

## Biographical/Historical Notes

John Smith was appointed United States Marshal for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania by Thomas Jefferson on March 28, 1801, replacing John Hall. James Monroe reappointed him to a four-year term on November 27, 1818, but in January 1819 he was removed from office and replaced by Samuel D. Ingram. Smith was listed in the Philadelphia city directories as "late marshal" from 1819 to 1822, and was not listed thereafter. He married Elizabeth Turner on October 15, 1795, at St Michael and Zion Lutheran Church, Philadelphia. No date of death is known.

United States Marshals were public servants appointed by the President; their primary function was to provide local support for the operation of federal courts. The post involved a wide range of duties including procuring witnesses, serving subpoenas and warrants, and paying the fees and expenses of court clerks, judges, federal attorneys, and jurors. Marshals advertised seized property and oversaw its sale. In addition, until 1870, marshals conducted the federal census, and collected a variety of statistical information on behalf of the federal government.

In time of war, such as the War of 1812, the marshal's duties expanded to include keeping track of enemy aliens living in the United States, issuing passports for their domestic travel, and guarding and providing for British prisoners of war.

John Smith also had a long military career, serving almost continuously from 1776 until 1814, when the 1st Regiment of the Pennsylvania Cavalry, which he commanded, was disbanded.

## Collection Overview

The papers of John Smith span the years 1802 to 1819, and primarily relate to his career as the U.S. Marshal for the District of Pennsylvania. The papers are arranged in four series: Series I, General Correspondence; Series II, Court Functions; Series III, Property Disposal; and Series IV, War of 1812.

Series I, General Correspondence (1804-1819) is arranged in two subseries: Marshal, and Military. The first holds twenty-seven letters from officials of the United States Department of the Treasury's Comptroller's Office, including comptrollers John Steele (1764-1815, served 1796-1802), Gabriel Duvall (1752-1844, served 1802-1811), and Joseph Anderson (1757-1837, served 1815-1836). Their letters inform Smith of the balance of his accounts, and of compensation for the local enumerators on the second federal census. A single printed circular letter from Treasurer Albert Gallatin (1761-1849) in 1812 described the compensation allotted to marshals and their staff for surveying the country's manufactures and manufacturing establishments. Among the additional six single letters in the subseries is one from Henry Reges of Chambersburg, PA, warning Smith against Greenberry Murphy, whom Smith had appointed as Deputy Marshal.