

Eliphalet Smith, Revolutionary War Veteran
The Declaration of Eliphalet Smith
in order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress passed June 7, 1832.

State of New York ... County of Allegany

On this 28th day of June of 1833 personally appeared in open court before the court of Common Pleas of the county of Allegany as aforesaid (being a court of Record and having a Seal) now sitting at Angelica in said county. Eliphalet Smith, a resident of the town of Allen in said county, aged seventy-three 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 7, 1832.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers, and served as herein stated: - viz.

1. That he enlisted at Sandersfield in the county of Berkshire in the state of Massachusetts, on or about the first of December 1775, in the company commanded by Captain Moses Soule, Noah Allen, Lieutenant, in Col. Whitcomb's regiment; in the Massachusetts line; (as he believes). Shortly after his enlistment he marched to Cambridge, near Boston, where he remained until the month of August 1776 when he marched to Ticonderoga in the State of new York, where he remained until the first of January, 1777, where he was discharged, having served one year and one month, to the best of his recollection he received no written discharge.
2. About the first of April, 1777, he volunteered, with a number of others at Sandersfield, aforesaid, and repaired to Springfield, Massachusetts, where he joined a number of the militia collected there; does not recollect the names of the officers; from Springfield he marched to Worcester on the way to Cambridge - at Worcester counter orders were received and he marched back to Springfield, and was hurried on towards Danbury at which place he arrived the day after that place was burned by the British; - from Danbury he marched to Peekskill, where he remained some time, and then was stationed on a hill about three miles up the river from Peekskill where he remained till he was sent on to meet Burgoyne. He recollects while on the hill near Peekskill, the execution of a soldier by the name of John Murray, for desertion, it being the third offense; heard him plead with General Putnam for pardon; heard Genl Putnam tell Murray that it could not be granted; that an example must be made; Murray was hung at one o'clock, and remained suspended on the gallows till near night the day following. This declarant left that place, he thinks in July, and marched to Fishkill, where he went on board of a sloop and sailed to Albany; then marched to Half Moon and Stillwater and joined the army under Genl . Schuyler at Saratoga; then retreated back to Stillwater, and then to Von Schaich's Island, where Gen. Gates assumed the command of the army; recollects that the change of commanders gave him and his fellow soldiers much satisfaction; - He then forded the Mohawk with the army and advanced toward Stillwater again where there was a battle with Burgoyne; - This declarant was in the reserve troops, and was not engaged in the action but went on to the battle ground after the action where he kept guard during the night; in about a fortnight afterwards, said there was another battle in which he was engaged for several hours; the next day pursued the enemy to Saratoga where they (lived?) till the surrender of Burgoyne; saw General Burgoyne, General Skeene and the other British officers pass down between the two lines of the American army to surrender. Was discharged a few days after the surrender; having been in service over six months; - received no written discharge to his recollection; - after leaving the service he went to Rupert where one of his brothers - resided, and where his father was about to remove. Rupert was in Bennington County in the Hampshire grants (so called) now Vermont.
3. That he enlisted in the month of December, 1779, at Bennington in County of Bennington in the (now) state of Vermont; into Capt. Sawyer's company of Vermont State troops; went directly to Rutland where there was a

picketted fort; at which place he remained in service till the February following, when he was discharged, having served three months, the term of his enlistment; received no written discharge;- this declarant was also out frequently at other times, on alarms, but to what amount of time he can not say;- but the whole amount of time he was in the service was at least one year and ten months, for which he claims a pension. He would further state, that his memory is very much impaired; and retains only the most striking events of his service.- He resided at Sandersfield before mentioned at the times when he entered the service as herein set forth, as the first and second periods of service; and at Rupert in the Hampshire grants, at the time of his enlistment at the third period of service. He saw and knew, while in service, General Washington, General Putnam; General Schuyler, and General Gates;- He was born in the town of Sandersfield, Berkshire county, Massachusetts, in the year 1759; on the 16th of November;- has a record of his age in his bible, made from information derived from his parents;- He resided in the said town of Sandersfield until he was sixteen years of age; when he went into the service;- then his parents removed to Rupert, in the Hampshire grants, and this declarant resided in Massachusetts until the year 1783;- He then removed to Orwell, Rutland county, Vermont; where he resided about twelve or thirteen years, then removed to Pawlet, in the same county, where he resided till the year 1807;- then removed to the town of Champion, Jefferson county, New York, where he resided about ten years;- then removed to the town of Fowler in the county St. Lawrence, New York, where he resided five years; then removed to Gainesville, county of Genesee, New York, where he resided nearly four years; and then removed back to Orwell, Vermont, where he resided about four years; and then removed to the town of Allen, in the county of Allegany, state of New York, where he has resided nearly three years last past, and where he now resides;- He was well acquainted with Elias Sage, and John Baxter, who were in the service with him, during his first term of service, mentioned in this declaration; and he has their affidavits stating their knowledge of this declarant and of his service, as set forth in this declaration, so far as regards the first term of service;- that as far as regards the second and third terms of service set forth in this declaration, he knows of no person whose testimony he can presume, who can testify to his service; - but he is acquainted with Ira Thompson and Joseph Donald, a preacher of the gospel, who resides in his neighborhood and who can testify as to his character for truth and veracity, and their belief of his services as a soldier of the revolution; he is also acquainted with his brother, Reuben Smith, who can testify as to his service at the term first mentioned in this declaration, and what he has always understood of his further terms of service herein mentioned.

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present and declares that his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any state.

Sworn to, and subscribed the day and year aforesaid.

(signed) Eliphalet Smith

(signed) M. (Frenman?), Clk.

Note: The town of Sandersfield referred to in the declaration is actually Sandisfield, MA.

_____? the said court we hereby declare their opinion after the Investigation of the matter then after putting the Interrogators prescribed by the war department that the above _____? applicant was a soldier of the Revolution - PARAGRAPH VERY HARD TO DECIPHER - there is more!!!!

That Joseph Donald who had signed the prescribed certificate is a clergyman _____? And that Ira Thompson who had also signed the same is _____?resident in the said town of Allen and is a _____? Person and that their statement is entitled to credit.

Signed - Andrew C. Hall

D. L. Gilman

Josiah Allen

Amos Allen

(Also included in file is an affidavit from his brother, Reuben Smith.)

A Bit of Personal History of Eliphalet Smith

Eliphalet Smith was born in Sandisfield, Berkshire Co., Massachusetts 16 Nov 1759, fifth child of Nathaniel Smith, Jr. and his first wife, Sarah McCartee. He is included in the Smith family genealogy written by Harvey Douglas Smith, Gouverneur, NY and published May 1849.

Mr. Smith states in his genealogy that he is satisfied that the Smiths he is writing about descend from Rev. Henry Smith, who was the first settled minister of Wethersfield, CT, installed in 1636. Rev. Smith had been a clergyman in England before coming to America in 1630. His children were Samuel, Perigrine, Noah and other small children and two daughters, who were married at his decease. Rev. Smith died in either 1641 or 1648.

It was noted that only the son, Samuel, born before 1640, lived to adulthood. Samuel lived, with his family, in Hadley, MA. He had the following sons - Samuel, James, Preserved, Ichabod, and Ebenezer (born between 1670 and 1680).

Among Ebenezer's sons there was a Nathaniel, born in 1702 in Suffield, CT. Nathaniel and wife, Mercy Smith (Mercy was a Smith before her marriage also) married 14 December 1727, and one of their children was a son, Nathaniel, Jr. born 22 May 1729.

Nathaniel Smith, Jr. of Suffield, and Sarah McCartee were joined in marriage, 15 February 1750. They had nine children - Nathaniel, Reuben, William, Jehiel, Eliphalet, Pliney, Oliver, Cynthia, and Sarah. The family moved from Suffield, CT to Rupert, VT (with a few years in Sandisfield, MA). There, in 1778 Sarah, his first wife died.

Nathaniel, Jr. married second Sarah Douglass and they lived in Pawlet, VT, an adjoining town. They had six children. This Sarah died of consumption 24 November 1789. Later, after several moves, and two unhappy marriages, Nathaniel, Jr. moved to St. Armand, Lower Canada to live with his son, Homer, where, at an advanced age, he died 19 October 1821.

So the genealogy comes to the generation of Eliphalet Smith, the Revolutionary War veteran.

The Smith family genealogy states "Eliphalet Smith was a man of considerable mental capacity, served as a magistrate many years both in VT and NY; was an excellent practical farmer, a kind friend and neighbor. His great fault was instability of purpose, a restless disposition to change, so moved about from place to place."

When he had just turned sixteen, he enlisted in the Revolutionary War as a private, on or about first of December 1775. In his declaration to obtain a pension he relates the places in which he was stationed, the battles in he was actively engaged and the length of service time. He also recollects the incident, while serving near Peekskill, of the deserter and the dire consequences associated with the soldier's military crime. The Declaration relates "While on the hill near Peekskill he recollects the execution of a soldier by the name of John Murray, for desertion, it being the third offense; heard him plead with General Putnam for pardon; heard General Putnam tell Murray that it could not be granted; that an example must be made; Murray was hung at one o'clock, and remained suspended on the gallows till near night the day following".

After the war ended he returned to Sandisfield where he lived until 1783, but he had met Elizabeth Bartow in the meantime, and they were married in Rupert, VT in 1780. In 1783, apparently they moved to Orwell, then later to Pawlet, VT. In 1807 the couple, with their four daughters, Lucinda, b. 3 February 1785; Cynthia, b. 23 August 1794; Amanda, b. 29 March 1796, and Fanny, a deaf mute, b. 8 October 1799, moved to the town of Champion, Jefferson, Co., New York State. Elizabeth died here 26 January 1813 in her 50th year and is buried in Hillside Cemetery with a slab type gravestone. Smith remained in this community about four more years. He is referred to as "Esquire", which indicates he was a Justice of the Peace.

About 1817 he moved to the town of Fowler in St. Lawrence County, New York where he purchased a farm. Then on 12 March 1823 it is recorded that he sold it to John and Peter M. Balmat. This farm became noted for its minerals - so, if Smith had kept the land, his descendants might have profited from the talc discovered there rather than the people who did!

After the death of his first wife, Eliphalet Smith married again to a woman whose name is not known. It is presumed that he lived in Fowler during this period. She gave birth, in 1821, to his only son, Orson. Smith was 62 years old at this time. The marriage was not a happy union and his wife, who must have been considerably younger than he, secretly, with the boy, left Smith, and neither was ever heard from again although the genealogy says the son was supposed to be living in 1847.

At the time of his wife's departure he wrote a letter to his daughter, Cynthia, wife of Guy Earle, in Edwards, telling her of his unhappiness and the fact that his wife had taken nearly all the household goods when she went. This letter is not dated, and another letter available, written by a niece, Samantha Baker, to her cousin, Cynthia Earle, also tells of the hard time Eliphalet Smith is having because of his spouse's shortcomings. These letters are the property of Randy Kerr, Grieg, NY. He has transcribed them as best as he could read the faded writing. -

(1) Written in the later years of the life of Eliphalet Smith -

Dear and Beloved children,

I expect this day to leave this part of the country to part with all my nearest and dearest (connections?) even my beloved children, perhaps never to see them no more which has wrought my feelings up to such a pitch that it is utterly out of my power to express them to you. Oh, Cynthia, put the case to yourself, you are a parent, you know the feelings of a parent to their children. How could you bear to part with all your children and be cast out amongst the _____ where there was no one to pity nor comfort you. Would it not be a very _____ thing to contemplate upon before you set out? But I must stop dwelling upon that heart rendering subject for it brings tears into my eyes so fast that I can hardly see to write. The old woman has plundered the house of almost all the linen there was in it and a host of other articles. Not left me a towel to wipe my hands on. I cannot write no more than to beg of you to remember my deplorable situation to the throne grace. I remain your unhappy, but affectionate father,

Eliphalet Smith

(2) Written to Cynthia Smith Earle by her cousin, Samantha Baker -

Synthia Earle,

Absent cousin, I now set down to write a few words to you. The reason I have not rote before is because i thought you was a stranger to me and my troble and you wold count it mony lost but sense you no sumthing about it I will let you no sumthing of my fealings all though it is impossible to discribe it with pen and paper the troble the old sour faced woman has made me. i can truly say that it was the begist curse that i ever brought on my famaly when i brot that old woman home. The first thing you see of her in the morning will be with her hand on her head or back and the next you see her half way to the neighbors she is good to the _____ she wold set and make up faces at the _____ and it is natural luck bad a nought i think if i could see you i could tell you more in one our than i could write in a week and to make the best on it you she was the disgrublest woman i ever saw and dissateful next a groach as for uncle i should ben glad to had him lived with me all his i ust to take a great deel of cumfort with him. My little children thought as much of him as they did of their father. He takes but little comfort with her he cant nether eat nor drink smoke in peace. She wold open the door and set rags afire and hold her nose and look mad enough to bite.

I wish i could reach him a good apple and a mug of cider and a pipe and cakes as i ust to but it ust to make her dretful mad. I told her before she went away from here to live to _____ she wold live to see the want of a good home if she outlives uncle do dobt about that for she live as long as wauter runs. you say you wished me much joy in giten read of her it was joy indeed but what shall i say to you i say i pitty you and your famaly from my heart. I want you or your sister wich he lives with i no not but be vary carful and use him all ways well treted him with great regard and respect so when he is dead and gone you will not have one thing to reflect on as we owe a great duty to our parents them that has brot up a famaly nose that to be careful in so doing i have got a great regard for uncle in his old age tell uncle that Seneca says he will do what is rite about them nots if uncle takes a horse. uncle we have skined too more of our calfs this week they was not as good as them was we lost when you lived here dear cousin i want you to write back to me a letter soon as you receive this so that we ma be more acquainted i should be glad to have you and your husband come and see us i want you incorage uncle to write ofen i must draw to a close for i cant hardly see one letter from another excuse all mistakes if you please

I subscribe my self your cousin and friend and well wisher

Samantha Baker

Note by Randy Kerr - LaVerne, since receiving your material I now know the above letter was written to Cynthia Earle by Samantha Baker, wife of Seneca Baker, apparently shortly after Eliphalet Smith came to Edwards to live with Guy and Cynthia.

Note: The "old woman" he refers to in letter #1 apparently is the second wife who had recently left him and taken most of the household goods, as well as his only son. He survived this calamity and moved on.

Eventually, Eliphalet Smith, Revolutionary War Veteran, settled down in Edwards with his daughter and son-in-law, Cynthia and Guy Earle, where he died on 15 April 1840, aged 80 years and 5 months. He was buried in Riverside Cemetery, village of Edwards, with a red sandstone slab type monument to mark his grave. The inscription on it reads "He was a revolutionary soldier, who fought for the liberty we now enjoy".

LaVerne H. Freeman - expanded 4 April 2005



Eliphalet Smith
d. 15 April 1840
ae. 80 y. 5 m. 1 d.
Riverside Cemetery
Edwards NY



Elizabeth Bartow Smith
d. 19 January 1813
in her 50th year
Hillside Cemetery
Town of Champion
near Carthage NY

Webmaster's note: According to Town Historian LaVerne Freeman, "at least half of the Edwards residents and many of the people who might read the article are descendants" of Eliphalet and Elizabeth Smith.

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