

Pension Application for Robert Smith

S.3926

State of Pennsylvania

City and County of Philadelphia SS.

On this twenty ninth day of September Anno Domini Eighteen Hundred and Thirty two personally appeared in open court before the District Court for the City and County of Philadelphia now sitting Captain Robert Smith a resident in the City of Philadelphia and State of Pennsylvania aged eighty years who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath, make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the Act of Congress passed June 7th 1832.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following officers and served as herein stated, to wit. About the year 1772 I entered a company commanded by Captain William Walton in the City of New York they together with another company commanded by Captain Shaw were called the Governor's Guards—or Tryon's Guards—they were taught their manual exercise and maneuvered by the British Sergeants who were compensated for their Services.

About the year 1774 when things became more serious—I left the Guards and entered a company commanded by a Captain Ritzman, who was subsequently Col. Ritzman and commanded one of the New York Regiments and went to [Can?]. They were called the New York Fusiliers —ex Governor Morgan Lewis of New York is the only person alive whom I know belonging to that company—this company was disbanded as a number had taken commissions in several Regiments in 1774 & 1775 about the time I entered a company commanded by Captain -- -- Shaw in Col. William McLeans Regiment – the 2nd Regiment of New York Volunteers, Captain Shaw in 1776 was called to the command of one of the United States Frigates stationed I believe on the North or Hudson River, and was burnt or destroyed after Fort Montgomery was taken in 1777.

I took command of this company early in 1776—my Commission as Captain is dated the 18th June 1776, signed by Nathaniel Woodhull President of the Provincial Congress for the then Colony of New York—see my commission—

About this period when the British troops arrived at Staten Island. The 1st & 2nd Regiment—the first commanded by Col. Lesler & the 2nd by Col. Malcom offered their services for six months, which were accepted and we were halted out of the City about 3 or 4 miles, our Brigadier General was John Morin Scott of that City. We did duty there and in the City with the other Continental Troops in erecting necessary Forts or Lines at this period June 1776, I was ordered from New York to Fort Washington in order to construct a small battery under the direction of a French Engineer on a trajection of the River below Fort Washington called Jefferson's Hook & I believe the remains of it are yet in [?]

I remained there until after the 4th July when the Declaration of Independence was declared under the command of General Mifflin who then commanded at Fort Washington—Our regiment went on to Long Island on the morning of the 28th August 1776 and arrived in time on the right of our army to cover the retreat of our troops under the command of Lord Sterling and General Sullivan particularly the Brigade of General Smallwood—We retreated from thence in the night of the 1st September to New York—where we remained until the 15th of the same when the British Troops landed at Kipps Bay—We remained in New York with Col. Fisher's Regiment & some other under the command of Generals Ward [or Wand] & Spencer—We were very near being taken prisoners as they landed in very superior numbers—as it was we lost 40 or 50 men—When we mustered the following day on the 16th Sept. as action commenced on the heights of Harlem—the British were repulsed with considerable loss—our Regiment lay on the ground & buried the dead.

We were commanded by Gen'l Putnam—We remained at Kingsbridge for some time—when the British landed their army under Lord Howe at Frogs Neck.—We remained there a few days and retreated to the White Plains—We were stationed on the left of the Army—In a few days the British army followed us—their right was opposite to us, but did not come nearer than Long [?] when they

halted—their left engaged our right and move Gen'l McDougall from his position on the north of Bronx River—They maneuvered all day to gain the right of our army or out flank us, but were not able to accomplish it—after they encamped in front of us for 10 or 12 days and remained quiet. They then went to the right about and attacked Fort Washington—this was in November 1776—One regiment marched from thence to Haverstraw on the west side of the North River where they remained until December—as it was near the time we were to be discharged—I was sent by our Col. with the pay rolls of the Regiment in order to get them signed & our discharge. The British after they had taken Fort Washington crossed the River and took Fort Lee. Gen'l's Washington and our troops retreated then to Jersey by the way of Hackinsack—Newark & on to Trenton—I did not overtake Gen'l Washington until I arrived near Brunswick—as I took the upward or western Road by Morristown &c. He halted at Trenton—where I received our discharge and got our PayRolls signed—on returning to our Regiment I was taken very ill with a fever and lay ill at my Brother in Laws & then partner W.A Robertsson & remained so for 4 or 5 weeks—I sent my papers by officer Lieutenant Brinckle who had accompanied me on the same mission—our regiment was discharged at Haverstraw—my late Col. raised another Regiment in 1777, one of the 16 Regiments ordered by Congress—They were raised at a distance from where I resided in New Jersey. I believe in the State of New York as I did not enter the army again but resided at Baskin Ridge near Morristown.

I volunteered my services on several occasions & when the army were at quarters during the winter of 1779-80. I went with Lord Sterling on to Staten Island with 1500 or 2000 Troops and remained on night in the snow & we retreated—the next day the British Troops retreated into their forts & it would have been folly to pursue them—In the year 1781 I came to Philadelphia and entered into Business—I immediately entered myself as a member of the first City Troops commande4d by Captain – m Sergeant – Cornet -- & 2nd Lieutenant as per my commission dated 29th of November 1796 and remained in the same until June 1802 when I resigned together with Captain Dunlap, Lieutenant William Hall and Cornet Gardner—Our Troops have done essential services from their first [?] in 1775 to this date, although they received their pay when in service, they appropriated the said proceeds which amounted to several thousand dollars to the founding a Lying in Department in our City Hospital which I have no doubt will prove useful from time to come.

It is not in my power to enumerate the services of this Troop since the commencement of the Revolution—The commander in Chief has done them justice—they have made many and great sacrifices to serve their country—they were the only troops called out in 1784 to oppose the soldiers who rebelled in 1784 at Lancaster and marched to Philadelphia in order to demand their pay. They surrounded the State House where Congress was then sitting and insulted them in so insolent a manner as to induce them to leave the city and adjourn to Princeton.

I was born in the City of New York on the 20th of November 1752 and am now in my eightieth year.

I left New York on the 15th of September 1776 as Captain in the 2nd Regiment of New York under the command of Col. William Malcom and did not return to it until after the Peace of 1783—I have resided in Philadelphia since 1781.

And I hereby relinquish every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present and declare that my name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any state. (Signed) Robert Smith

Sworn to and subscribed in open court this 29th day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty two. F. W. Hindonand Pro Prothy??

I advise you from the papers in the Revolutionary War pension claim, S.3926 it appears that Robert Smith was born in New York City, November 20, 1752.

He entered the service of his country in the city of New York in 1772 in a company commanded by Captain William Walton or Watton in the Governor's Guards of Tryons Guards. In 1774, he joined Captain Ritzema's Company of the New York Fusiliers.

About 1775, he entered the company commanded by captain Shaw, Colonel William Malcolm's New York Regiment. June 18, 1776 he was commissioned captain of the Company of the company of Caledonian Rangers in Colonel William Malcolm's Second New York Regiment, was in the retreat from New York, the battles of Harlem Heights and White Plains and served six months.

In June 1776 he volunteered and served under General Lee and Marquis deLafayette and was at the battle of Monmouth, length of service not stated.

During the winter of 1779 and 1780 he volunteered on several occasions and went with Lord Stirling on his expedition to Staten Island.

After resigning his commissions he lived in Basking Ridge, New Jersey, and in 1781, removed to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he was a merchant.

He was allowed pension on his application executed April 29, 1832, while residing in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

It is not stated that soldier was ever married.

After the Revolution he joined the First City Troops of Philadelphia, served as private, sergeant, cornet and November 29, 1796 was commissioned Second Lieutenant. He resigned in June 1802.