

Orange A. Smalley (1812-1893)
Collection, 1850-1962
MSA 652 and 653
MS Size C

Introduction

This collection consists of correspondence, newspaper clippings, notes, photographs, professional journals, family and genealogical materials, and personal papers regarding Orange Alfonso Smalley (1812-1893) of Forestdale, Brandon, Vermont. The materials were assembled by his grand-daughter-in-law, Sophie McLaughlin (Mrs. Carver Woodward) Smalley, in her quest to establish Orange Smalley as a co-inventor of the 'electric engine' with Thomas Davenport. The collection was donated by Norman Joy Greene, a distant cousin of Carver Smalley, around 1962, and was originally housed in *Folio 929.2 Sm181, Vols. 1 and 2. The papers are now housed in two flip-top archival storage boxes which occupy .75 linear feet of shelf space, plus one oversized folder, MS Size C.

Biographical Sketch

Orange Alfonso Smalley ("OAS") was born on July 3, 1812, in Hartford, N.Y., the son of physician, Dr. Adoniram J. Smalley of Brandon, Vt., and his wife, Sophia Goss, of Forestdale, Brandon, Vt. Orange Smalley and his wife, Alma, lived on a farm in Forestdale, where he was listed in the 1850 U.S. Census as a house joiner, and as a miller of ochre paint pigment in the 1860s. Smalley is said to have been a blacksmith and mechanic in 1834, when he reportedly worked on developing the 'electro-magnetic engine' (perpetual motion machine) with Thomas Davenport, his next door neighbor. Orange Smalley was only involved in the project's early phase, as he apparently did not see the engine's full potential, nor did he have the means to develop and promote it. By the time the invention came to fruition, Davenport received full credit for developing it. When Orange Smalley died in 1893 in Forestdale, Brandon, Vt., at age 80, he had not been credited for authorship in the invention.

Orange Smalley and his wife, Nancy "Alma" Carlisle (1820-1905, born Goshen, Vt.), had three sons, Darwin A. Smalley (1841-1870), Carver "Waldo" Smalley (1843-1910), and John Adelbert Smalley (b. 1846).

Waldo Smalley served a nine-month stint in the 12th Vermont Infantry Regiment, Company G (1862-1863), as a corporal. His unit was deployed in defense of the U.S. capital in Washington, D.C. Darwin Smalley, who achieved the rank of major, served two stints, the first, for six months in the 1st Vermont Infantry Regiment (1861); the second, re-enlisting in the 7th Vermont for the duration of the war (1862-1865). The 7th spent most of its time in Louisiana, around New Orleans and Baton Rouge, with a brief deployment around Pensacola, Florida. Both soldiers returned home safely.

Orange and Alma Smalley's third son, John Adelbert Smalley, an engineer, married Julia E. Morse and resided in Brandon, Vt.. Their children were Darwin Smalley (b. 1881), who died shortly after birth, Mary Alma Smalley (1882-1925), and Carver Woodward Smalley.

Carver Woodward Smalley was born on August 18, 1884, in Forestdale, Brandon, Vt., and married Sophie (de) Barbe McLaughlin on Oct. 9, 1913. Beside a stillborn child, they produced no offspring. In 1920, Carver and Sophie Smalley lived in Sudbury, Vt., on a farm next to Carver's sister, Mary Alma (Smalley) Parent, and her husband Emery; Carver was a house painter. By 1930, the Smalley's lived on East Seminary Street in Brandon village where Carver ran a home decorating and house painting business. By 1940, Carver's home decorating business had expanded into construction. Carver died sometime after 1947, presumably in Vermont.

Carver's wife, Sophie McLaughlin, was born on December 31, 1879, in Green Township near Cincinnati, Ohio, the ninth of ten children of James W. McLaughlin, a successful architect, and Olive Amelia Barbe. After her marriage to Carver, Sophie tirelessly gathered the materials in this collection in order to establish Orange A. Smalley, her husband's grandfather, as co-inventor of the 'electro-magnetic engine.' She believed that Thomas Davenport was wrongly given sole credit for the invention, and she wrote many articles and letters attempting to correct the misperception. To aid in her research, she hired Lawrence Chamberlain (1878- after 1942, b. Brandon, Vt.) of Greenwich, Connecticut, a retired stock broker turned historian, genealogist, and author of several books on the financial markets. To what degree Sophie succeeded in her quest to change the public's mind is undetermined. When she died on January 23, 1962, in Rutland, Vt.; Sophie Smalley was a resident of Forestdale.

Norman Joy Greene (1898-1985) of Berwyn, Pennsylvania, donor and original organizer of this collection, was also a descendant of Adoniram Smalley, through Dr. Smalley's daughter Harriot and her husband Alanson Green. According to his obituary in the *Pennsylvania Genealogical Magazine*, Norman Greene had a career in investment brokerage until his retirement in 1963. He was a life member of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania, serving as its director, vice president, and president. Mr. Greene was Governor General of the Society of Mayflower Descendants in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, from 1966 until 1969.

Scope and Content

The materials in this collection were assembled by Sophie McLaughlin Smalley, grand-daughter-in-law of Orange A. Smalley, in her quest to establish him as a co-inventor of the 'electro-magnetic engine' with Thomas Davenport. The collection was originally organized by the donor, Norman Joy Greene, into two leather portfolios, with the papers encased in stapled acetate pages. For greater accessibility the contents of the folios have been reorganized and placed into folders. A listing of Norman Joy Greene's original physical organization of the materials appears in Folder 0, and copies of his cover sheets and introduction to the collection, are found in MSA 652:0.1 and MS Size C.

The new arrangement consists of three series: I) Materials related to Orange Smalley and his work on the electric engine; II) Genealogical materials mainly on the Smalley family, with Carver, Woodward, McLaughlin, Parent, Flint, and other allied families included; III) Personal family correspondence, including a group of Civil War letters from Darwin (1846-1870) and Carver "Waldo" Smalley (1843-1910) to and from their parents, Orange A. and Nancy Alma Smalley. Of particular interest is Darwin's letter dated May 18, 1861, describing his passage by ship to Ft. Monroe, Virginia, on the *SS Alabama*, as well as letters from Camp Butler in Newport News, Virginia, and Ft. Pike, Louisiana.

Related Collections and Materials

A duplicate copy of the Smalley family bible records (1806-1915), contained in MSA 652:12, is housed in Misc 1268. Misc 1268 also contains a cover letter from Norman Joy Greene.

Framed, handwritten birth information of Harriot Smalley (Mrs. Alanson) Green (1805-1848), is housed in the museum collection, accession 1950.1. Orange A. Smalley (1812-1893) was Harriot's brother, and he framed the piece, reportedly, at age five.

MSC 193 contains a letter from Lawrence Chamberlain to Mary Greene Nye, a Smalley "cousin," which may be of interest to members of the Greene line.

The Lawrence Chamberlain Collection in Brandon Free Public Library contains papers concerning Orange A. Smalley and the electric motor.

Thomas Davenport is very well documented in the library collection and in many of its manuscript collections, including historian Dorman B.E. Kent's speech on the 125th anniversary of Davenport's birth, at *X B D2773k.

Inventory

I. Orange A. Smalley and the electro-magnetic engine

- MSA 652:1 *Electrical Engineer* journal articles, 1891, Vol. XI, nos. 140-143, contain a narrative depicting Orange A. Smalley and Thomas Davenport as co-inventors and co-patentees of the electro-magnetic engine.
- :2 Newspaper articles, 1910-1961, and undated.
- :3 Notes of Sophie Smalley, undated, contains affidavits supporting OAS as an inventor of the engine, the reproduction of an 1869 map of Forestdale, OAS' obituary, and some genealogical notes,.
- :4 Correspondence, Lawrence Chamberlain to Sophie M. Smalley, 1942-1956, and undated.
- 5 _____, others, including Mary Greene Nye, 1884-1950, and undated.

II. Genealogical and biographical materials

- :6 Blood , 1919-1928, and undated.(Phineas Blood (Revolutionary War soldier) was grandfather of Nancy Alma Carlisle through Nancy Blood (1793-1826) and Martin Carlisle.)
- :7 Carlisle, 1876-1953, and undated.
- MS Size C _____, estate account, 1876-1877
- :8 Carver, 1889-1954, and undated.
- :9 Flint, 1929-1954, and undated. (Abigail Carver Smalley (1818-1841) was the first wife of William B. Flint.)
- :10 Goss, 1896-1947, and undated.
- :11 McLaughlin, 1935-1946, and undated.
- :12 Smalley, family bible pages (spanning 1806-1915) and notes, 1862-1949, and undated, including Morse and Parent. (May Alma Smalley (1882-1925) married Emery W. Parent.)
- :13 _____, correspondence, 1922-1957, and undated.
- :14 Woodward, undated, includes bible pages (after 1816).
- MSA 653:1 Photographs, Smalley and McLaughlin, 1884-<1910, and undated.

III. Personal materials

- :2 Personal records:
- a. Journal of OAS, 1850-1865, with work time records; Forestdale District 14 school class records, supplies, and accounts; farm expenses 1857-1864.
- b. Address book of Sophie M. Smalley, 1925-1947, and undated.
- :3 Official documents, Smalley, 1854-1905, and undated, includes OAS' 1862 receipt for a patent for roofing compound, and OAS' estate inventory.
- :4 Correspondence, Darwin and Carver Smalley with parents, 1861-1885, and undated, including Civil War correspondence.
- :5 _____, Smalley family and others, 1858-1936, and undated, including letters from Alma's cousin, Norman Mason, early settler of Ripon, California in 1882 re: going to lay out town of Clarks Forks Bottom, Calif., a 'fiat' city of the Pacific Railroad.
- :6 Miscellaneous, 1834 (*Christian Almanac for New England*), and undated.
- MS Size C "Perpetual Motion," by Cornelia Meigs, *The Classmate: A Paper for Young People*, January 25, 1941, and February 1, 1941

Marge Garfield
 October 2012; rev. February 2013
 SmalleyOrange.doc