

GRANTING SIX MONTHS' PAY TO CONSTANCE D. LATHROP

DECEMBER 22, 1925.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed

Mr. DREWRY, from the Committee on Naval Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 6136]

The Committee on Naval Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 6136) granting six months' pay to Constance D. Lathrop, having had the same under consideration, report the same back to the House without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

When the war risk insurance act was passed it was held that the act granting six months' pay to the widow of an officer who died in the service was repealed. This seemingly was not the intent of the Congress as they again in the act of June 4, 1920, reenacted in substance the former law which gave to the widow six months' pay upon the death of her husband. That law is as follows:

That hereafter, immediately upon official notification of the death from wounds or disease, not the result of his own or her own misconduct, of any officer, enlisted man, or nurse on the active list of the regular Navy or regular Marine Corps, or on the retired list when on active duty, the Paymaster General of the Navy shall cause to be paid to the widow, and if there be no widow to the child or children, and if there be no widow or child, to any other dependent relative of said officer, enlisted man, or nurse previously designated by him or her an amount equal to six months' pay at the rate received by such officer, enlisted man, or nurse at the date of his or her death. The Secretary of the Navy shall establish regulations requiring each officer and enlisted man or nurse having no wife or child to designate the proper dependent relative to whom this amount shall be paid in case of his or her death. Said amount shall be paid from funds appropriated for the "Pay of the Navy" and "Pay of the Marine Corps," respectively.

The following letter to the chairman of the Committee on Naval Affairs of the House of Representative from the Secretary of the

2 GRANTING SIX MONTHS' PAY TO CONSTANCE D. LATHROP

Navy sets forth clearly the facts in the case and the attitude of the Navy Department:

NAVY DEPARTMENT,
Washington, December 21, 1925.

The CHAIRMAN COMMITTEE ON NAVAL AFFAIRS,
House of Representatives.

MY DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Replying further to the committee's letter of May 14, 1924, inclosing a bill (H. R. 6136) granting six months' pay to Constance D. Lathrop and requesting the views and recommendations of this department thereon, the department has the honor to inform you as follows:

The purpose of this proposed legislation is to authorize the payment to Constance D. Lathrop of six months' pay at the rate received by her husband, the late Lieutenant Commander Lathrop, United States Navy, at the time of his death.

The records show that this officer died at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on November 20, 1919, as the result of drowning.

The act approved May 13, 1908, which was repealed by the act of October 6, 1917, provided for the payment to the beneficiary of an officer or enlisted man of the Navy or Marine Corps who died as the result of wounds or disease contracted in the line of duty of an amount equal to six months' pay at the rate received by the officer or enlisted man concerned at the date of his death. This provision of law was reenacted under the act of June 4, 1920, but at the time of Lieutenant Commander Lathrop's death there was no law in effect which authorized the payment of the gratuity in question to his widow.

Had Lieutenant Commander Lathrop's death occurred on or after June 4, 1920, his widow would have been entitled to six months' pay at the rate received by her late husband at the time of his death. However, the date of this officer's death precludes payment of the gratuity to his widow under the law, and it seems pertinent here to remark that there are many other deserving claims of a similar nature.

The department considers this class of legislation as meritorious, but invites attention to the fact that it is not general in character. It therefore can not recommend approval of the bill (H. R. 6136), which is for the relief of an individual. However, the total cost of legislation granting six months' pay to the dependents of all officers and enlisted men who died while on active duty between October 6, 1917, and June 4, 1920, would approximate \$3,331,569.70, an expense which the Naval Establishment can ill afford to bear at this time, and for this reason the department also is opposed to the enactment of general legislation covering all such cases.

Sincerely yours,

CURTIS D. WILBUR,
Secretary of the Navy.

The following are a few commendatory letters from various commanding officers under whom Lieut. Commander P. T. M. Lathrop served:

Lieut. Commander P. T. M. Lathrop, United States Navy: Entered service in 1908; duty on trip around the world with fleet; duty in Philippines, 1909, as supply officer at Olongapo station; holds Cuban, Nicaraguan, Mexican intervention medals for active service in those campaigns; duty in European waters 1915-16 U. S. S. *Chester*; commendatory letters from various commanding officers.

Attached to record of Lieutenant Commander Lathrop:

Capt. Nathan Twining, United States Navy, October 22, 1914: "Paymaster Lathrop is a most competent, energetic, and faithful officer."

Hon. Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the Navy: "I thought you would like to see the inclosed letter from Mr. Millard Sprague, of the Charles River Trust Co., of Cambridge. I need not tell you that such reports concerning officers of the Navy give me a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction and I congratulate you upon the excellent work which you have accomplished."

Department Army and Navy Campaign: "I want to express the thanks of the seven organizations of the united war campaign for your energetic work and successful efforts in our behalf. The time and attention given by you to the campaign will long be remembered and appreciated throughout the district."

Commander Nathaniel Ayer, United States Naval Reserve Force: "I can not tell you how, as a former business man, I appreciated the manner in which you went at your work and organized the various departments and obtained for us the great number of supplies both for the education and comfort of the men. I shall always consider that a great deal of credit the school got was directly due to the efficient manner in which you performed your duty."

Admiral T. J. Cowie, United States Navy: "I want to congratulate you heartily on the 'hot stuff' you put into the Liberty loan campaign at the Radio School, etc."

Rear Admiral Spencer S. Wood, commandant first naval district: "Lieutenant Commander Lathrop has performed his various duties in a most satisfactory manner. Always cheerful and ready to carry out any orders he may receive. He has shown great professional skill and ability in solving the many complicated problems of supply and demand which have been brought to him. I regard him as a highly efficient officer."

Commander David Weaver, United States Navy: "An excellent officer; as member of the board on leased properties in the first naval district has shown great tact and ability in dealing with managers and trustees of estates. Will be glad to have this officer again under my command."

Commodore Albert Key, United States Navy: "Lieutenant Commander Lathrop performed the duty of supply officer at Bumkin Island with entire satisfaction. During this period he prepared an official letter to the Bureau of Supplies and Accounts giving reasons for a ship's store on shore which resulted in a circular letter from Chief of Supplies and Accounts authorizing ships' stores on shore at various new stations. He is an excellent officer."



Commander Nathaniel Avery, United States Naval Reserve Force; "I can not tell you how, as a former business man, I approached the matter in which you were at your work and to which the various functions and of which for us the great number of employees, for the education and training of the men, I shall always consider that a great field of activity and one which the Government is bound to support in which you are now engaged."

"I shall always consider that a great field of activity and one which the Government is bound to support in which you are now engaged."

"I shall always consider that a great field of activity and one which the Government is bound to support in which you are now engaged."

"I shall always consider that a great field of activity and one which the Government is bound to support in which you are now engaged."

"I shall always consider that a great field of activity and one which the Government is bound to support in which you are now engaged."

"I shall always consider that a great field of activity and one which the Government is bound to support in which you are now engaged."