

Mrs Coburn - Smith of Ottawa sent the following letter, which was written by Elias Smith (1799). Mrs Coburn attached this note to the front of the Elias Smith letter

-: I read with great interest your account of the settlement of Port Hope. I am a direct descendant of Elias Smith. My great-great grandfather, was Elias Smith. We feel that you are slightly in error in giving the credit of the actual settling to Myndred Harris. I am enclosing a copy of my great-great grandfather's letter to JON. Simcoe concerning the grant of lands to him. In it you will see that he points out that where his son Peter Smith (for whom Smith Creek was named) and Mr. Jonathon Walton arrived with the settlers, "there was not a family nearer than York on the West side and the Bay of Quinte on the East" We have always understood that Myndert Harris was one of the settlers who came out at that time with my great-great grandfather. However we may be wrong. However I think from the letter you will see that nearly all the settlement was made by Elias Smith.

This excerpt and the following letter were located in the National Archives in Ottawa.

Elias Smith 1799 letter.

Montral, 15 th Oct 1799.

Honoured Sir

In the year 1792 your excellency was pleased to issue a proclamation for granting the waste lands of the Crown, in the Province of Upper Canada, in Townships in consequence of which proclamation, Jonathon Walton, Abraham Walton and myself were induced to present a petition for a grant of a township laying on the north side of Lake Ontario, known by the name of Hope, or fifth township. Our petition was laid before your Excellency the 6th day of Octoger 1792, which your Excellency was pleased to grant in council. We then had reason to believe the lands which composed the Township were to be our own, upon condition of our placing thereon forty settlers and the next spring, brought into the province, six families at a heavy expense, consisting of thirty - six souls, twenty-seven of which we settled in the Township of Hope, then a wilderness, there not being a family nearer the settlement than York, a distance of 60 miles on the one side and the Bay of Quinte, on the other side, a distance of 40 or 50 miles; which settlers we were obliged to furnish (as well as many others we have placed on the said Township since) with provisions, clothes and other necessaries of life, for which in a great degree, we never shall obtain payment.

When I arrived at Niagara from Lower Canada in the month of June 1793, Mr. Jonathon Walton and my son, Peter Smith, were gone forward with the settlers for Hope Township. Your Excellency greatly surprised me by saying we could not obtain more than 1200 acres of land each, we having supposed we had a right to the Township. I observed to your Excellency that 1200 acres was by no means a consideration to idemnify us for the expenses we had been put in settling the Township, and that I, for my own part, had in general found it best to put up with the first loss and therefore would decline having any further to do in the business. I presume your Excellency will recollect that you said I must not think of that, and at the same time, your Excellency said ypu would grant me 1200 acres of land as proprietor of the Township, and on consideration of the strong reccommendation you had received from his Excellency, Governor Hamilton, and Capt. Dunford, Chief Engineer of Barmuda your Excellency would grant me any military lands, and for each of my ten children 1200 acres. This, your excellency observed, was in your power and this you would do, and requested me by all means to go on with the settlement. I engaged my word to your Excellency that I would go on, and have done so, and have been at the greater expense than any are with who I am concerned, - having placed forty settlers on the township, including a part of my own family, since the month of June 1793, built an excellent saw and grist mill; a frame house, five rooms on a floor, and made many other improvements for the general good of the settlement, in the firm hope and expectation of obtaining lands for my

family, agreeable to the promise made by your Excellency; but as there was no order of Council nor any written notice made by your Excellency, the Honourable Council will not allow the lands I request, that is to say, 1200 acres for each of my ten children, unless I am fortunate to obtain from your Excellency, a certificate of the promise you had the goodness to make me.

May it please your Excellency, I do not complain of the Honourable Council. They had been pleased to order me in my own right, all the lands I could expect and have been pleased also to order two of my sons 1200 acres each, and two of my daughters 600 acres. I beg leave to refer your excellency for the truth of what I asserted to that good man the Honourable Peter Russell, now in Upper Canada, and the Hon. David William Smith who, I am in hopes, will present this letter to your Excellency, in which I have enclosed for your perusal and satisfaction, an account of money I have absolutely expended for the purpose of settling the country round about, but more particually the Township of Hope, by building of mills etc., in a wilderness country which will not pay interest for the money they cost and in course, the capitol is sunk, not withstanding these mills have anserwed me important and, that of greatly helping to settle the country.

The land the Honourable Council has granted my children is under the late regulation, except 200 acres each. I hope your Excellency will be pleased to recommend the grants to the dated from the time of your Excellency's promise, which was made on the 8th day of June, 1793, which

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will place my family under the old regulation; as I can, with great truth, assure your Excellency that the heavy expenses I have sustained, making and improving the settlement have deminished my capitol so much that I am not able to bear the additional expense of paying for the lands under the new regulations.

I humbly submit the nature of my case to your Excellency's wisdom and known kindness to forward such a certificate in favour of myself and family, to his Excellency, Governor Hunter, and the Honourable Council of Upper Canada, as your Excellency may be of the opinion I justly merit in consequence of the great fratique and heavy expense I have been at in settling a new country to all intents and purposes in the state of nature.

I should most certainly have made this application sooner, but that I entertained hopes of your Excellency's returning to the government of this Province.

That this finds your Excellency and family in the enjoyment of health and happiness, is the sincere prayer of Honoured Sir.

Your most respectfully obliged obedient humble servant.

ELIAS SMITH.