

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

Pension Application of Joseph Smith R9780

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

State of Kentucky } SS

Jefferson County }

On the Seventeenth day of March in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty five personally appeared in open Court now sitting in the County of Jefferson State of Kentucky & City of Louisville Joseph Smith a Resident of said County in the Eightyeth year of his age who Being Duly Sworn on the Evangelist of Almighty God does make the following Declaration in order to obtain the Benefit of the act of Congress Pased June 7th AD 1832

That in the year Seventeen hundred and Seventyeight he was then a Resident of Rockingham County and State of Virginia and in that same year he Received a Commission as first Lieutenant of the Militia Signed By his Exelency the Governor Patrick Henry and was Sworn into office By the Clerk of the Court of Said County which Commission he has safely kept and this day Produced in open Court and is Dated Twenty first day of May in the Second year of the Commonwealth A.D. 1778 Signed P. Henry. And the said Joseph Smith further states that the Militia was caled on about the Eight or Tenth of November in the year seventeen hundred and Eighaty at which date or Time he went into the Army a Volunteer holding his command and office as Lieutenant and was under the command of Colonel William Dark up to the date of his Discharge. and the said Joseph Smith Also produces in our said Court Now Sitting his Discharge which he Received from the hands of his Commanding officer Col. William Dark By order of General Stephens [sic: Edward Stevens], Being discharged at Camp Near West Point [in Virginia] August Seventeenth 1781 And this Applicant Lieutenant Joseph Smith states upon Oath That he is the same Joseph Smith that is Named on the face of the Commission so signed By the Govoner P. Henry and that he has Carefully Keptd it since and he further makes oath he is the same Joseph Smith that Received the Discharge that is here produced and Dated Camp Near West Point Seventeenth August 1781 and signed William Dark Col. By Order of Gen'l. Stephens

And Lieutenant Joseph Smith makes Oath that he served his Country as Lieutenant in the Revolutionary Ware about One year and eight months up To the Date of his discharge

But while in the Army he Always held the commission of first Lieutenant he went in as Lieutenant and was Discharged as Lieutenant he Further States his mind is much Impaired his Recollection fails to serve him and he Does Not know of Even one man now living who served with him and By whom he can Prove his Services. [signed] Joseph Smith

Interrogatories Prescribed By the War Department propounded By the Said Court

Question 1st.

Where and in what year was you Born

Ans I was Born in Orrange [sic: Orange] County and State of Virginia in the years 1754 or 1755 I cannot Be Qualified as to the precise Date But know it was Early in 55 or la[edge of page]

Ques 2^d.

Have you any Record of your age and if so where is it

Answer The Book of Record of the ages of my Fathers Family was lost or Burnt and my age is only known to me By the word I Received of Fathers when I was a man which I have always Believed to Be Correct which Date make me Now in my Eighatyith years

Question 3^d. Where were you living when caled into Service where have you lived since the Revolutionary War and where do you now live

Answer I lived in Rockingham County & State of State of Virginia where I lived many years I then moved To Fayette County Kentucky in the year 1794 I then moved to Shelby County Ky

where I lived until February last 1835 and since February I lived where I Now live in Jefferson County Kentucky

Question 4th. How were you Called into Service Where were you Drafted Did you Volunteer or or was you a Substitute

Answer I was Called into Service By orders of Colonel Noll [sic: William Nolle] the Colonel Commanding the Militia of Rockingham County of which I Belonged and By Him Rendavoused at Rockingham and Put under the Command of Colonel William Dark [sic: William Darke] in whose Regiment I Served

Question 5th. State the names of the Regular officers who were with the Troops where you served such Continental and Militia Regiment as you can Recollect and the General Circumstances of your Services

Answer My Recollection is so much Impaired I am unable to state much on this subject I once had a perfect Recolection of many of the officers But can Give you no Posative Relation on this Subject

Question 6th. Did you Ever Receive a Commission if so By whome was it Given or Signed and what Become of it

Answer I Received a Commission as first Lieutenant Dated twenty first day of May 1778 and Signed P Henry

Question 7th. State the Names names of the persons to whom you are known in your present neighborhood and who can Testify as to your Charactor for Veracity and their belief as to your services as a Soldier of the Revolution

answer My late Removal to this County affords me less opportunity to produce this last Requisition But State John McCollough

The COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

TO Mr. Joseph Smith GREETINGS

KNOW you, that from the special Trust and Confidence which is reposed in your Patriotism, Fidelity, Courage, and good Conduct, your are, by these Presents, constituted and appointed First Lieutenant of Militia in the County of Rockingham. You are therefore carefully and diligently to discharge the Duty of First Lieutenant of the Militia, by doing and performing all manner of Things thereunto belonging; and you are to pay a ready Obedience to all Orders and Instructions which from Time to Time you may receive from the Governour, or executive Power of this State for the Time being, or any of your superiour Officers, agreeable to the Rules and Regulations of the Convention or General Assembly. All Officers and Soldiers under your Command are hereby strictly charged and required to be obedient to your Orders, and to aid you in the Execution of this Commission, according to the Intent and Purport thereof.

Witness *Patrick Henry*, Esquire, Governour or Chief Magistrate of the Commonwealth aforesaid, at *Williamsburg*, this Twenty First Day of May in the Second Year of the Commonwealth, *Anno. Dom. 1778*

[signed] P. Henry

Camp near west point Aug't. 17th 1781

Lieut Joseph Smith from the County of Rockingham having no Command in that County Militia there being an over perpasion[?] of Officers for the number of men, the [illegible word] to Command became a supernumery and is therefore discharged and has permission to leve the Army by order of Gen'l.

Stephens

[signed] Wm. Darke

NOTE:

The following undated and unsigned document regarding Cap'tn. Joseph Smith of the Maryland regular army is misfiled with the papers of Lt. Joseph Smith of the Militia of Rockingham County VA.

Contrary to the statement herein, Heitman's *Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army During the War of the Revolution* states that Capt. Joseph Smith served from 31 May 1777 until he retired 1 Jan 1781. Capt. Joseph Smith is here confused with Capt. John Smith, who killed Lt. Col. James Stuart at the Battle of Guilford Courthouse on 15 Mar 1781.

Cap'n Joseph Smith of Baltimore belonged to that part of the revolutionary army called the "Maryland line" which was commanded, I think by Gen'l. [Mordecai] Gist of Frederick Co. Maryland Cap'tn. Smith served through the whole war & lived 'till 1818. His commission & other papers, were placed in the hands of a Mr Jno Gray claim agent in Was. City – who was recommended by the Hon Liem[?] Boyd member of Congress from Kentucky who was so sure of the success of the claim that he wrote to the heirs to inquire where they would have the money deposited – about that time he died very suddenly with cholera & the papers were never recovered. Cap'tn smith left three children, Caroline H Smith, Louis F. Smith & Elizabeth A Smith who afterwards married John B Anderson both L. F. Smith & Mrs. Anderson are dead, L. F. Smith died without heirs Mrs. Anderson left H. B. Anderson, Mrs. Florence Anderson Clark & Miss Ellen Anderson. Very few of Captn Smiths old companions are left but I suppose the records at Was. give an account of his services. He was a member of the Society of Cincinnati & met regularly every 4th of July until his death In an old number of Harpers magazine in an article on N. Carolina by Porte Crayon there was a description of the battle of Guilford Courthouse in which Cap'tn. Smith was in command of his regiment in the absence of his Col. he stated the gallantly of Capt Smith in killing the British Col. with his sword turned the tide in favor of Americans. The heirs have never received any thing for their fathers services.

Lieut Joseph Elliott Smith eldest son of Cap'tn Joseph Smith, died before his father, he left no family but has one sister living & the heirs of Mrs. Elizabeth Anderson, who desire a private act for their benefit; never having recieved any thing for his services or their fathers –

N.B. Mr. Gray said in examining the papers of the society of Cincinnati he identified our Cap'tn Smith from another of the same name. We copy from the obituary of Lieut Joseph E Smith published in the Baltimore American "some extracts written by Edward G Woodyear Esq'r of Balt. "The recent annals of our Navy have presented so unbroken a succession of brilliant victories achieved with comparatively trifling loss as to excite throughout the country a pure & almost unmingled sentiment of triumph & congratulation But there is in human affairs no security against accident or misfortune & we have been summoned to the melancholy office of mourning the loss of Lieut Joseph E Smith. The glory which he created for himself & his country in the ever memorable battle of Lake Erie will long survive his loss, he was taken sick after the battle & received a furlough from his brave commander (Perry) to visit his friends & relatives but alas: the unrelenting hand of death overtook him at Pittsburg & closed his mortal existence in the 24th year of his age, beloved & resped by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance"

"Lieut Smith was a young man of great promise & died regretted as he lived beloved by all who knew him, he was the pride of his family, the idol of his associates & promised to be an ornament to his country, and an able as he had always been a zealous defender of her rights & liberties He received a liberal education & commenced the study of law but desirous of giving his country his feeble but willing aid in the maintenance of that independence which his father had fought & bled to obtain, he entered the navy of the U. S. as midshipman in which capacity he served until after the declaration of war against G. Britain when he was promoted to a Lieutenancy & ordered to Lake Erie where he shared with the gallant Perry in the honors & dangers of that splendid victory –

Having suffered in his health from the service on the Lake he obtained a furlough to return to the southward for its restoration, but alas, he was not permitted by the all-wise providence to reach the place of his destination, his strength failed him at Pittsburg & whence in two weeks his manly soul threw off its earthly mantle and winged it flight to happier regions.