

## Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of John Smaw S42342

f21VA

Transcribed by Will Graves

3/5/12: rev'd 6/14/21

[Methodology: Spelling, punctuation and/or grammar have been corrected in some instances for ease of reading and to facilitate searches of the database. Where the meaning is not compromised by adhering to the spelling, punctuation or grammar, no change has been made. Corrections or additional notes have been inserted within brackets or footnotes. Blanks appearing in the transcripts reflect blanks in the original. A bracketed question mark indicates that the word or words preceding it represent(s) a guess by me. The word 'illegible' or 'indecipherable' or 'undeciphered' appearing in brackets indicates that at the time I made the transcription, I was unable to decipher the word or phrase in question. Only materials pertinent to the military service of the veteran and to contemporary events have been transcribed. Affidavits that provide additional information on these events are included and genealogical information is abstracted, while standard, 'boilerplate' affidavits and attestations related solely to the application, and later nineteenth and twentieth century research requests for information have been omitted. I use speech recognition software to make all my transcriptions. Such software misinterprets my southern accent with unfortunate regularity and my poor proofreading skills fail to catch all misinterpretations. Also, dates or numbers which the software treats as numerals rather than words are not corrected: for example, the software transcribes "the eighth of June one thousand eighty six" as "the 8<sup>th</sup> of June 1786." Please call material errors or omissions to my attention. Researchers should not rely solely on the transcripts but should review the originals for themselves. These transcripts are intended as an aid to research, not to be used in lieu thereof.]

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To the Honorable Peter A. Jay Recorder of the City of New York & one of the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas called the Mayor's Court of the said City which is a Court of record of the State of New York

The declaration under oath of John Smaw formerly a Soldier & Sailor engaged in the service of the United States during the Revolutionary war Respectfully sheweth that the said John Smaw is an Inhabitant of the City of New York and a Citizen of the United States born in Maryland and now aged sixty-nine years & upwards. That in the year 1776 he enlisted for nine months in the company commanded by Captain Blair [perhaps Capt. John Blair of the 9<sup>th</sup> Virginia Regiment] in the Regiment commanded by Colonel Hays in the Virginia line on the Continental establishment & served in the said Regiment the full term for which he enlisted. That he received a Discharge which was afterwards lost together with his other papers at the time of the capture of the *Virginia* frigate hereafter mentioned. That soon after being discharge from the said Regiment this Applicant having been bred a Sailor entered on board the *Virginia*<sup>1</sup> Frigate, as a Seaman, & was immediately appointed Masters Mate by Captain Nicholson [James Nicholson] who commanded the said Frigate; & served as Masters Mate on board the said Frigate upwards of fifteen months & until she was captured by the British Frigates *Emerald & Broom* – that this applicant & divers others of the Crew of the *Virginia* were paroled by the Captors. That about seven months after, this applicant again entered on board the *Trumbull*<sup>2</sup> ship of War of the United States the same Captain Nicholson commanded. He served on board the *Trumbull* about fourteen months until she was taken by the British ship *General Monk*, after which this Applicant being a prisoner was confined on board the *Jersey* prison ship in the port of

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<sup>1</sup> Ken Kellow has a fantastic article on the *Virginia* posted at

<http://www.awiatsea.com/conn/Virginia%20Ship%20%5BJames%20Nicholson%5D.html>

<sup>2</sup> *Trumbull*, 28 guns, 1777-1781. GWA:701, ND3:90, 195, 917, ND4:768, ND5:497, ND6:1426, ND7:1103, ND8:482, ND9:892, ND10:23, 310, ND11:602, Smith:250, Continental Navy frigate with 28 guns, Capt Dudley Saltonstall, which went to sea in 1780 and fought a hard engagement with a British letter of marque. Maclay:206, Buel:95, R81II:159, CTRec:598, Capt James Nicholson in 1780, last frigate to be lost to two British ships, the *Iris* and *General Monk*, 8 August 1781. John Fanning and crew members were prisoners on Long Island, Oct 1781. C:221. Ford1776:423, Ford1780:603, Ford1781:607. JA7:281, 9:511, 10:25. R81II:260, RM1:148. CTN:204. CTP:163, 193, 265. Volo:90, 111, 112, 132. Fowler:85, others, Capt James Micaelson. Silverstone:3, 28 guns, 199 men, 700 tons, captured 29 Aug 1783 (this date must be in error.) Paullin:517, served 1777-1781. Paullin:518. Chappelle:74. Coggins:203. <https://www.awiatsea.com/Hough/Hough%20List%20T.html>

New York for about nine months when he was exchanged. After which he entered on board the private armed ship *Hyder Ally*<sup>3</sup> Captain Barney [Joshua Barney]. That the applicant afterwards served as a volunteer at the Siege of Yorktown & capture of Cornwallis [October 19, 1781]. That he has lately been quarter Gunner on board the United States Ship *Franklin*. That this applicant is now old & poor has a wife & two children & hath nothing for his maintenance except his profession of a sailor, which he is now too old to pursue much longer – And being in reduced Circumstances in life he is in need of Assistance from his Country for support.

Therefore he conceives himself entitled to the benefit of the Act of Congress entitled an act to provide for certain persons engaged in the Land and Naval Service of the United States in the Revolutionary war approved March 18, 1818 – and he requests that your Honor will examine into the truth of the Matters aforesaid and certify and transmit the testimony in the case & the proceedings had their own to the Secretary of the Department of War, to the end that such relief may be had in the Premises as he is by law provided.

Date 24 August 1819

S/ John Smaw

City of New York: SS: John Smaw the above named applicant being duly sworn saith that that matters by him set forth in the foregoing Declaration are in all respects just and true – sworn the 24 August 1819 before me

S/ P. A. Jay

S/John Smaw

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Smaw". The ink is dark and the handwriting is somewhat slanted to the right.

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City of New York SS: Jacob DeWitt being duly sworn saith that in the year 1776 he enlisted as a soldier in the company commanded by Captain Blair in the Regiment commanded by Colonel Hays in the Virginia line on the Continental establishment & that this Deponent afterwards enlisted again in the said Regiment & served therein & in other Regiments upwards of five years; That the applicant John Smaw was a Sergeant in the said Company at the same time that this Deponent was a private therein & to the knowledge of this Deponent served in the said Company as a Sergeant nine months or more – That the said John Smaw has since been in the Navy of the United States.

Sworn the 24th of August 1819 before me

S/ P. A. Jay

S/ Jacob DeWitt, X his mark

City of New York SS: Joseph Roberts being duly sworn saith that in the year 1777 & 1778 he was a boy on board the United States Frigate *Virginia* Captain Nicholson. That the above named John Smaw entered on board the said Frigate in the said year 1777 & according to this Deponent's recollection in the Summer of that year. That the said John Smaw acted as a Master mate on board the said Frigate for fourteen months, after which this Deponent was left on shore

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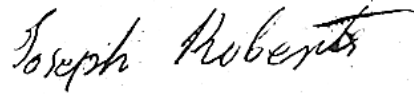
<sup>3</sup> *Hyder Ally*. Maclay:179-190, Buel:218, 219, Smith:273-274, LCP:124/125, LM PA privateer, purchased in 1782, a former trading vessel. It carried 16 guns and 110 men, Capt Joshua Barney. ScharfI:263, RM4:553, SchV:45, at the Delaware when it captured the British *General Monk* 8 Apr 1782. Bouvet:104, it may have been the ship which moved the French surgeons from Philadelphia back to France in Apr 1783. Alternatively, it could have been a French vessel. <https://www.awiatsea.com/Hough/Hough%20List%20H-I.html>

sic, but the said John Smaw continued on board the said Frigate, but how long he continued in the said Frigate afterwards this Deponent doth not know. That this Deponent is now well acquainted with the said John Smaw & knows him to be old & poor in reduced Circumstances in life & needing the assistance of his Country for support.

Sworn to 24 day [of August] 1819 before me

S/ P. A. Jay

S/ Joseph Roberts



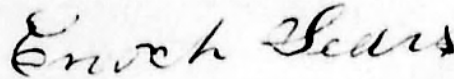
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City of New York SS: Enoch Sears being duly sworn saith that during the revolutionary War he was a Sailor on board the United States Vessel of War *Trumbull* carrying 28 Guns & was in her when she was taken by the British Frigate *General Monk* that this Deponent when he first came on board the *Trumbull* found there the above named applicant John Smaw who was also taken prisoner together with this Deponent & together with this Deponent was confined in the *Jersey* prison Ship. That after an imprisonment of about 5 weeks this Deponent was exchanged & released & left the said John Smaw still a prisoner on board the *Jersey*. That the said John Smaw served on board the *Trumbull* after this Deponent entered on board that Ship & before her capture about 6 or 7 months. This Deponent has since served with the said John Smaw on board the *Franklin* & knows him to be in reduced & indigent Circumstances in life & to need the Assistance of his Country for support – by which this Deponent does not mean that he is in a suffering Condition but that he hath saved little or nothing & after only his profession as a Seaman to depend upon, which at his age is and uncertain Dependence.

Sworn the 27 August 1819 before me

S/ P. A. Jay

S/ Enoch Sears



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New York Mayor's Court

In the Court of Common Pleas, called the Mayor's Court of the City of New York, held at the City-Hall, in and for the said City, before the Judges of the same Court, of June term, in the year of our Lord 1820

Present the Honorable Peter Augustus Jay Esquire Recorder of the City of New York  
City of New York, SS: Be it remembered, that on the 26<sup>th</sup> day of June in the year of our Lord 1820 personally appeared in the Court of Common Pleas, called the Mayor's Court of the city of New York, in open court, the said court being a court of record for the city and County of New York, according to the charter of the said city and the laws of the state of New York, John Smaw aged sixty-nine years resident in the City and County of New York in the United States of America who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on his oath declare, that he served in the revolutionary war as follows: that is to say, that he enlisted on the 17th day of April 1776 as a Sergeant in the 9th Virginia Regiment commanded by Colonel Hays in the company commanded by John Blair, deponent enlisted in Northampton County in Virginia for nine months in the Continental Service, and marched from Northampton to Philadelphia, and there joined the Grand Army commanded by General Washington deponent was in the battle of Brandywine [September

11, 1777] where Captain Blair was wounded and afterwards died at Philadelphia. Captain Nathaniel Darby then took command of deponent's company deponent was a Sergeant in the Army and was discharged in October 1777 by Captain Darby in Philadelphia – and deponent in May 1778 joined the *Virginia* Frigate rated 36 guns commanded by Commodore Nicholson in Chesapeake Bay and about 6 months after deponent shipped they were captured by the British Frigates *Emerald* and *Broome* each 44 guns – deponent was enrolled and sent home, and shortly after shipped on board the *Trumbull* Frigate as Masters mate, mounting 32 guns under the same Commodore deponent was in the engagement with the Frigate *Watt* of about 36 guns, deponent was in the engagement with the Frigate *General Monk*, mounting 40 guns and was captured and sent a prisoner on board the *Jersey* Prison Ship in the Wallabout, deponent was exchanged and shipped on board the *Hyder Ally* under Commodore Barney mounting 32 guns was in the engagement with the *General Monk* and captured her and was discharged in the fall of the year 1781 by Commodore Barney in Philadelphia –

And that his original declaration is dated the 24th day of August 1819 and that his pension certificate is No. 14.828

S/ John Smaw

And I do solemnly swear that I was a resident Citizen of the United States on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of March 1818 and that I have not since that time by gift, sale or in any manner whatever disposed of my property or any part thereof with intent thereby so to diminish it as to bring myself within the provision of an act of Congress entitled “an act to provide for certain persons engaged in the land and naval service of the United States in the revolutionary war” passed on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of March 1818, and that I have not nor has any person in trust for me any property, or securities, contracts or debts due to me nor have I any income other than what is contained in the schedule hereto annexed and by me subscribed

Real estate

none

Personal estate

None (except the wearing apparel)

Deponent has no trade, is a Sailor – he is at present in the Alms house has had a paralytic Stroke of the palsy which has taken away the use of his legs and it renders him unfit for any kind of business. He has at present no occupation and has no family.

Sworn in open Court this 26 June 1820

S/ John Smaw

S/ Benjamin Ferris, Clk.

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$8 per month commencing August 24, 1819, for service for 15 months as a master's mate in the frigate *Virginia* in the US/Virginia Navy.]

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Addendum to John Smaw S42342

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. 13 June 2021.

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

I do hereby certify that John Smaw enlisted a soldier in the 9th Virginia regiment, that he was appointed a Serjeant; that he after the expiration of his service in the said regiment, or while it was going on, enlisted during the war, and served during the American revolutionary war to the Southward as I have been informed and believe

Jno. Cropper Jr. [John Cropper W3781] formerly

Lt Col Comm'dt 11th Virginia Reg't



*Peter Muhlenberg*

John Smaw a Sergeant in the Continental army having faith fully served the term of his enlistment is hereby discharged Winchester Barracks April the 21th 1783.

P Muhlenberg BG [Peter Muhlenberg BLWt1495-850]



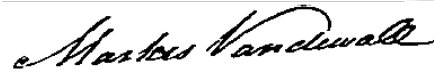
*Peter Muhlenberg*

Richmond 12th May 1783

I do Certify that John Smaw of the 9th Virginia Regiment, Joined the first Virginia Regiment the nineteenth day of June 1778 as a serjeant and continued to act as such till the nineteenth of June 1781.

Given under my hand. Markes Vandewall

Lt. 1 Virg Regiment



*Markes Vandewall*