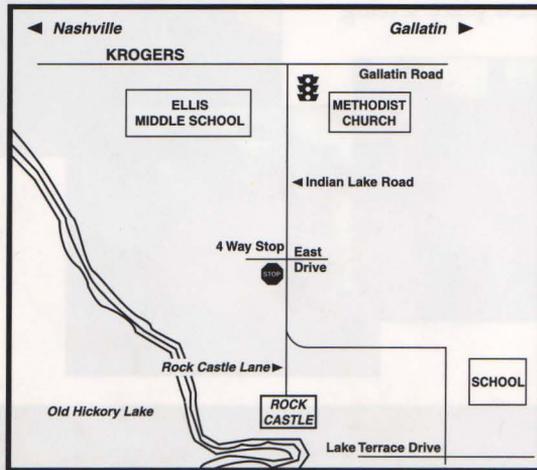


The Visitors Center

This building, constructed in 1975, is the first stop on your visit to Historic Rock Castle. You can purchase tickets here for a tour of the house and grounds and enjoy orientation to the site through a display of interpretive panels. You can also browse in the Gift Shop, stocked with selected items which are representative of the era when the Smiths lived at Rock Castle. The Visitors Center also houses the staff offices and a meeting room.



Daily Guided Tours

Admission Charged

Student, Senior & Group Rates Available

For Group Tours and Special appointments,

Call - (615) 824-0502

e-mail: rkcastle@bellsouth.net

Operating Schedule

Days & hours of operation vary by season

Please call (615) 824-0502 for current hours.

Always closed Mondays.

Watch for Daniel Smith Days, a two day period re-enactment and Colonial Fair the last weekend of September on the Rock Castle grounds.

Grounds & Pavilion rental available for weddings and special events.

www.historicrockcastle.com

Historic Rock Castle



*A magnificent seven level
hand hewn limestone structure
on Old Hickory Lake*

circa 1790

*on the National Register
of Historic Places*

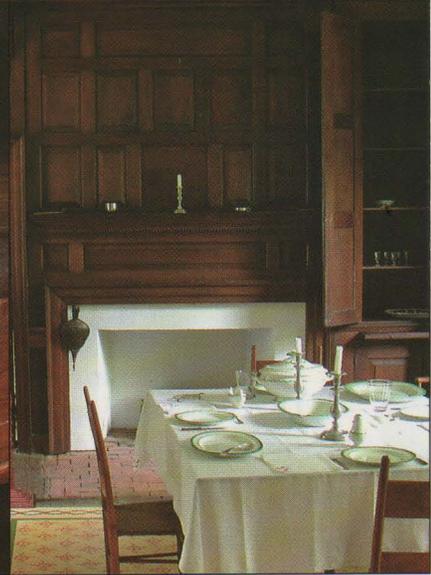
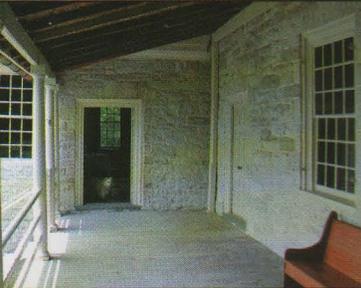
Hendersonville, Tennessee

The Furnishings

Rock Castle reflects in its furnishings a simple lifestyle of culture and good taste. The furniture and many accessories are late eighteenth-century antiques typical of the furnishings Daniel and Sarah owned.

Three original pieces; a blanket chest, a desk, and a sugar chest belonged to Smith. They are in the refined, Hepplewhite style. A recent discovery on the property, an earthenware shard of 1780s style green flame edged creamware, has led to the addition of a new place setting at the dining room table.

The family Bible, private letters, and Daniel Smith's library of over two hundred books are in the collection and have proved valuable for research on the life and character of Daniel and Sarah Smith.



The Details

Of special significance are the floor-to-ceiling, black walnut cupboards built into the fireplace walls in several of the rooms, a rarity for Tennessee homes of this early period. Along with the fine joinery work throughout the house, they show the skilled craftsmanship of Smith's nephews, Smith and Peter Hansborough.

The History & The Family

Daniel Smith was born in Stafford County, Virginia, to Henry and Sarah Crosby Smith. He grew up on a plantation in Virginia.

Daniel studied "physic" or medicine with Dr. Thomas Walker while living at the Walker home, Castle Hill, in Albemarle County, Virginia. He most likely acquired his learning in other fields such as surveying, law, and mathematics from Walker as well. After being licensed as a surveyor by the College of William and Mary, Smith took up that profession and began his work in 1770.

In 1773 Daniel married Sarah Michie. They had two children. Their son, George, married Tabitha Donelson, oldest daughter of Captain John Donelson, III. Their daughter, Mary Ann (Polly) married Samuel Donelson, Rachel Jackson's brother. Although forbidden by her father, Polly's marriage was the result of a very elaborate elopment plot carried out by her intended Samuel Donelson and brother in law Andrew Jackson in the late spring of 1796. It resulted in strained relations between all parties concerned, but the differences were later resolved. Of her three sons from that marriage, Andrew Jackson Donelson served as private secretary for Andrew Jackson at the White House and Daniel Smith Donelson was a General in the Civil War.

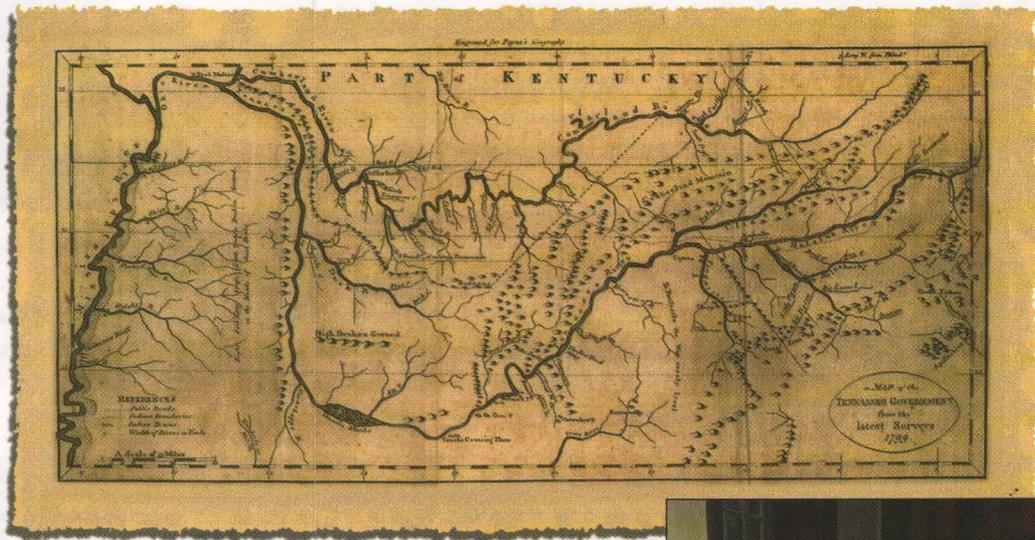
Daniel Smith received a land grant from the State of North Carolina in payment for surveying land boundaries in Middle Tennessee, which he completed in 1784. To claim his land, he brought his family to this site and began construction of Rock Castle. Much of the construction supervision as well as plantation management was shouldered by Sarah since for most of their married life Daniel was gone for long periods on surveying trips.

Daniel Smith died in 1818 at his home. Sarah died in 1831, and both are buried in the family cemetery on the grounds of Rock Castle.

In addition to being a well-known surveyor of the North Carolina (now Tennessee) boundaries and of Davidson County, Daniel served as a Captain in the Revolutionary War, Brigadier General of the Mero District, Secretary of the Territory of the United States Southwest of the River Ohio, chairman of the committee to draft the constitution of Tennessee, United States Senator, and Indian treaty negotiator.

In 1793 Daniel Smith authored a pamphlet on the new Tennessee territory, which was followed by his map of the land west of the Cumberland Mountains and its many water courses. This map of the "TENNESSEE GOVERNMENT" was widely published well into the nineteenth century.

Smith was called upon in 1784 to help survey the city of Nashville. In 1785 he was one of nine trustees appointed



for Davidson Academy, the first institution of higher learning in Nashville.

In 1798 he was appointed to serve Andrew Jackson's remaining term in the United States Senate. He then ran for the Senate in 1805 and defeated the incumbent, William Cocke.



The Site & Architecture

Located on Old Hickory Lake in Hendersonville, Rock Castle is two miles south of Gallatin Road (Highway 31E) off Indian Lake Road. It remains one of Tennessee's most important structures of the early Republic. Its noteworthy architectural character reflects the taste of a man of culture and education who chose to build a new life for himself and his family on the frontier.

The once 3,140 acre plantation now consists of 18 acres, the house, a smokehouse and cemetery. The creation of Old Hickory Lake in the 1950's claimed other existing outbuildings.

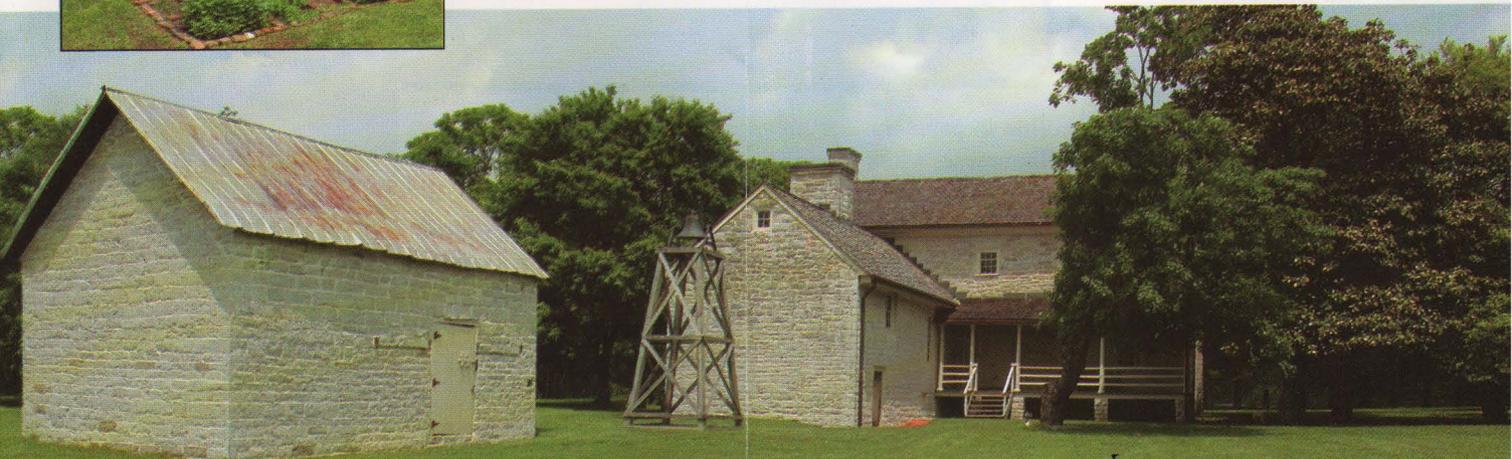
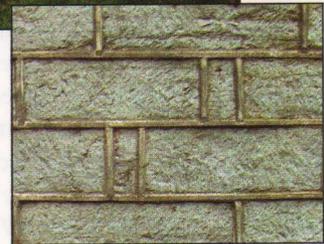
The architectural style is a simple and pleasing blend of Georgian and Federal periods. It has its origins in the colonial homes of Virginia, Daniel Smith's birthplace.

The original unit, built in the mid 1780's, consisted of two rooms. The family lived in these while other rooms were added. By 1796 the multi-level stone dwelling was complete; it is comprised of seven rooms—four downstairs and three upstairs—along with a usable basement and attic.

Rock Castle was raised from the land itself. The great limestone blocks were quarried nearby. The wood for the house came from virgin walnut, ash, cedar, cherry and poplar trees on the property. The front features

beautifully flat hewn limestone block layed in level rows with ridge point mortar.

The height of luxury for a frontier home in its day, its 22" thick stone walls have stood the test of time preserving this treasure for all to enjoy today.



THIS SITE IS OWNED BY THE STATE OF TENNESSEE. IT IS MANAGED AND INTERPRETED BY THE "FRIENDS OF ROCK CASTLE", A PRIVATE, NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION EMPLOYING A PROFESSIONAL MUSEUM STAFF AIDED BY VOLUNTEERS.