

George Brunswick Smyth,¹ J.P. 1814²– 1845³

Captain, 80th Regiment of Foot

Military Juror, Melbourne Court

Captain, Port Phillip Mounted Police

Vice-President 1839 Melbourne Mechanics' Institution Committee

This article gives a brief account of George Brunswick Smyth's life, his election as one of eight vice-presidents of the first Melbourne Mechanics' Institution Committee, and his connections with fellow-members of the Committee. Further references on Smyth's background and time in Australia include the *Historical records of Victoria, Foundations series*⁴ and research by the Melbourne Fitzroy History Society.⁵

Early life

George Brunswick Smyth was born in 1814 in New Brunswick, Canada, the third surviving son of George Stracey Smyth and Amelia Anne.⁶

In 1779 George Stracey Smyth was appointed ensign in the East Norfolk Regiment of Militia. In May 1791, he served in Gibraltar as adjutant of the 7th Foot, under the command of Prince Edward, fourth son of George III, and continued on the Prince's staff for twelve years until 1803, serving in Gibraltar, Quebec, the West Indies, Nova Scotia, and again in Gibraltar. In 1799 Edward, now Duke of Kent, became Commander-in-Chief of the forces of British North America, making Smyth his aide-de-camp, and named Smyth's older brother, Rev. John Gee Smyth, as his domestic chaplain. By now, the connections with royalty were firmly established. It was said that "Smyth belong to the class of squire-parson who provided the backbone of early 19-century English high Toryism; his grandfather, father, a brother and a nephew were all clergymen".⁷

Four years later, after the Duke's retirement, Smyth returned to serve in England. In 1812, the year he was promoted to Major General, Smyth was back in Canada to serve in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

George Stracey Smyth and Amelia were married about 1813. Both Smyth and his wife suffered ill health, Amelia dying in 1817 at Halifax. Smyth suffered from 'consumption', causing him to take leave in 1813, and illness continued to plague him. George Brunswick Smyth would have been about two when his mother died in 1817. He had a sister, so in the brief few years of marriage before Amelia died, she is thought to have given birth to three sons and at least one daughter, only George and a sister surviving to adulthood.

[G.B.] Smyth spent much of his childhood in Canada, where his father who achieved the rank of Major General in 1812 was Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick from 1817 to 1823.⁸ George Stracey Smyth died on 27 March 1823, aged 55, in Fredericton, New Brunswick when his son was 18, and already in the army in England. "His will requested that the children be placed under the protection of the Court of Chancery, England, with their uncle John Gee Smyth and [their father's] nephew Rev. Charles Smyth as guardians."⁹

"George Stracey Smyth was not a very successful administrator and preferred to be engaged in musical activities or endeavouring to provide opportunities for education for all. ... He gave strong support to the efforts of the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor which was encouraging the establishment ... of schools using the monitorial system of teaching (called Madras schools). The young George was educated in New Brunswick at a Central School in Saint John. This being the first school established in the Province by his father who often instructed the boys there in singing and presided at the organ."¹⁰

The Smyth family estate was *Chelsworth*, in Suffolk, part of which was substantially developed by the Rector Rev. John Gee Smyth [the brother of Major General George Stracey Smyth]. "It was his nephew George Brunswick Smyth who bought his estate in Melbourne some twenty years later, naming it *Chelsworth Park* in fond memory of childhood days – though he actually grew up in Canada."¹¹

Early career

Smyth joined the army, following in the footsteps of his father. On 18 October 1831, aged 17, he was appointed Ensign in the 98th Regiment of Foot. He achieved the rank of Lieutenant in the 98th on 6 May 1836, Lieutenant in the 80th on 6th May 1837, and Captain on 26 June 1838.¹² "80th Foot – Lt George Brunswick Smyth to be Captain by purchase, vice Scully, who retires."¹³ Smyth, now in Australia, would have been approaching 24 at this time.

A sister, Amelia Georgina, married Rev. Henry Sharpe Pocklington, of Stebbing, Essex, on 8 August 1827. The Pocklington family was an established landed Chelsworth family with estates also in Yorkshire and Lancashire.¹⁴

The 80th Regiment of Foot

The Regiment began movements from its depot at Chatham, England, during 1836 for Gravesend on the Thames where it was to form escorts for convict transports headed for New South Wales. Between 1837 and 1841 the regimental headquarters was located at Windsor, New South Wales. By July 1837 the 80th had begun to deploy detachments

throughout the colony [including to Port Phillip]. The Regiment spent nearly nine years in Australia and New Zealand.¹⁵

Apart from his army records we know little about Smyth's activities in England before leaving for Australia. It is believed that he was a member of the Geographical Society, London, in 1836.¹⁶

Port Phillip District – 1838–1843

Smyth arrived in Port Phillip in 1838, aged about 24. "The Mounted Police under Lieutenant G.B. Smyth was also reinforced that year [as more convicts arrived and the military detachment increased]."¹⁷

A map of existing buildings in 1838 Melbourne, published in 1888 [National Library of Australia], shows Lieutenant Smyth's quarters near the corner of Spencer and Little Collins Streets. Robert Russell's 1838 survey of Government buildings is shown laid across the blocks from Spencer to King Streets. Smyth's building is at an angle to the grid. Nearby are shown the temporary hospital and temporary prisoners' quarters at either end of a structure, also the military barracks, the soldiers' huts, the police office and the guard room.¹⁸

Communications between Superintendent William Lonsdale and the Colonial Secretary include that of 6 October 1838 when Lonsdale wrote to the Colonial Secretary "I have the honour to enclose a letter from Lieutenant Smyth, 80th Regiment, requesting to have a quarter built for him near the barracks of the Mounted Police as he has been appointed to that Corps. I beg you observe should he remain the only Military Officer here the present quarter will still do for him, but should another officer be sent to have the separate charge of the Detachment in Infantry, it will be requisite to have another one for Lieutenant Smyth, and if His Excellency approve of it, I can have a small house of two rooms built with the convict mechanics we have here, for him."¹⁹

On 2 July 1839, responding to Captain William Lonsdale, the Colonial Secretary wrote rejecting an application from Smyth for assigned servants, as no convicts were to be given for purchases of land obtained at Port Phillip subsequent to 31 December 1837.²⁰

In December 1838 the Melbourne Court Register shows that Smyth was appearing as a Justice of the Peace for the Colony.²¹ H.F.Gisborne, W.Lonsdale, J.Simpson, T.Wills, and W.Yaldwyn, also appointed JPs, would be fellow-members of the Mechanics' Institution the following November.

It is likely that Smyth's life was extremely busy, with his various military and civil duties, as well as social commitments. Indeed on 5 October 1838 the Rev. William Waterfield, of the

Independent (Congregational) Church in Melbourne, noted in his journal “This day I was wholly engaged in seeking an opportunity to wait on Lieutenant Smyth, and at last obtained his subscription of £5.”²²

Marriage — 23.11.1839

On 23 November, 1839, a week after his election to the Melbourne Mechanics’ Institution’s first Committee, George Brunswick Smyth married Constantia Matthews Alexander at St James Cathedral, Melbourne, in the presence of three witnesses, H.N.Carrington, J.B.Were and F.A.Powlett. The Rev. J.C. Grylls officiated.²³ [*Robert Russell, fellow-1839 committee member, was married at St James Cathedral the following month*]



Constantia Matthews Smyth (née Alexander)
Photograph: Robb, E.M. Early Toorak and District
Robertson & Mullens, Melbourne, 1934.

Constantia came from a military family and in the small settlement that was 1839 Melbourne it is not surprising that George and Constantia met.

Constantia was born on 1 May 1816 in Ramsgate, England to Thomas Alexander (at one time Governor of the Arsenal at Mauritius) and his wife Grace, née Friend. Constantia’s sister, Augusta was married in Mauritius, to Lieutenant Charles Forrest (b. 1809, Cawnpore, India).²⁴ An article on the life of Charles and Augusta in the *Argus* of 17.2.1945 includes the sad account of six of their eight children dying of scarlet fever.

Notes (unsourced) in the collection of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria purportedly trace the Alexander family’s direct line of descent, via their *Friend* forebears, from William the Conqueror, and from Catherine Parr on another family strand.²⁵

Alas, Constantia would be widowed in her 29th year after four years of marriage when George died in 1845. Lee records that they were childless. “Constantia remained in the UK as per Census of 1851 she was living in Blackheath Hill , Greenwich, Kent co-inhabiting with

three Polkington children, Ellen K. 20 years, Rose Emma 20, Alice 18 and Frederick 15 scholar. All of the named women in the house including Constantia were annuitants and they lived with two servants.²⁶ Constantia must have been left in a difficult financial situation; another source comments "It is believed that Constantia remained in Kent raising her brother-in-law's children (the parents both died in the early 1840s)."²⁷

Constantia returned at some stage to Australia – possibly to be near her sister Augusta Forrest's family – where she died aged eighty-three in 1899: "Smyth, on 2 November, at Goonara, Sorrett Avenue, Malvern, Constantia, widow of the late Captain George Brunswick Smyth, H.M. 80th Regiment.". She is buried at St. Kilda Cemetery.²⁸ Appendix 3 gives details of Constantia's will. She bequeathed family silver, the family Bible and two oil paintings of George Brunswick Smyth to her sister Augusta's Pocklington family in Chelsworth, England.

Smyth was quick to build social networks in the Port Phillip District

[] indicates fellow-members of the 1839 Mechanics Institution committee involved

Smyth was early on the Melbourne Masonic scene. [T.Strode & T.Burns were also members of early Lodges established in Melbourne]. Finn, in his *Chronicles of Early Melbourne* comments "From Mr T.B.Alexander, Frankfurt House, Abbotsford, [brother of Smyth's wife, Constantia²⁹] I am in receipt of the of the following interesting communication: 'I think Captain George Brunswick Smyth was the first to initiate the formation of a Masonic Lodge in Port Phillip, as I have on my side-board a silver salver embossed with the usual Masonic emblems, and bearing the inscription – *presented to Brother George Brunswick Smyth, from the members of the Lodge of Australia Felix, as a mark of fraternal regard. St John's Day, 27 December, 1840.*' Though personally unacquainted with my correspondent, I recognise in him a respected old colonist gazetted in Kerr's 1842 Directory as a settler at Mount Macedon."³⁰

Smyth was one of 150 'gentlemen' invited to a levee in late 1841 to be presented to Sir George Gipps, the new Governor of New South Wales, on a visit to the Port Phillip District. The invitees represent the social élite of the settlement. [E.Brewster, S.Craig, Rev.] Forbes, J.Graham, W.Lonsdale, Dr F.McCrae, D.C.McArthur, D.G.McArthur, G.Porter, J.Peers, J.Rattenbury, P.Welsh, T.Wills].³¹

The Melbourne Club – initially mooted at the first cricket match played in Melbourne – was established in November 1838 to cater for the needs of the 'gentlemen' of Port Phillip District, including the wealthy 'gentleman squatters' visiting Melbourne and needing accommodation. Smyth was a founding member, no doubt finding it advantageous in setting up social and commercial networks soon after arriving in Melbourne. [W.Lonsdale, W.Yaldwyn, R. Russell]³² But four years later trouble arose for Smyth at the Club.

This was an era when it was not unusual for gentlemen to seek satisfaction through duels or 'horse-whippings' when they felt their honour had been impugned. Hence, in 1842, a dispute occurred between Smyth and fellow-members Peter Snodgrass and John Woolley. As a result of financial stresses during the depression Snodgrass quarrelled with Smyth, and after Smyth 'cut' Snodgrass in Collins Street the latter sent a 'friend' Woolley to wait upon him and demand an apology or issue a challenge. "Smyth decided that Woolley was tight, refused to deal with him, and the next morning had Snodgrass and Woolley bound over to keep the peace."³³ Snodgrass, the son of a military officer of high distinction, had in 1838 been gazetted as Commissioner of Crown Lands in the Colony. "That he was rather partial to powder is evidenced by the fact that he was a prominent character in some of the early duels which came off in the Province. [Including a duel with Redmond Barry]"³⁴ The Minutes of the Melbourne Club³⁵ report on the Smyth–Snodgrass saga which polarised members, and resulted in the resignation of Smyth, and the near closure of the Club. [Appendix 1 gives a summary of the affair].

Snodgrass and Smyth had not always been at cross-purposes; at a meeting held on 3 October 1838 Smyth had seconded a proposal by Snodgrass that a Registry office be established for the hiring of servants.³⁶

The early gentlemen of Melbourne were passionate about their sporting activities; the first cricket match was played on 22 November 1838 near the foot of Batman's Hill, near the site of the present Southern Cross railway station in Spencer Street. Smyth was one of those who paid one guinea subscription to form the Melbourne Cricket Club. [R.Russell, D.G. McArthur, W.Highett]. "Arrangements had been made by the Gentlemen Civilians of the district to play a match of cricket against the Military. Captain Smyth, with the enthusiasm natural to him, and desirous of forwarding everything, either really beneficial or of useful amusement, joined by many of those who had retired from service, but whose hearts are still with it, mustered on the ground a company with which they would have attempted a more stirring contest. It was a heart-enlivening sight to witness from an adjacent hill the ground as it was laid out. Camps pitched, banners tastefully arranged, and the all-enlivening smiles of beauty that would have graced many a far-famed *tournament* of the olden times, formed a scene that we trust often again to witness. A 12 o'clock precisely, a signal called the players to their post, when the game commenced – the Military taking the first innings. ... On the whole the game was played with an *esprit de corps*, a judgement, and an activity, that a first-rate club in England might not be ashamed to boast of."³⁷

Smyth was also active in the Port Phillip Turf Club, set up in 1840, being elected to the committee to manage and arrange races, and to act as a steward. [W.Highett, R.Russell, W.Yaldwyn, H.Gisborne].³⁸

Land purchases in Melbourne

Smyth was the co-owner with Benjamin Baxter of land in Brunswick Street, Fitzroy, subdivided in 1839. It is possible that Brunswick Street was named after him.³⁹ Robert Russell [fellow member of the 1839 committee], surveyor and architect, said of Smyth “He it was who named Brunswick Street Collingwood ... having bought suburban allotments 48 ...”.⁴⁰

It is also possible that the locality of Brunswick was named after Smyth; *Place Names of Victoria*⁴¹ notes that “Blake believes that German land speculator W.F.A.Rucker [member of the 1839 Mechanics Institution committee] named his property Brunswick after Captain George Brunswick Smyth”. It has been elsewhere suggested that Brunswick might have been named in honour of the marriage of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert of the Royal House of Brunswick. A plaque in Brunswick, Melbourne, marking the site of the estate of Thomas Wilkinson, states “Brunswick was named in 1840 from a house built on this site which was owned and occupied by Thomas Wilkinson ‘Father of Brunswick’ and named after Caroline, Duchess of Brunswick, wife of King George IV of England”.

Smyth was one of the early Heidelberg settlers. He purchased two large tracts totalling 532 acres in the Heidelberg area to which he gave the name *Chelsworth*. “He used part of the fortune he is said to have brought with him to purchase the Heidelberg land as well as Portion 1 in the Parish of Nillumbik, an estate of 958 acres on the Plenty [River] which he named *Bois Cheri*. ... In 1840 he had leased the 296 acres of *Chelsworth* south of the road, known as ‘*Chelsworth Farm*’ ... The northern section he sold in 1840 to Horatio Nelson Carrington [who had been a witness at Smyth's 1839 marriage]. Carrington fell into financial difficulties ... [and] the property came back into Smyth's hands. Smyth sold *Bois Cheri* and thereafter appears to have resided at *Chelsworth* which he developed into a fine estate. One of his favourite activities was the breeding of pedigreed Shorthorns.”⁴²

In the depression of the early 1840s “George Smyth was one of those most heavily hit by the crash. It was said that he lost £10,000. The heavy losses compelled him to call a meeting of his creditors, and the fear that he would have to seek the protection of the Insolvency Court caused him to resign as a Justice of the Peace. His letter of resignation is most sad to read. He appears to have avoided insolvency but *Chelsworth* was sold and he returned to England.”⁴³

Civil responsibilities in Port Phillip District

Although only in his mid-twenties on his arrival in Melbourne, Smyth's military background and experience, and no doubt the scarcity of suitable candidates, led to his involvement in a number of civil responsibilities.

On 13 May 1839 "Smyth, of the Mounted Police" was appointed as a military juror at the inauguration of the Melbourne Court. The first Chairman was Mr E.J.Brewster [1839 *Mechanics Institution committee member*]. N.H.Carrington, a solicitor, was appointed Crown Advocate.⁴⁴ Later in the year Carrington would be a witness at Smyth's wedding.

Another community endeavour was a proposal for a Port Phillip College. At a meeting held on 12 August 1840, Smyth was appointed to a provisional committee. [E.Brewster, W.Yaldwyn, G.Porter] Finn notes that "Anno Domini 1840 might well be termed the year of projects in Melbourne, social, commercial, intellectual, or even spiritual, for there was a handful of colonists then in Melbourne, so self-sufficient, ambitious, and hopeful that they really believed they had only to wish for anything, even an impossibility, and by some miraculous agency it would be effective. The most remarkable instance of this aerial architecture was the proposition to found a proprietary College in Melbourne, so as 'to place the means of education and the higher walks of literature within the reach of the youth of the Province'". The provisional committee was authorised to retain office until £2000 had been raised. A reserve of land (off the south east corner of the Carlton Gardens, then an open stretch of bush country) was selected by Superintendent La Trobe. The grant was never completed, due to opposition by religious organisations who regarded it as a Church of England ploy. "The collegiate prospectus fluttered for a season before the public eye, and ... vanished."⁴⁵

Smyth's participation in the business of the Melbourne Mechanics' Institution Committee

On 26 November, 1839, three days after his marriage, Smyth chaired a meeting, the report of which in the Minutes is brief, with no list of those present; the meeting was adjourned. At a meeting on 27 November Smyth was present and the Rev. James Clow chaired. The meeting discussed a Code of Laws for the Institution. [Some confusion exists in the records with conflicting dates for this meeting on 26th and 27th November, 1839].

It seems that the majority of the 1839 vice-presidents, including Smyth, accepted the opportunity to be on many committees and boards that were being established at the time. A number of these ventures appeared to have suffered through lack of input from the board members, probably aggravated by the depression of the early 1840s. The following section gives an indication of the members' many commitments, and one wonders that any were

able to fulfil their obligations to so many organisations, especially if, like Smyth, they had an occupation.

Smyth's commercial associations also involving fellow-members of the 1839 committee of the Melbourne Mechanics' Institution

An early foray into commercial activity was not successful. In June 1839 "the colonists took it into their heads to set up a bank of their own." [Melbourne and Port Phillip Bank]; at a meeting in December "the Board decided to increase the shares and capital and re-name the bank the Port Philip Bank." Smyth [Gisborne] were unsuccessful in a bid to join the Board [Directors appointed included J.Gardiner, Managing Director, [Dr F.McCrae, S.Craig, P.Welsh, Dr A.Thomson, and T.Wills.]⁴⁶

On 1 July 1839 the Melbourne Fire and Marine Insurance Company started business offering 1,000 shares at £50 each. Squatters who were directors included Smyth [J.Gardiner, J.Simpson, A.Thomson, W.Yaldwyn]. [Other directors were W.Rucker; founding directors were D.C.McArthur and Rev.J.Clow; S.Craig and W.Highett were auditors. Other 1839 committee members who were shareholders included P.Welsh and T.Wills]. Smyth bought 40 shares, a large commitment, though shareholders were required at the time to pay only a £2.10 per share.⁴⁷

Smyth was a director of the Pastoral and Agricultural Society of Australia Felix founded in January 1840. [F.McCrae (Vice President), J.Clow, A.Thomson, W.Rucker, P.Welsh, also J.Simpson, who would become President of the Mechanics' Institution in June that year, and A.McCrae, who would become a Trustee of the Institution in June was appointed Secretary]. "In those times it was a cardinal tenet of popular belief that no enterprise could prosper unless set going by good dinner, a blended baptism of post-prandial grog and oratory, and so to work the 'undertakers' went to get up a convivial celebration accordingly. It was at first intended to hold it at the *Lamb Inn* – grandmother of the now *Scott's Hotel* – where there was a tolerably large room at the time, but on measurement this was pronounced to be not sufficiently commodious, and a recently-erected store of Mr Rucker's, in Market Street, between Collins and Little Flinders Streets was finally selected as the feeding ground. This was the first Public Dinner in the colony, and it came off on 15 January. The Rev. James Clow, one of the Directors, invoked a blessing. Amongst the best speakers of the jolly evening was another clergyman, the Rev. James Forbes the first Presbyterian minister. ... The Association was born several years too soon, but it was not surprising that the premature bantling should be an abortion. Annual exhibitions were promised at Melbourne and Geelong, but the materials did not exist in the Province to produce such unconsidered results. The first show took place on 3 March, 1842 and it was a failure. The exhibits were a vast disappointment. ... On the following evening the members consoled themselves over a dinner, much less enthusiastic,

gushing and prayerful than the inauguration one." Smyth was awarded a prize for vegetables at this first show.⁴⁸

In April 1840 the Melbourne Auction Company was established to afford security and facilities for the disposal of property. Smyth was a member of a large Directorate [*F.McCrae, A.Thomson, T.Wills, W.Highett*]. The Company was "ushered into the world with every kind of flourish ... It soon shared the fate of several other old joint-stock undertakings which, starting with a Directory of ostentatious names, and less capital than expectations, very soon came to grief."⁴⁹

A meeting of merchants and other residents in Melbourne was called in March 1841 to consider the exploration and practicality of mining coal at Western Port. It was moved by George Thomas, seconded by Smyth, "that a subscription list be opened to bore for coal... to purchase shares in any company that may be formed." The meeting more than met the required amount. Smyth subscribed £30.⁵⁰ Finn reports that initial exploration was not successful.⁵¹ It is not known whether other 1839 Mechanics' Institution Committee members were involved.

Conclusion

Smyth, one of eight vice-presidents elected to the first Melbourne Mechanics' Institution committee, appeared to have attended only one meeting. The *Code of Laws* of the Institution [*believed to have been drawn up in 1840*] declared vacant any committee position following absence for three successive monthly meetings, and also reduced the number of vice-presidents to two; Smyth was not re-elected to the committee at the 1840 Annual General Meeting. Any influence Smyth might have had on the business of the Melbourne Mechanics' Institution would have been through his association with other members and their collective influence in the Port Phillip community.

At the time of his election to the 1839 committee Smyth was occupied not only with his Mounted Police duties, but with building up social and sporting networks, as well as making significant land purchases. Smyth was obviously a gregarious and popular addition to the community, and in spite of his relative youth compared to many 1839 fellow vice-presidents, who were mostly a decade older, he was quick to initiate new projects. He was described by Robert Russell, a fellow-member of the committee, as "handsome and full of life in his early days". At the time of the establishment of the Institution, in late November 1839, he would have been caught up in the obligatory social engagements prior to his marriage which took place only a few days after his election to the committee. He would have had the task of establishing a new household at a time when accommodation was primitive and scarce, even for those with some means and the right connections.

The District's depression of the early 1840s proved disastrous for Smyth, as for a number of fellow-1839 committee members, especially those whose foray into land speculation resulted in huge financial losses. Some committee members prospered, but Smyth was not one of them; the loss of his Heidelberg estate and livestock, coupled with his humiliating resignation from the prestigious Melbourne Club, resulted in Smyth and his wife returning to England, financially stressed. He died on 16 March 1845 aged 30 and was buried at St Mary, Lewisham, Kent, on 24 March 1845.⁵² That his memorial was an altar tomb, reflects the high standing of the family in the area. Robert Russell noted that "he came to an untimely end"⁵³.

Anne Marsden

Melbourne Athenaeum Archives

June 2015

Appendix 1

The Smyth & Snodgrass dispute in 1842 which nearly brought down the Melbourne Club

Notes by Anne Marsden from Minutes of the Melbourne Club 1840-1856.

Letterbook: 1842-1855, (copy) State Library of Victoria,

In 1842 trouble erupted for Smyth at the Melbourne Club as the result of a dispute with fellow-members Peter Snodgrass and John Woolley. Financial stresses during the depression had resulted in Snodgrass quarrelling with Smyth, and after Smyth 'cut' Snodgrass in Collins Street the latter sent a representative, Woolley, to wait upon Smyth and demand an apology or issue a challenge.

At a special general meeting of the Melbourne Club held on 15 June 1842, the question before the meeting "was simply whether Capt. Smyth was justified in refusing Mr Snodgrass the satisfaction he demanded." Conflicting proposals – "That Capt. Smyth be heard in defence" and "That Capt. Smyth be not heard further" – were voted upon. Smyth then read his defence. The members then voted on "whether the conduct of Capt. Smyth has been derogatory to a member of this club." In compliance with Rules of the Club, the vote was taken by ballot, the anonymity of which was probably welcomed by the members, who had been polarised by the incident. "It appeared that in a ballot of forty-two members twenty-six voted that Capt. Smyth should cease to be a member of the Club, while sixteen voted he should remain a member. As two-thirds were required for exclusion, Capt. Smyth had a majority of two in his favour.

The meeting then debated upon the allegations made by Smyth that Woolley had been drunk whilst acting as Snodgrass's 'go-between'. The meeting was adjourned for two days and re-convened on 17 June.

In the meantime Smyth appeared to have tendered his resignation. A section of the Minutes [covering a proposal that the meeting should consider whether Smyth's resignation be accepted, and an amendment by Mr Ebdon, seconded by Smyth, that Smyth's resignation be accepted] were crossed through in the Minutes.

The Minutes then record the members' agreement that Woolley's character had not been impugned by his part in the dispute between Smyth and Snodgrass. After a number of proposals and amendments the committee accepted Smyth's resignation.

The Melbourne Club appeared to be at crisis point, as further following sections of the Minutes are crossed through. Then the President, Mr Verner, gave notice of his intention to move that the Club be dissolved. He also gave notice of his intention to move “that the particulars of the last two days be expunged from the Book.” At this point, a supporter of Smyth, Mr Simpson [James Simpson, who was, through the 1840s, President of the Mechanics Institution] gave notice of his intention to resign as a member of the Club.

The Club was not dissolved. On 6 July 1842 a new President was elected to replace the founding President, Mr Verner, and a member gave notice that he would move that a Committee be appointed to revise the Rules, in the event of Mr Verner’s intended motion [?that the Club be dissolved].

Thus, this unfortunate quarrel nearly caused the closure of the Melbourne Club and must have significantly affected Smyth's standing in the Melbourne community.

Appendix 2

Notes relating to George Brunswick Smyth

Royal Historical Society of Victoria Records

[deposited 3.10.1947 by AWM Chalmers, Union Trustee Co. Austr., possibly author of unsigned notes, and co-executor of Mrs George Brunswick Smyth's Will. These papers were deposited almost 50 years after her death.]

Item	Box 37/10 MS 13939–49 /Description of item		
1	Certificate of Burial [Monumental inscriptions, St Mary, Lewisham, Kent]	Altar tomb: "Sacred to the memory of George Brunswick Smyth/Late Capt. of the 80 th Regt. Died 16 March 1845, in his 31 year."	
2	Letter from <i>Public Library, Museums & Nat.Gall. Vic.</i> 6.9.1941 to A.W.M.Chalmers, Glen Iris	Smyth, G.B. J.P. 38 born 30 Sept. 1814 3 rd surviving son of Major General Smyth m. Miss Alexander, sister of TB Alexander, the Den [<i>possibly a Melbourne Club</i>].(Constantia Matthews, 2nd daughter of Thomas Alexander, Isle of France [<i>Mauritius</i>]) m.23.11.[18]39, d.16.3.45, at Lewisham England. arrived Hobart in the barque Hope from Calcutta 5.11.37 and Port Phillip overland 2.38. Ensign 98 18.11.31. Lieutenant 4.3.36 army 80 th Captain 6.5.36 26.6.38 sold out retired 40. Windsor 38 Capt. Mounted Police 2.39 Port Phillip Commander 4th division Mounted Police 39, leave 40. Little Collins Street opposite PO 9.40 – of Bois Cheri, R.Plenty, Chelsworth – bought in 1839. Property Plenty will be sold by auction 2.8.41 Mundy & Smyth 40. Diss. 40 late farm and cattle 7.40. GBS Little Collins St.	some added pencilled margin notes
3	Certificates Genealogical chart [unsourced] purporting to be pedigree of Thomas Alexander and Grace Friend [GBS's in-laws) 4 pp	Appointment Ensign 18.10.1831 Appointment to Lieutenant 6 May 1836 Appointment to captaincy 26 June 1838 back to Katherine Parr 2 pp back to William the Conqueror 2 pp	Pencilled note on reverse "pedigree of Mrs Brunswick Smythe"
4	Burial certificate no. 2235	G.B.Smyth 24.3.1845 aged 30	

Melbourne Mechanics Institution – 1st Committee of Management 1839

George Brunswick Smyth

The Melbourne Athenaeum: <https://melbourneathenaeum.org.au/>

	St. Mary, Lewisham		
5	Free Mason certificate	Received into Free Masonry, London, 1836	
6	Note unsigned, unsourced handwritten	<p>G.B.Smyth b. 30 Sep. 1814 at New Brunswick, BC Died 16 March 1845, buried in St Mary's churchyard, Lewisham, Eng.</p> <p>Ensign 98th Reg. 18 Oct. 1831 Lieutenant 98th Reg. 4 March 1836 " 80th Reg. 6 May 1837 Captain 80th Reg. 26 June 1838</p> <p>Territorial Magistrate Port Phillip Commander Mounted Police Port Phillip</p> <p>A founder of Melbourne Cricket Club " Port Phillip Jockey Club " Agricultural Society " Melbourne Club " Masonic Lodge of Australia</p> <p>Felix</p> <p>Member of Geographical Society London 1836 Played in the first cricket match in Melbourne as capt. of the Military team versus Civilians 1838</p>	
7		[?]copper monogram stencil	
Item	Box 29/2 MS 000068 /Description of item		
	<p>Russell Collection <i>Letters to Robert Russell 1808 – 1900</i> The letter from Smyth to Russell is missing from the file, but this added note matches Russell's handwriting elsewhere on file.</p>	<p>includes signature of Smyth + note [? By Russell] George Brunswick Smyth L. 80th Reg. Known as Capt Smyth He it was named Brunswick Street Collingwood [words undecipherable] having bought suburban allotment between them. He married and went home, where he came to an untimely end. Handsome and full of life in his early days he together with Capt Baxter, Capt Mundy and Powlett originated the Melbourne club also helped the to form [?missing word] having initiated the Cricket Club.</p>	
		<p>May 14 1840 We the undersigned, H.W. Carrington on the part of Capt Smyth, and H F Gisborne for himself, do hereby agree to refer to Messrs Powlett and Simpson a dispute about the quantity of land (being portion of ? 49) and sold by Capt Smyth <i>[sic]</i> to the said H F Gisborne some months since and to say if any (?) And what sum of money is to be refunded to the said H F Gisborne</p>	

Melbourne Mechanics Institution – 1st Committee of Management 1839

George Brunswick Smyth

The Melbourne Athenaeum: <https://melbourneathenaeum.org.au/>

		Melbourne (signed) H F Gisborne May 14 1840 HW Carrington for Smythe Witness (illegible) [Note appended by R.R.] H F Gisborne Private Secretary to Sir Richard Bourke and subsequently Commissioner of Crown Lands at Port Phillip. A man of good ability, lively, pleasant and ?active. He died in India.	
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Notes made by Anne Marsden at RHSV, Melbourne Athenaeum Archives, January 2012

Appendix 3

From 1878 Pocklington (Chelsworth) Papers Suffolk Records Office, England, National Archives, UK.

(Australian Joint Copying Project M982) ⁵⁴

Item 1

Will of Constantia, wife of George Brunswick Smyth

/3/18 22

May 1900

Letters from A.W.M. Chalmers, National Mutual Buildings, Melbourne, to Colonel Frederick Pocklington, Chelsworth, stating that he is enclosing (as one of the two executors) a parcel of items (mainly silver, paintings and family Bible) here listed which Col Pocklington was left by Mrs Constantia Smyth in her will, and receipt of this parcel from Tate's Express, Melbourne.

1878/2/18 A.W.M. Chalmers

388 Tate's Express, 28 to 30 Market Street Melbourne

received two cases numbered 23828

address Col Fred Pocklington, Chelsworth Suffolk England

Melbourne May 22, 1900

Dear Sir, in terms of the Will of the late Mrs Constantia Smyth the following bequests were made to you

One silver Inkstand containing two glass ink vessels and lids, and silver candlestick with extinguisher

one small silver salver

Four silver teaspoons (with Crest)

One butter knife, One sugar tongs

Also to Colonel Henry Pocklington

One silver salver (with coat of arms)

One silver cup, with cover

One family Bible

and to Lady Maryon Wilson

One oil painting of Captain G.B. Smyth

One oil painting " " " with pony and dogs

Item 2

Pocklington family papers, National archives UK [ref. HA 552] Covering dates 1686 – 1929

Contents: deeds and related papers of the Pocklington family of Chelsworth, 1667 to 1929, concerning lands mainly in Suffolk, and estates in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire.

HA 552/1/1 Marriage settlement of the Rev Henry Sharpe Pocklington of Tyrilander, near Swansea, Glamorgan, and Amelia Georgiana Smyth, spinster, only daughter of Major General George Stracey Smyth. 1st August 1827

HA 552/2 special limited probate copy will of the Major General George Stracey Smyth Esq of Fredericton, Co. York and Province of New Brunswick, Lieutenant Governor of the Province, proved PCC 23 July 1823

HA 552/3 notice to Equity and Law Life Assurance Co of assignment of policy on life of Col George Henry Pocklington Esq of Chelsworth Hall, Lt Col 18th Regt. Of foot, to Spencer Maryon Wilson Esq. of Searles nr Fletching, Co Sussex 8 8 1871

[Maryon Wilson was possibly a descendant of Constantia's sister Amelia Pocklington]

Copied by Anne Marsden at The State Library of Victoria, Melbourne, February, 2012

¹ Spelling of Smyth/Smythe. The spelling Smyth is generally used. Edmund Finn in his *Chronicles of Early Melbourne, 1835-1852*, Melbourne, Fergusson and Mitchell, 1888, uses Smyth, with a few exceptions. Vol. 3, *The Index to Finn's Chronicles*, with biographical details by Cannon, M., uses Smythe. Most other publications use Smyth. It is likely that confusion has arisen between the identity of George Brunswick Smyth and his contemporary George Douglas Smythe, surveyor-squatter, as has occurred in some recent publications. [To confuse matters further George D. Smythe was married to the sister of Peter Welsh, a fellow-member, with George B. Smyth, of the 1839 Melbourne Mechanics' Institution Committee].

² Appendix 2, item 2: Royal Historical Society Victoria, Box 37/10 MS 13939-49, Letter 6.9.1941.

³ BDM index: *District Lewisham, Vol. 5, Page 235*.

⁴ *Historical Records of Victoria, Foundation Series*, various volumes.

⁵ Lee, M. *Naming Brunswick Street and Gertrude Street* [unpublished paper], Fitzroy History Society, Melbourne, 2012.

⁶ See Appendix 2, item 2.

⁷ Young, D.M., (D.C.B.) *Dictionary of Canadian Biography: Smyth, George Stracey*, p.3.

⁸ Lee, M., p.2, citing D.C.B.

⁹ Lee, M., p. 2, citing the will of George Stracey Smyth.

¹⁰ Lee, M., p.2, citing D.C.B.

¹¹ Quinlan, B. & H. *Chelsworth - an Illustrated Social History*. www.chelsworth.co.uk/socialhistory/walk .

¹² Appendix 2, item 3. Certificates of Commission are held at the Royal Historical Society Victoria.

¹³ Sydney Gazette 13.11.1838, p.2.

¹⁴ Appendix 3, Pocklington family papers, Item 2.

¹⁵ Regimental history website.

¹⁶ Appendix 2, item 6.

¹⁷ *Historical Records of Victoria, Foundation Series*, Vol. 3, *The Early Development of Melb. 1836–1859*, p.282.

¹⁸ *Historical Records of Victoria*, Vol. 3, p. 48.

¹⁹ *Historical Records of Victoria*, Vol. 3, p. 302.

²⁰ *Historical Records of Victoria*, Vol. 3, p. 400.

²¹ *Historical Records of Victoria*, Vol. 3, p. 62.

²² *Historical Records of Victoria*, Vol. 3, p. 544.

²³ *Historical Records of Victoria*, Vol. 3, P. 596.

²⁴ Robb, E.M. *Early Toorak and District*, Robertson & Mullens, Melbourne, 1934, p. 12-14.

²⁵ Appendix 2, item 3.

²⁶ Lee, M., p. 5, citing UK Census, 1851.

²⁷ Genealogy site *Ancestry.com* posting by Canadian descendant of Constantia 26.9.2001[loasby8@home.com].

²⁸ *Argus* 3.11.1899 Death notices.

²⁹ Appendix 2, item 2.

³⁰ Finn, E. [*Garryowen*] *Chronicles of Early Melbourne 1835 – 1852*, Fergusson & Mitchell, Melb., 1888, p. 615.

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- 31 Finn, E. p. 221.
32 Finn, E. p. 417-418.
33 De Serville, P. *Port Phillip Gentlemen*, OUP, Melbourne, 1980, p.112-114.
34 Finn, E. p. 408.
35 *Minutes of the Melbourne Club 1840-1856*. Letterbook: 1842-1855, (copy) State Library of Victoria.
36 *Port Phillip Gazette*, vol.1, no. 1, 27 October 1838, p.3.
37 Finn, E. p. 735-736.
38 Finn, E. p. 720.
39 www.yarracity.vic.gov.au *Heritage street names*.
40 Appendix 2, p.2, Robert Russell Collection of letters and notes.
41 www.museumvictoria.com.au/Municipality of Brunswick, Victoria.
42 Garden, D.S. *Heidelberg: the Land and its People* Melbourne University Press 1972, p. 27-28.
43 Garden, D.S. p. 40.
44 Finn, E. p. 87.
45 Finn, E. p. 630-632.
46 Finn, E. p. 323-324.
47 Sullivan, M. *Men and Women of Port Phillip* Hale & Iremonger, Sydney 1985 p. 63.
48 Finn, E. p. 427-428.
49 Finn, E. p. 596.
50 *Australasian Chronicle* 23.3.1841, p.2.
51 Finn, E. p. 554-556.
52 Appendix 2, items 1 & 4.
53 Appendix 2, p. 2.
54 Collections held by Suffolk Record Office, National Archive, UK (AJCP M982) SLV microfilm M982