

[Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters](#)

Bounty Land Claim for Matthew Smith BLWt200-300 VA  
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 26 July 2021.

Virginia, Frederick County Ss

On this day Edward Smith Esq personally appeared before me William Davison one of the Justices of the peace in & for the County aforesaid and made oath as followeth that Matthew Smith formerly an officer in the continental line during the revolutionary war received a wound at the battle of German town in the year [blank; Battle of Germantown PA, 4 Oct 1777] & of which wound he died soon after in the Town of Reading in the State of Pennsylvania. That the said Matthew Smith never was married & that by the then existing Laws of Virginia Augustine I. Smith the son of Augustine Smith, the elder Brother of the said Matthew, became his Heir, & as such has always been acknowledged by his relations – To the truth of the above statement the said Edward Smith Esq. made oath & added his signature this 18<sup>th</sup> day of March 1805 [signed] E Smith

Whereas Matthew Smith deceased late a Captain in the first Regiment of the Continental Line of the State of Virginia on the passing of a certain Bill now before Congress, into a Law of the United States will be entitled to a Land Warrant for Three hundred Acres of Land in the Tract allotted for satisfying United States army bounty Lands; and whereas Augustine I. Smith of the County of Fairfax in the State of Virginia Heir at Law of said Matthew Smith for divers just and good causes thereunto him moving and for five shillings in hand to him paid the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged [several illegible words] Indenture bearing date the twenty first day of February one thousand eight hundred and five doth assign sell, give and set over unto John Smith of Frederick County in the State of Virginia to him his heirs and assigns forever all and singular, the warrant for Three hundred Acres of Land, and the said Augustine I. Smith doth hereby request and authorise the issuing of a Land Warrant for the said three hundred Acres in the Name of John Smith Assignee of Augustine I Smith Heir at Law of Matthew Smith aforesaid. [signed] Aug I Smith

[From [bounty-land records in the Library of Virginia.](#)]

We do hereby Certify that Matthew Smith esquire who was killed at the Battle of German Town, the 4<sup>th</sup> day of October 1777; was at that time acting as Deputy Adjutant General of the Army of the United States, and whose appointment had been previously announced in General Orders. In virtue of this appointment, and in Conformity with the Regulations of the Army, Mr. Smith had the rank of a Major by Brevet. We further Certify that Mr. Smith was entitled to the rank of a Captain in the first Virginia Regiment, on Continental establishment.

Given under our hands this 15<sup>th</sup> day of December 1794  
James Wood [BLWt2419-500] late B.G.  
E Meade late ADC to Genl Lincoln [Everard Meade  
BLWt2063-300 Aide de Camp to Gen. Benjamin Lincoln]

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The top signature is 'James Wood' written in a cursive style. Below it is the signature 'E Meade' also in cursive. There are some faint marks above the 'James Wood' signature, possibly initials or a date.

[From [rejected claims in the Library of Virginia.](#)]

To his Excellency the Acting Governor of Virginia  
Your Memorialist respectfully represents to your Excellency that Mathew Smith his great Uncle entered the army in the war of the revolution as he believes at a very early period in the capacity of a Lieutenant in one of the Regiments of the Virginia line he is led to believe in the 1st Va Regiment. That he rose by promotions or otherwise to a Captain in the line and also to a staff appointment in the grand army under

the immediate command of general Washington the precise rank or grade not known to your Memorialist. And while acting in such staff Capacity was killed at the battle of Germantown while bearing a flag of truce to the British commander then defending himself within Chew's stone house being at the time a single and unmarried man that [blank] Smith his Eldest brother became his heir at law who departed this life leaving an only son named Augustine Smith as his heir at law and who also departed this life about [blank] years ago intestate leaving the following Children to wit. Augustine J. of Clarksburg Va. David B. William T, Robert J. Elizabeth J. Margaret B. Heriott[?] (widow) Susan A Rose (widow) all of Alexandria District of Columbia. Mary J wife of Jacob Morgan of Shepherdstown Va, Susan T wife of [blank] R Mason King George Co Va, and Jane Allice[?] wife of Doct. Alex. Mason Falmouth Co and all believed to be now living as his only heirs at law

Your memorialist believing that his said great Uncle Mathew Smith acquired in right of his services as above named a right to more bounty land from Virginia than has heretofore been received in right of his said services. Therefore your memorialist in behalf of himself and his coheirs prays your Excellency to cause his Claim to be investigated and that you will grant him and them the allowance of any additional bounty land to which their said great Uncle shall have acquired a right by virtue of his said services and your memorialist as in Duty bound will ever pray.

Robt. J. Smith

[9 April 1841]

Mathew Smith entered the Provincial service on the 18<sup>th</sup> September 1775 as a 2<sup>d</sup> Lieutenant in Captain John Sayres [VAS4364; company raised in Gloucester County] Company 1<sup>st</sup> Virginia Reg't. and was commissioned on Continental establishment 23<sup>d</sup> of January 1776. He rose to the rank of Captain in the 1<sup>st</sup> Virginia Continental Reg't, became a Deputy Adjutant General, and fell while bearing a flag of truce at the Battle of Germantown, on the 4 October 1777. See extract from Washington papers herewith filed, and "Lees Memoirs of Southern Campaign" page 22 [see second endnote]. His heirs have drawn the land which would have been due to him as a Captain only. They now claim the additional quantity to which he was entitled as a Colonel from the 18<sup>th</sup> September 1775 until the end of the war. To sustain this claim they refer to the long settled and well established practice of the Executive of Virginia to allow to staff officers the Bounty Land to which commissioned officer of the same rank were entitled – a practice fully sustained by the authority of numerous Resolutions of Congress. See Resolution of Congress 1 Aug 1782 giving Deputy Adjutant Gen'ls \$75 per month the same pay of a full Col. of Infantry. Cong[ressional] Journal Vol 4 p 56. In relation to other staff officers see Resolution 5 June 1776 Journal 1 Vol 365 & 24 March 1777 Vol 2 p 65. Vol: 4 p 43 which last resolution gave to aids and Brigade Majors "the pay and emoluments of of a Major in the line". Accordingly we find that Congress by a resolution of the 5<sup>th</sup> March 1776 Jour'1 1 Vol p 279 having given to Thomas Bullitt [sic: Thomas Bullitt VAS2760] of Virginia Deputy Adjutant General the rank of Lieut Colonel, and by resolution of the 18<sup>th</sup> May 1776 Journ'1 Vol 1 p 347, and 22<sup>d</sup> February 1777 Vol 2 p 47 the rank of a full Colonel, the Executive of Virginia gave his heirs the land bounty due a Colonel. Again Presley Nevalle [sic: Presley Neville (Nevill) BLWt1596-300], a Captain only in the Va line, but aid to Gen'l Lafayette, drew Land as Lt Colonel, as early as 24 November 1782, nearly one year before the war ended, and his heirs have recently drawn additional land for his services as Lieut Colonel for 8 years, and two months. Again Valentine Peers [VAS155], a Lieut of the line, but either Aid, or Brigade Major, drew land as Major, as did also Francis T. Brooke [S8093] & John T. Brooke [VAS2675], both of whom were staff officers, the latter a Brigade Major, and many others cases of the same kind might be cited.

H. L. Brooke Counsel for Memorialist/ May 5<sup>th</sup> 1841

A List of Officers in the first and second Battalions of Virginia Forces, while on Provincial Establishment, with the Date of their Commissions. [extract]

Captains	first Lieutenants	second Lieutenants	Ensigns	Date of Provincial Commission
John Seayres	Goodrich Crump	Matthew Smith	Nathaniel Burwell	September 18 <sup>th</sup> 1775

A List of Captain and Subaltern Officers in the Virginia Service dates of Comissions &c'a &c'a [extract]

What regiment	Captains	1 <sup>st</sup> Lieutenants	2 <sup>d</sup> Lieutenants	Ensigns	Dates of Commissions 1776	Promoted &c'a
1 <sup>st</sup>	John Sayres	Goodrich Crump	Matthew Smith	Nathaniel Burwell	Jany 22 <sup>d</sup>	Sayres prom'd

A true copy from the original Lists in the War Office, I. Nourse Clk.

1841 May 25 Rejected

NOTES:

In the pension file a typed summary includes the following: "The records of this office show that Matthew Smith was a Captain in the 1st Virginia Regiment, and was wounded at the battle of Germantown, when carrying a flag by order of General Washington, to 'Chew's House', which wound caused his death about three weeks later in Reading, Pennsylvania."

The reference to Smith by Lee is as follows: "A flag of truce was instantly dispatched to summon the British colonel, while appropriate bodies of troops were prepared to compel his submission. As had been suggested, the summons was disregarded by Musgrave, who persevered in his judicious defences: and Captain Smith, of the first Virginia regiment, deputy adjutant-general, bearing the flag, fell with it waving in his hands. Thirsting after military fame, and devoted to his country, he obeyed with joy the perilous order; advanced through the deadly fire pouring from the [Chew] house, presuming that the sanctity of his flag would at length be respected; fain expectation! he fell before his admiring comrades, a victim to this generous presumption" Lee, Henry. *Memoirs of the War in the Southern Department of the United States*. New York: University Publishing Company, 1869, pp 96-97.