurse. Has a very favorable appearance. she is alert, well groomed and dignified. Grasps situations and adapts herself easily. Conscientious and understands administrative procedures. . ."

Lt. Col. E. Valine Messner, ANC  
Bremerhaven, January 1947

"This officer is well poised, neat in appearance, and has a pleasing personality. She is a thorough conscientious worker and commands respect by her fairness in dealing with personnel and her logical solution to problems. . ."

Lt. Col. Pauline Kirby, ANC  
Percy Jones G. H., April 1948

"This officer is reliable, conscientious, cooperative and loyal. She carries out administrative details in and orderly and accurate manner. She has a strong sense of duty, excellent health and character, and a pleasant disposition. . ."

Maj. Alice J. Robbe, ANC  
Percy Jones, G.H., October 1948

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EXCERPTS FROM  
EFFICIENCY REPORTS  
(CONT'D):

"This officer has shown a thoroughgoing knowledge of her profession, is businesslike, has continuous application to duty, is politic in speech and ideas, and generally most dependable. . ."

Col. H. M. Nicholson, C/O  
155 Station Hospital, November 1949

"Has gone quietly about her work, achieving a smooth-functioning and a highly efficient nursing service with a minimum of problems presented to headquarters and is considered a superior administrative nurse. Her personality is pleasing and at the same time reflects a positive capacity for accomplishment. . ."

Col. H. M. Nicholson, C/O  
155 Station Hospital, May 1950

OTHER  
EVALUATIONS:

Well trained, mature nurse, with tact, leadership, initiative, coolness, good application to detail and routine.

Solves her own problems. Would fight to get her.

Obtains respect and obedience without causing resentment.

Type everyone likes for a friend.

Inspires pride in the organization.

Thoroughly cooperative.

Has admiration of men and officers alike.

Firm but not overbearing.

Col. H. M. Nicholson, C/O  
155 Station Hospital, March 1950



SMITH, GENEVIEVE M. N 546 Major R/A Date of Birth: 25 April 1905  
 Epworth, Iowa Protestant

Mother: Mrs. Mary (Kennedy) Smith

Father: Deceased

High School: Dubuque, Ia - 1922

Graduate of Mercy School of Nursing, Mercy Hospital, Dubuque, Ia. - 1925

Graduate nursing experience at St. Anthony's Hospital, Chicago, Ill. from 1925 to 1929 where she specialized in obstetrical nursing.

Came into Army Nurse Corps as 2nd Lt - 10 August 1929

- 1st Lt - 25 March 1941

Capt - 6 March 1944

Major AUS - 23 June 1944

Capt R/A - 25 Sept 1947

Major R/A - 22 Dec. 1948

Since 1942 she has served in administrative capacity as chief nurse of station hospitals in Z/I and overseas.

During World War II she served in the European Theatre from 4 October 1944 to 10 October 1946, first as chief nurse of the 189th General Hospital in the Rhineland campaign and in the occupation period as assistant chief nurse of the 21st General Hospital, later the 121st General Hospital, and as nurse administrator with the 386th Station Hospital. Upon her return to the U. S. she was in supervisory capacity at Percy Jones General Hospital, Battle Creek from December 1946 to October 1948, at which time she went to FECOM. Among her assignments there, she was chief nurse of the Philippine Scout Hospital in Manila, and later chief nurse at 155th Station Hospital, Yokohama (500 beds).

Was acting chief nurse, 8th Army, at time reported missing in action.

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