

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

Pension Application of William Smith R9872

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

[The following appears to be in the handwriting of the applicant. Punctuation and capitalization partly corrected.]

William Smith deposeth and saith that his father frances Smith [Francis Smith] kept a register of the ages of his Children and On examination of that register I find his Son william Smith was born the fourteenth December One thousand Seven hundred and fifty five, en the year One thousand Seven hundred and Seventy five I Wm Smith removed from hanover County the place of my nativity to the County Louisa in January One thousand seven hundred and eighty one I recieved a letter from Mr. Jefferson then governor of Virginia under date January eighteenth one thousand seven hundred and eighty one a true copy of which marked A may be seen. The original letter lost or misplaced emediately on the receipt of the letter alluded to I waited on Colo. [James] Wood at Charlotsville, albemarl County [sic: Charlottesville in Albemarle County] Colo. Wood commanded the guards of the prisoners called borgoines troops [sic: Convention Army surrendered by Gen. John Burgoyne at Saratoga on 17 Oct 1777 and brought to Albemarle Barracks in Jan 1779] Colo. Wood informed me he was disappointed in giting the gunsmith he expected without loss of time. I waited on Mr. Jefferson and reported to him. The result of the trip I then was requested without delay to git gunsmith in the Countary where they wer to be had to repare the publick armes at there own Shops I knew of many good workmen then ingagued in repareing and makeing guns on there private interest, I waited on them Shewed them Mr. Jeffersons letter above alluded to on the faith of which I engaged william Duggin, James hall [pension application S6946], Joseph Spicer [S14554] and James Sea [sic: James Seay, W8038] then at work in Wm. Duggens Shop, hanover County. John higgason I employed hanover County. matthew barnard fluvanna [County] Wm. James goochland [County] an Englishman. William and frances gidens Louisa [County]. Joel higgins Carroline [sic: Caroline County] Many other persons worked on the publick armes in the Shops of the princepal persons I have mentioned. I reported to Col. Wm. Davies [William Davies] the men employed by me, to repare the publick armes, Col. Davis had Charge of the War department in Virginia at this time. I was requested by Col. Davis to Superintend the persons I had ingagued & to report to him how the work progresed from time to time. I knew of a large number of dammaged armes depossited in the prison at hanover Courthouse, I sent them on to the persons I employed. when they were repared, they were recieved and others sent as directed. the work went on with Sperrit until the Surrender of Conwalles at Yorktown [sic: Cornwallis, 19 Oct 1781] after which prospects was favourable for piece & independence, the repares of publick armes went on, but not with that Sperrit it had done Colo. Davies thought proper to continue the gunsmiths in Service, all of those I employed is dead or removed to some of the United States except James hall Joseph Spicer & James Seay so fair as I know or believe and they ar verry old and enferm and have spuported good charactors through life. I furnished my own horse and paid my own money while in publick service. the money then in Circulation was worth but Little I donot know nor do I believe the men I employed received any thing for the work done for the publick, I paid them money Colonel William davies alluded to in the forgoing part of this my statement has been dead many years. War he liveing no doubt but kould obtane a Cirtificate to elucidate or fully establish to the sattisfaction of the officer to settle the justice of my clame. the quatermaster General at the time I was ingagued in publick service is long since dead. he well knew the servings[?] I was ingagued in. he lived in the City Richmond. it is generally known that Mr. Jefferson is dead. I know of no other persons liveing by whom I can prove that I am the Identical Wm Smith that Mr. Jefferson addressed the letter alluded to in the forgoing part of this my declaration but James hall, Joseph Spicer, and James Seay, I made no Contract positively with any person. how or in what manner I was to be remunerated, but had confidence at some

time or other I should be noticed and paid by my country, I leave the whole business to be settled by the officer appointed to settle such claims and mine and will be satisfied with what is done for his Ob't. Serv't.

at this late time of life it is difficult to write so }
as to be understood. my nerves is much affected }

[signed] William Smith
August 1833

Richmond, January 18th 1781.

Mr. William Smith

Sir, You will be pleased to proceed into the Country, and engage eight gun smiths, and one good Black Smith (a white man) to come immediately to work with Mr. Anderson in the repairs of Arms. Should you be able to find any good and faithful hands, who tho' unwilling to come here, would undertake to repair such arms as should be sent to them, you will be pleased to engage them and to know what number of Arms we may send them for the first month, at the end of which they shall be sent for and others carried. In this case I think it necessary that some good gentleman in the neighbourhood be applied to to superintend their proceedings, to keep them to the public work, and to report to us from time to time what progress they make; whether they do their work faithfully, and whether they do so much as to render it worth our while to continue to employ them. Those who come here shall receive a liberal hard money pay by the day. Those who undertake to repair at their own shops shall be paid by the piece at the old hard money prices, according to the rate of Exchange. It will be best for you to proceed first to Col. Wood at the Barracks and get those he expected to furnish

(Signed) T. J.

Executive Department

Richmond Va 13 October 1832

The foregoing is copied from a book in this department containing letters from Mr Jefferson when Governor of Virginia to different persons – [illegible word] the note signed in full by Mr Jefferson is undoubtedly a copy of a letter addressed by him to Mr Wm Smith

Wm A Richardson Secy Com'th

I certify that Mr William Smith employed me to repair the public arms. I proceeded to repair the armes in the shop of William Duggin, who was employed by Mr. Smith. On the faith of a letter under date, the eighteenth of January, one thousand seven hundred and eighty one sign'd Thomas Jefferson. Mr Duggin carried on the work largely, he had many hands engaged in the work. Mr. Smith superintended the work sent on arms from time to time as wanted, and received such as was repaired. Mr. Duggin continued to repair the public arms to the end of the war. He has been dead many years. Given under my hand 18th October One thousand eight hundred and thirty two

[signed] Joseph Spicer

I certify that Mr William Smith employ'd me to repair the public armes, I immediately proceeded to the work on the credit of a letter under date, eighteenth Jany One thousand seven hundred and eighty one. Sign'd Thomas Jefferson. William Smith superintended the work received those repaired and sent others to be repaired as wanted. I continued to repair the public arms to the end of the War, and Mr Smith superintended the work Given under my hand this 18th day of October One thousand eight hundred and thirty two –

[signed] James Hall

[The following is in William Smith's handwriting except for the signature.]

I Certify that Mr. William Smith employed me to repara the publick armes between the first and tenth of July one thousand seven hundred and eighty one. I ingagued which Mr. Smith on the faith of a letter Mr. Smith shewed me under date January 18th 1781 signed Thomas Jefferson. I proceeded emediately to the work and worked faithfully five months in the shop of william Duggin who was then reparing publick Armes with many others. Mr. Smith Superintended the work, recieved such as was repaired, and sent on

others when wanted. Wm. Duggen with whom I worked has been dead many years and I believe all the hands that worked in his shop except James hall and Joseph Spicer. I never recieved any payment for the work I done. nor do I know that any one did that repared the publick armes. I agreed on no price or time to continue in the work. given under my hand this 30th day of November 1832 [signed] James Seay
memo James Seay has removed since the date of his Cirtificate and affidavet

NOTE:

Joseph Spicer deposed as follows in his own pension application: "Shortly after the termination of his third tour (say the first of June 1781) he was detailed by Capt. William Smith to repair muskets at Duggins' Shop near Davenports Ford, in Hanover County, under William Duggins, as master armourer, and in the company with John Lively, James Hall, James Seay and others, all of whom are now dead except James Hall and James Seay whose testimony he annexes hereto. He is positive he was constantly employed as armourer from June 1781 till after the surrender of Lord Cornwallis on the 19th of October 1781."

James Hall in his pension application stated that "he was called on to repair arms in the County of Hanover under the direction of Capt. William Smith." James Seay's pension declaration did not mention service as a gunsmith during the Revolutionary War.

Smith's claim was rejected as not being for military service as covered by the pension act of 7 June 1832.