

Simpson-Atmore Family Biographies

Emily Powis Simpson-Atmore

Emily Powis Amis was born on March 13, 1882 in South Hackney, London, England. She was the youngest child of nine, born to Eliza Louisa Amis (nee Roll) and Henry Amis. Emily's father passed away when she was six years old, and she was raised by her mother with the four remaining children in the household.

In 1905, at the age of 23, Emily married Herbert Anselm Nethercot. They moved to Canada in March of 1913 and settled into a home. At the onset of World War I, Herbert joined the Canadian military. He served in the 2nd Canadian Mounted Rifles (British Columbia Regiment). He was killed in action on May 17, 1916 in West Flanders, Belgium.

Emily returned to England, and in 1922 she married William Smith Simpson-Atmore, a Reverend and widower. Emily and William traveled extensively together, living mostly in the southern United States but visiting the southwestern U.S., Mexico, and returning often to England. William passed away on April 10, 1943 and is buried in Winslow, Arkansas. Emily continued to travel throughout the southwest in the 40's and 50's, crossing the border between the U.S. and Mexico and living in Arkansas until finally settling in Washington, IA in the early 1960's. She passed away while living at the Halcyon House in Washington, Iowa on December 17, 1968 at the age of 86. She donated her collection of southwestern Native American artifacts to the Washington Public Library in 1964 with no additional information as to their provenance.

Rev. William Smith Simpson-Atmore

William Smith Simpson-Atmore was born in Cape Town, South Africa on July 5, 1863 to Robert Atmore and Elizabeth Simpson. He and his three older brothers were raised by their father and stepmother, Martha Atmore, and educated in Hingham, Norfolk, England. In 1884, at the age of 21, William moved to the United States, where he attended Seminary at The University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee. In June of 1888, he was ordained an Episcopalian priest by Bishop Edwin Gardner Weed (1846-1924). On May 15, 1889, he married Anne Howze Milton (1859-1920), the daughter of former Florida Governor John Milton (1807-1865) in Jackson, Florida. In 1920, Rev. Simpson-Atmore's wife, Anne, died. Two years later, he remarried British native, Emily Powis Cotton, who donated the offered lot and others to the Washington, Iowa Public Library in 1964.

Rev. William Smith-Atmore traveled widely and was pastor, rector, superintendent and warden at a variety of Episcopal Churches and institutions in the United States including: Church of the Good Shepherd Jacksonville, Florida, 1890-1898, St. Lukes, Kearney, Nebraska, circa 1899-1900, Trinity Episcopal Church, Hattiesburg, Mississippi, 1911-1921, and Helen Dunlap Memorial School For Mountain Girls (Warden), Winslow, Arkansas, circa 1922-1938. Simpson-Atmore was also, at one time, the U.S. Episcopalian Secretary for the Propagation of the Gospels in the United States. Furthermore, his ordaining bishop (Edwin Weed) was known as the missionary bishop; as over 77 missions were founded during his episcopate. Little is known about his whereabouts during the period of 1900-1910, roughly the period in which the donated artifacts would all seem to date. The group of 11 albumen print photographs in the collection would seem to date to this time period as well and depict various scenes of the Arizona Territory with period inscriptions on verso. One of the photos, which is inscribed as "Apache woman in front of Trading Post-Whiteriver Agency, Arizona", also depicts a white man in attire typical (hat and bow tie) of a gentleman circa 1900. Based on a known photograph of Rev. William Smith Simpson-Atmore, it is plausible that the figure depicted is him. It is not difficult to presume then that with his background as Secretary for the Propagation of the Gospels and the missionary zeal of the day that Rev. Simpson-Atmore would have been drawn to the missionary territory of Arizona (and his wife to the dryer warmer climate). As such, it would seem likely these items were acquired by him while traveling there at that time.

In 1920, while serving as priest-in-charge of the Trinity Episcopal Church in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, his wife Emily passed away (September 25, 1920). She is buried in Marianna, Florida. William remained as priest-in-charge of Trinity Episcopal until 1922, when the church achieved parish status.

On December 19, 1921, William traveled to the United Kingdom. A few short months later, on March 22, 1922, William married Emily Powis Cotton (shortened from Nethercot, nee Amis) in Dorset, England. They departed England for New York in May of 1922 and traveled throughout the United States and abroad together. William and Emily kept permanent residence in Winslow, Arkansas, where William passed away on April 10, 1943. He is buried at the Saint Stephens Episcopal Cemetery in Winslow, Arkansas.



All biographical information culled from Ancestry Library Edition records, Find A Grave, and Jackson's Auction provenance research.

Research completed by Library Director Debbie Stanton and Jackson's Auction. If you would like any primary records based on the Simpson-Atmore biographies, please contact the library.