

HARRY P. CREEKMORE

MAY 27, 1926.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed

Mr. VINSON of Georgia, from the Committee on Naval Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany S. 2178]

The Committee on Naval Affairs, to which was referred the bill (S. 2178) for the relief of Harry P. Creekmore, having considered the same, report favorably thereon and recommend that the bill do pass.

This bill proposes to grant Harry P. Creekmore the rights and benefits of law conferred upon honorably discharged soldiers, sailors, and marines by holding him to have been honorably discharged from the Marine Corps on June 25, 1899, and to thereby relieve him of the disabilities carried by the charge of desertion now standing against his name and record.

The facts in the case are as follows: Harry P. Creekmore enlisted in the Marine Corps on March 29, 1898, to serve for a period of five years. He performed duty as part of the marine guard of the U. S. S. *Texas* from April 22, 1898, throughout the Spanish-American War, to June 25, 1899, when he deserted.

On June 12, 1898, the marine guard of the U. S. S. *Texas* was landed at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to reinforce the marine battalion engaged with the Spaniards. Mr. Creekmore was one of 37 marines who landed, helped to hoist the American flag in Cuba, and was one of four men who volunteered to dig the graves, under heavy fire, to bury the first Americans who fell in battle.

On July 3, 1898, the U. S. S. *Texas* was engaged in the battle of Santiago, at which time Mr. Creekmore was a member of her crew.

On November 5, 1899, he enlisted in the Army, under the name of Harry Paul, for service in the Philippine Islands; he served two years in the insurrection, and was honorably discharged from the Army, with character "good."

During the World War Mr. Creekmore was employed in the naval aircraft factory at Philadelphia, Pa., as a ship joiner. He had previously applied for enlistment in both the Navy and Marine Corps, but was not accepted.

The committee feels that, in view of Mr. Creekmore's honorable service in the Army and his patriotic efforts during the World War, the disability now standing against his name and record should be relieved.

The following letter from the Secretary of the Navy, addressed to the chairman of the Committee on Naval Affairs of the House of Representatives, clearly sets forth the views and recommendations of the Navy Department, and is hereby made a part of this report:

NAVY DEPARTMENT,
Washington, May 22, 1926.

The CHAIRMAN COMMITTEE ON NAVAL AFFAIRS,
House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.

MY DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Replying further to the committee's letter of April 14, 1926, inclosing the bill (S. 2178) for the relief of Harry P. Creekmore, and requesting the views and recommendations of the Navy Department thereon, I have the honor to inform you as follows:

The records in this case show that Harry P. Creekmore enlisted in the Marine Corps as a private on March 29, 1898, for a period of five years. He served on board the U. S. S. *Texas* as a member of the marine guard throughout the Spanish-American War and deserted from that vessel on June 25, 1899. The records further show that Creekmore applied for enlistment in both the Navy and Marine Corps in April, 1917, to serve during the World War, but was not accepted for reenlistment because of his past record. In his letter applying for reenlistment he claims to have served in the Army under the name of Harry Paul from November 6, 1899, to November 8, 1902, when he was discharged by reason of expiration of service, with character "Good."

The bill S. 2178 will result in no cost to naval appropriations if enacted into law. However, it was referred to the Commissioner of Pensions for information as to whether a pension charge would be involved, and there is inclosed herewith for the committee's information a copy of the reply received from the First Assistant Secretary of the Interior Department, dated May 7, 1926, which is self-explanatory.

The bill S. 2178 was also referred to the Bureau of the Budget, with the above information as to cost and a statement to the effect that the Navy Department contemplated making an unfavorable report thereon, and under date of May 19, 1926, the Navy Department was informed that this report would not be in conflict with the financial program of the President.

In view of the foregoing, and the fact that this proposed legislation is individual in character and is not for the general good of the naval service, the Navy Department recommends that the bill S. 2178 be not enacted.

Sincerely yours,

E. W. EBERLE,
Acting Secretary of the Navy.