

**SMITH, Gustavus Woodson**, soldier, was born in Scott county, Ky., Jan. 1, 1822. He passed his boyhood on his father's farm, and attended the county schools until he was sixteen years old, when he entered the U. S. Military Academy, and was graduated in 1842. In 1844 he was junior assistant professor of civil and military engineering and the art of war in the U. S. Military Academy. On the outbreak of the Mexican war he was lieutenant of a company of sappers and miners which had been raised to form a part of the regular U. S. army. The captain having been taken ill at Matamoras, the command devolved upon Lieut. Smith. In the campaign from Vera Cruz to the city of Mexico the engineer company made a proud record, and Lieut. Smith was specially commended by Col. Harney and Gen. Twiggs in their reports of the battle of Cerro Gordo. In 1849 Capt. Smith was appointed principal assistant professor in engineering and the art of war in the Military Academy, and ordered to West Point. He remained in this position until he resigned his commission in the U. S. army in 1854. After his resignation Capt. Smith went to New Orleans to live, and Sec. Guthrie, of the U. S. treasury, appointed him superintendent of the repairs of the branch mint and of the construction of the new Marine Hospital in New Orleans. In 1856 he resigned this position, and went to New York for the purpose of accepting in the house of Messrs. Cooper & Hewitt the position of chief engineer of the Trenton Iron Co. In 1858 Mayor Tieman named Capt. Smith to be street commissioner of the city of New York, and he was unanimously confirmed by the board of aldermen. He continued to hold this position until September, 1861, when he resigned. During his occupancy of the office he received the commendation of the press and the public for the efficiency and honesty with which he performed his duties. His resignation was sent in while he was in Kentucky on his way to Hot Springs, Ark., where he had been sent by his physician after a terrible stroke of illness brought on by overwork in his department. He had been opposed, as a Southerner and a state's-rights man, to the election of Pres. Lincoln, evidently believing that the advent of the anti-slavery party in power meant a centralized government at Washington, supported by the bayonets of the military. While in Kentucky he was informed that the authorities in Washington designed to arrest and imprison him on account of his known opinions. He accordingly sent in his resignation as street commissioner of New York, and started for Richmond, where he offered his services to the Confederate government. He was appointed major-general of the Confederate States army on Sept. 19, 1861, and assigned to the command of the second corps of Gen. Joseph E. Johnston's army. He made a stirring war record, being engaged chiefly in conflict with the army of the Potomac; but he had incurred the ill-will of Pres. Davis, and this hampered his

military opportunities to such a degree that he tendered his resignation, which was accepted in 1863. In 1866 Gen. Smith accepted the position of general manager of the business of the Southwestern Iron Co., at Chattanooga, Tenn. In 1870 he was appointed insurance commissioner of the state of Kentucky, and from that time exercised great influence among the insurance commissioners of the different states. His works on the subject of life insurance and his public official reports made to the several annual insurance conventions have done much to enlighten the public in regard to the elementary principles upon which calculations in life insurance are founded. After 1876 Gen. Smith resided in New York city, where he wrote and published several books on the subject of life insurance. He also published "Confederate War Papers" (1884), and "The Battle of Seven Pines" (1891). His political disabilities were removed by act of congress in 1888. Gen. Smith was married, while stationed at West Point as assistant professor, to Lucretia, eldest child of Capt. Abner Bassett, of New London, Conn. She died in New York city in 1881, and he died there June 25, 1896.



*Gustavus W. Smith*

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**SMITH, GUSTAVUS WOODSON** (March 1822–June 24, 1896), civil and military engineer, Confederate officer, was born in Georgetown, Scott County, Ky., the son of Byrd and Sarah Hatcher (Woodson) Smith. His grandfather, John Smith, had emigrated to Kentucky from Virginia with Daniel Boone. On the maternal side he was a descendant of John Woodson who came to America before 1679. He entered the United States Military Academy from Virginia and was graduated in 1842 as a second lieutenant, Corps of Engineers. He was assigned to duty at New London, Conn., where he served two years as an assistant engineer on the construction of fortifications, and was then ordered to West Point as an instructor in civil and military engineering. On Oct. 3, 1844, he was married to Lucretia Bassett, the daughter of Capt. Abner Bassett, of New London, Conn. They had no children. Upon the outbreak of the Mexican War, he was detailed to assist Capt. Alexander J. Swift to recruit and train the sole company of engineers in the army. Shortly after reaching Mexico, Captain Swift was invalided and the command devolved upon Smith. The engineer-soldiers were employed in converting the infamous mule paths of northern Mexico into passable roads until March 1847, when they joined Scott's expedition at Vera Cruz. Smith was cited for distinguished services at Vera Cruz, Cerro Gordo, Contreras, Churubusco, and Mexico City, and was brevetted, successively, first lieutenant, captain, and major, the last brevet being disapproved by the war department. Upon the conclusion of peace he returned to West Point as assistant professor of engineering.

He resigned on Dec. 18, 1854, to join, it is said, the Cuban filibustering expedition of John Anthony Quitman [*q.v.*]. This expedition proved still-born, and Smith accepted a treasury department appointment to supervise the repairs to the mint and the construction of the marine hospital in New Orleans, La. A year later he became associated with the engineering firm of Cooper and Hewitt in New York City, and served them as chief engineer of the Trenton Iron Works. He was appointed street commissioner for New York City in 1858, served until 1861, and soon achieved prominence in the councils of the Democratic party. He served on a board to revise the program of instruction at West Point in 1860. He participated in the Pine Street meeting of citizens of New York to devise measures to avert civil war, and favored the Crittenden Compromise. In the late summer of 1861, having been stricken with paralysis in April, he set out for Hot Springs, Ark., upon the advice of his physician. At Lexington, Ky., he learned that his arrest as a disloyal person had been ordered from Washington. This determined him to join the Confederacy, and he proceeded at once

to Richmond, where he was appointed, Sept. 19, 1861, a major-general in the provisional army.

He commanded one wing of the Army of the Potomac until the conclusion of the Peninsular Campaign. After General Johnston was wounded during the battle of Seven Pines on May 31, 1862, he commanded as senior officer until General Lee's arrival on June 1. On June 2, he suffered another attack of paralysis. His relief by Lee caused the renewal of a quarrel with President Davis, which had originated over the appointment of his aide-de-camp the previous year. In August 1862 he was placed in command of the sector from the right of Lee's theatre of operations on the Rappahannock to the Cape Fear River, with headquarters in Richmond. He acted as secretary of war from Nov. 17 to Nov. 20. In consequence of the promotion of six officers over his head and presidential interference with details of his command, he resigned on Feb. 17, 1863. He served a short time as a volunteer aide to Beauregard in Charleston, and then became superintendent of the Etowah Mining and Manufacturing Company in north Georgia. In June 1864, he accepted an appointment as major-general to command the 1st Division, Georgia Militia, which was attached to the Army of Tennessee. After the fall of Atlanta, his division was employed in observation of Sherman's army, falling back before it during the famous march to the sea. On Dec. 30, 1864, he was assigned a sector in the defenses of the department of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. He surrendered to the Wilson raiders at Macon, Ga., in April 1865.

After the war, he gave testimony on Jan. 30, 1867, before the Congressional committee investigating the affairs of Southern railroads. He was employed as general manager of the Southwestern Iron Company at Chattanooga, Tenn., from 1866 until 1870, when he was appointed as the first insurance commissioner of Kentucky. He held this office for five years, and then moved to New York City, where he resided until his death. He was the author of *Notes on Life Insurance* (1870), *Confederate War Papers* (1884), *The Battle of Seven Pines* (1891), *Generals J. E. Johnston and G. T. Beauregard . . . at Manassas* (1892), and *Company "A," Corps of Engineers, U. S. A., . . . in the Mexican War* (1896).

[H. M. Woodson, *Hist. Genral. of the Woodsons* (1915); G. W. Cullum, *Biog. Reg. . . . U. S. Mil. Acad.* (1891); *U. S. Army Register*, 1839; C. S. Stewart, in *Ann. Reunion, Asso. Grads., U. S. Mil. Acad., 1897* (1897); C. M. Wilcox, *Hist. of the Mexican War* (1892); *War of the Rebellion: Official Records (Army)*, see index; M. J. Wright, *Gen. Officers of the Confed. Army* (1911); *Confed. Mil. Hist.* (1899), vol. 1; *House Report No. 34, 39 Cong., 2 Sess.* An obituary article in *Appletons' Ann. Cyclop., 1896* (1897), gives June 23 as the date of Smith's death. See, however, the *Augusta Chronicle*, June 26, 1896.] W. M. R., Jr.