

69TH CONGRESS }
1st Session }

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

{ REPORT
No. 663

RACHEL THOMAS

MARCH 25, 1926.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered
to be printed

MR. FISHER, from the Committee on Military Affairs, submitted the
following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 5786]

The Committee on Military Affairs, to which was referred the bill (H. R. 5786) for the relief of Rachel Thomas, widow of William Thomas, deceased, having considered the same, report it back to the House with the recommendation that it do pass.

Rachel Thomas is the widow of William Thomas, deceased, who was a member of Company A, Fifth United States Artillery, as shown by the records of the War Department. The deceased soldier was enlisted on August 1, 1861, in Battery A, Fifth United States Artillery. He was transferred to Battery B of the same regiment November 24, 1862, and served until he was discharged on January 24, 1864, the end of his three years of service. He reenlisted and served until June 23, 1865, on which date he left his company, and an entry was made on his record that he was a deserter.

In a letter written by the deceased soldier, he stated that he had received news from his home that his sister was dangerously ill. She died as a result of this illness. He tried to get a furlough, but he was unable to do so because of the indifference of his captain. He left the camp and went home to find his sister dead and buried; that he had to pay the expenses of the illness and burial and that as the war was over and his services were no longer needed, he did not return. He has an excellent record of nearly four years' war services. He had been severely wounded. A former Commissioner of Pensions, Mr. G. M. Saltzgaber, wrote this paragraph in a letter which is in the record:

The soldier had a highly honorable service, was severely wounded, and his departure from the service was after the war was over, so I would think there ought to be no great difficulty in getting the charge of desertion removed, at least so as to give his widow a pension. Probably the most favorable way to deal with the matter is to take it up with your Congressman or Senator.

The soldier made every effort to have the charge of desertion removed. He was given a deserter's release on December 8, 1896. His widow is 78 years old and unable to make a living. She has no one to look to for her support.

It is believed, in view of the faithful service rendered by the deceased soldier over more than three years and because of the sad circumstances in his home when he left his company after the war, that the relief asked for by his widow should be given favorable consideration.

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