

CLAYTON H. ADAMS

FEBRUARY 25, 1927.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed

Mr. WHEELER, from the Committee on Military Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 1391]

The Committee on Military Affairs, to which was referred the bill (H. R. 1391) for the relief of Clayton H. Adams, having considered the same, report thereon with the recommendation that it do pass.

A similar bill was considered by the Sixty-fourth Congress and the report of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs, which recommended the relief sought for in this bill is made a part of this recommendation.

[Senate Report No. 697, Sixty-fourth Congress, first session]

This is a case which has been before the Senate for many years. Upon its submission to the War Department for report, in 1905, the committee was advised that—

“The name of Clayton H. Adams, has not been found on the rolls on file in this office, of any company of the Fifty-ninth Illinois Infantry Volunteers, and nothing has been found of record to show that a person of that name rendered any service as of that organization during the Civil War.”

Nevertheless, from other official sources, as will appear in certain papers hereinafter quoted and made a part of this report, it is shown (1) that Mr. Adams did serve in the Mississippi Marine Brigade in an organization known as “Ellet’s ram fleet,” operating in the Mississippi River in 1862; (2) that the fleet was fitted out under direction of the War Department and was commanded by Col. Alfred W. Ellet, of the Fifty-ninth Illinois Infantry Regiment, from which organization the sole armed force of the fleet was drawn; and (3) that Mr. Adams was paid for services rendered as a member of Colonel Ellet’s ram fleet.

Mr. Adams maintains that he enlisted as a soldier; that he was furnished with gun, saber, revolver, clothing, and other equipment, and was drilled, with others in the regiment, twice daily for some time; that the chief carpenter of the ram fleet, who had known him before the war, asked for his detail to assist in the carpentering, which was granted, but that during battles and skirmishes he was ordered to fall in and fight with the rest, which he did. His assertions are corroborated by the sworn statements of comrades who served on the *Monarch* with him. He further maintains that in those days there was no thought in his mind of the difference between his pay and that of ordinary soldiers who were not detailed for special duty and no thought of pension and possible difficulties on account of his different duties incident to his detail.

Whatever the records may or may not show, there seems to be conclusive evidence before your committee that the said Clayton H. Adams did enlist for service in the War of the Rebellion with the intention of being a soldier. For many years those who served with him, side by side, have been enjoying the benefits and privileges of pension, etc., while he has had no relief extended him by the Government. Now, in his declining years, he seeks the benefits of the pension laws, which he needs, and it would seem that they should, in equity, be given him.

Attention is invited to the appendix following, which contains further facts concerning the case:

#### APPENDIX

#### LETTER FROM BUREAU OF NAVIGATION, NAVY DEPARTMENT, DESCRIPTIVE OF ORIGIN OF ELLET'S RAM FLEET

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY,  
BUREAU OF NAVIGATION,  
Washington, D. C., September 8, 1904.

SIR: Responding to the request contained in your letter of the 3d instant addressed to General Ainsworth, Military Secretary, War Department, and by that official transmitted to this bureau, for information as to the naval history claimed by Clayton H. Adams, of Medora, Ill., in the rams *Monarch* and *Queen* of the United States ram fleet, War of the Rebellion, I have to inform you that the fleet referred to appears to have been that known as Ellet's ram fleet operating in the Mississippi River in 1862, two vessels of which were designated as *Monarch* and *Queen of the West*. This fleet was composed of vessels not controlled by the Navy, but was fitted out under direction of the War Department (see *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, The Century Co., vol. 1, pp. 453-459), and was commanded by Col. Alfred W. Ellet of the Fifty-ninth Illinois Infantry Regiment from which organization the sole armed force of the fleet was drawn, as set out in the history referred to. It is suggested that possibly Mr. Adams's service was in the capacity of one of the crew, operating a chartered vessel and not strictly military as viewed by the Commissioner of Pensions, this in distinction from the armed force assigned thereto. This is known to be the view held by the Commissioner of Pensions concerning service rendered by many in the western gunboat flotilla, an organization controlled by the Army until September 30, 1862, when turned over to the Navy by authority of Congress.

Concerning your inquiry whether it is worth your while to introduce a bill in the next session of Congress with the view to correcting Adams's record, the bureau prefers not to make suggestion in this single case, having no record whatever of the service he claims. It is believed, however, that the character of service performed by certain of the crews of Ellet's ram fleet and the western gunboat flotilla, with the view to defining whether or not pensions are proper, is a subject worthy of congressional attention.

Very respectfully,

J. E. PILLSBURY,  
Acting Chief of Bureau.

Hon. BENJAMIN F. CALDWELL,  
Springfield, Ill.

#### AFFIDAVIT OF CLAYTON H. ADAMS

MEDORA, ILL., February 21, 1908.

To whom it may concern:

Statement of Clayton H. Adams in relation to his enlistment and service in the service of the United States in the War of the Rebellion.

I enlisted in the service at Bunker Hill, Ill., on the 1st day of September, 1862, under Col. Alfred W. Elliott, who furnished me transportation to Cairo, Ill., and he ordered me to report on board the *Monarch*, one of the Mississippi ram fleet vessels that was at Mound City on the Ohio River. A few days later Colonel Elliott came to Mound City and swore me into the service and assigned me to the *Monarch*. I was furnished with gun, saber, revolver, clothing, etc. I commenced drilling twice a day for about two weeks. George W. Andrews, chief carpenter of the ram

fleet, knew me before the war and asked Colonel Elliott to detail me to help him with the carpenter work. Colonel Elliott granted the request, and I was detailed to do carpenter work, which I did the balance of my time of enlistment, except at different times when the fleet was in a battle or skirmish, then I was ordered to fall in and fight the same as all other soldiers. We helped to clear the Yazoo River in December 23 to 29, 1862, to let General Sherman's army land to attack Vicksburg in the rear. The fleet and General Sherman's army left the Yazoo and went up the river to Fort Hindman, Ark., post January 4 to 17, 1863, and took the fort under a heavy fire. Our vessel (the *Monarch*) was the first vessel to steam by the fort. From there the fleet and army returned to Vicksburg. Below the Yazoo River at different times the *Monarch* had engagements while I was in the service, and in every case I did military work the same as any soldier.

After serving my term of enlistment I was ordered to Memphis, and there received my discharge, and transportation was furnished me to St. Louis, Mo.

By request of the paymaster at Cincinnati, Ohio, I sent him my discharge in order to draw my money; this I did, requesting him to return my discharge, but I have never received it. In December, 1893, I made an application for a pension under a late law, but after working on it for several years found I was not pensionable under the act of June, 1891, as my Army record showed my discharge as a carpenter belonging to the Quartermaster's Department, classing me as a civilian and not one belonging to the Army. This is all wrong for my name to appear on the record, which keeps me barred from getting a pension as you will see by the above statement.

The Mississippi ram fleet was manned by detachment of various Illinois regiments, mostly from the Fifty-ninth Illinois, and from its organization as a fleet was controlled by the Navy until September, 1862, the month I enlisted; then it was transferred to the Army, and for this reason my record should appear on the roll as a soldier and belonging to the Army, Fifty-ninth Illinois Volunteers. Colonel Elliott recruited from that regiment, and at the time I was sworn in the service the fleet was under the control of the Army.

In order to explain my situation as a soldier I have had to make this statement quite lengthy.

Trusting that my Army record may be corrected I have been waiting a good many years to get a pension as a soldier not as a civilian.

CLAYTON H. ADAMS.

Subscribed and sworn to before me by Clayton H. Adams, who declares that the statements above are true to the best of his recollection and belief, this 21st day of February, A. D. 1908.

[SEAL.]

C. W. TIETSORT, Notary Public.

#### AFFIDAVIT OF JOHN P. SAWYER

STATE OF ARKANSAS,

County of Arkansas, ss:

In the matter of the claim of Clayton H. Adams, personally appeared before me, a notary public in and for the county and State aforesaid, John P. Sawyer, aged 66 years, who, being duly sworn according to law, declares as follows:

That he remembers very well meeting said Clayton H. Adams before the War of the Rebellion, and that in August, 1861, he enlisted in the Ninth Missouri Regiment at St. Louis, Mo.; shortly after that he was transferred to the Fifty-ninth Regiment Illinois Infantry, then to the Mississippi ram fleet, commanded by Col. Alfred W. Elliott. Early in the fall, I think in September, 1862, I was assigned to the *Monarch*, one of the fleet. I remember well seeing Clayton H. Adams the first time on the *Monarch* while laying at Mound City, Ill., on the Ohio River in the fall of 1862 and remember seeing Comrade Adams drilling at different times. Later in December the fleet went down the river to the Yazoo River. General Sherman's army was there and our vessel helped to clear the river for Sherman's army to land to attack Vicksburg in the rear. While there our vessel had some fighting to do. I remember Comrade Adams taking a part in the skirmish. We were there about a week, then General Sherman withdrew his forces and a part of the ram fleet went with the army to Fort Hindman. The *Monarch* was the first vessel that steamed by the fort. Comrade Adams took

part in that battle. I also saw him working at carpenter work at different times while on the vessel. I can freely state that I always found Comrade Adams to be a good reliable man and a true soldier.

JOHN P. SAWYER.

Witnesses—

S. CHAMBERLAIN.

RAY O. BURKS.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 26th day of February, A. D. 1908, by the above-named affiant, and I certify that I read said affidavit to said affiant and acquainted him with its contents before he executed the same. I further certify that I am in no wise interested in said case and that said affiant is personally known to me and that he is a credible person.

[SEAL.]

G. W. FAGAN, *Notary Public.*

My commission expires September 19, 1909.

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TREASURY DEPARTMENT'S RECORD OF PAYMENT FOR SERVICE OF CLAYTON H. ADAMS

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
OFFICE OF AUDITOR FOR WAR DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, March 23, 1912.*

HON. FRANCIS E. WARREN,  
*United States Senate.*

SIR: Referring to your letter received the 20th instant, requesting a statement as to what the records show as to the service and payment of Clayton H. Adams as a member of Colonel Ellet's ram fleet in 1862, I have the honor to state the records show that Clayton Adams was paid for services rendered on the United States steam ram *Monarch* as carpenter from September 1, 1862, to March 1, 1863, six months, at \$60 per month, \$360, less war tax,  $1.80 = \$358.20$ , and payment was made in May, 1863.

Respectfully,

E. A. GANGWER, *Auditor.*

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MR. ADAMS'S STATEMENT RELATIVE TO PAY AS A CIVILIAN EMPLOYEE

HILLSBORO, ILL., *March 31, 1913.*

HON. C. D. CLARK,  
*Washington, D. C.*

DEAR SENATOR: Since receiving your letter of April 1, 1912, I have been making a few inquiries and am in a position to comply with the instructions you gave me at that time. I notice that you are holding the report for further evidence. Since receiving your letters I have found three comrades who served on the *Monarch* at the same time I did. I am inclosing affidavits from some of these men to prove that I served in the Army, as I informed you a year or so ago, and was detailed to do carpenter work also. I will be greatly obliged to you if you will give my case your special attention and introduce a bill before the Senate for the correction of my record, showing that I was in the Army as a soldier and not as a carpenter. That the records show I was simply a carpenter is purely the fault of the clerk, and I do not think I should be held responsible for his mistakes, especially as the situation stands with these affidavits in my favor, and also from the fact that many other records from the days of 1861 have proven inaccurate.

I note what you say as to the pay I received that leads you to think I could not be doing military work and draw carpenter pay (\$60 a month). A good part of my military work, drilling, etc., was during the first part of my enlistment, and before the quarterly pay roll was made out the clerk asked me if I had been working as a carpenter. Since I was detailed, I told him I had most of the time, and he made out the pay roll accordingly. This explains how I was paid \$60 a month. I think this should prove beyond all reasonable doubt that I am entitled to a pension.

I think the affidavits and papers that I am inclosing show conclusively that I was a soldier in the Civil War and that I am entitled to whatever is due a soldier. Anything you can do for me in this matter and anything you can get your friends to do will be greatly appreciated. In the meanwhile, if I can be of any further



aid, will be willing to do anything possible to get this matter closed up as soon as possible.

Thanking you in advance for your prompt attention to this matter, I remain,  
Yours truly,

CLAYTON H. ADAMS.

ADDITIONAL AFFIDAVIT OF JOHN P. SAWYER

STATE OF ARKANSAS, *County of Arkansas, ss:*

In the matter of Clayton H. Adams, United States Navy ram *Monarch*, original invalid pension.

On this 19th day of March, A. D. 1913, personally appeared before me, a notary public in and for the aforesaid county, duly authorized to administer oaths, John P. Sawyer, aged 71 years, a resident of Stuttgart, in the county of Arkansas and State of Arkansas, whose post-office address is Stuttgart, Ark., and well known to me to be reputable and entitled to credit, and who, being duly sworn, declared in relation to aforesaid case as follows:

I, John P. Sawyer, was personally acquainted with said Clayton H. Adams. We both served on the same boat, the *Monarch*, and I saw the said Clayton H. Adams doing military service at different times, and at the battle of Arkansas Post he was ordered on deck with rest of the soldiers, and he fought in said battle. I also knew him to be detailed to do extra work as carpenter. I also know that he was working in the water, fixing drag hooks to drag up torpedoes, to raise the boats; that was the cause of his having typhoid fever, and came near dying; and I also knew he was one of the sharpshooters at the Arkansas Post. I know he was a regular soldier, and done carpenter work when detailed to do so. And I further declare that I have no interest in said case, only as a brother soldier, and think he deserves a pension for such.

JOHN P. SAWYER.

STATE OF ARKANSAS,  
*County of Arkansas, ss;*

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 19th day of March, A. D. 1913, by the above-named affiant, and I certify that I read said affidavit to said affiant, including all the words erased, and all the words added and acquainted him with its contents before he executed the same. I further certify that I am in no wise interested in said case, nor am I concerned in its prosecution; and that said affiant is personally known to me, and that he is a creditable person.

[SEAL.]

A. W. HARPER, *Notary Public*.

My commission expires January 11, 1916.

I, I. C. Gibson, clerk of the county court in and for aforesaid county and State, do certify that A. W. Harper, Esq., who hath signed his name to the foregoing declaration and affidavit, was at the time of so doing a notary public in and for said county and State, duly commissioned and sworn; that all his official acts are entitled to full faith and credit, and that his signature thereunto is genuine.

Witness my hand and seal of office this 19th day of March, 1913.

[SEAL.]

I. C. GIBSON, *Clerk of the County Court*.

AFFIDAVIT OF CHARLES C. ISAACS

STATE OF ILLINOIS,  
*Macoupin County:*

On this 24th day of March, A. D. 1913, before me, a notary public within and for the county and State aforesaid, personally came and appeared Charles C. Isaacs, of the city of Gillespie, in the State of Illinois, who, being by me duly sworn according to law, on oath declares that he was personally acquainted with Clayton H. Adams; that they both served on the boat *Monarch*; that I saw the said Clayton H. Adams doing military work at different times. He was at the Battle of Arkansas Post, and fought in said battle. I also knew him to be detailed to do carpenter work. I also knew he was working fixing drag hooks

to drag up torpedoes. I also knew he was sick with some kind of fever. I further declare that I have no interest in said claim only as a soldier, having knowledge of the above facts.

CHARLES C. ISAACS,

Subscribed and sworn to before me in and for the county and State aforesaid this 27th day of March, A. D. 1913.

[SEAL.]

R. H. ISAACS, *Notary Public.*

ADDITIONAL AFFIDAVIT OF CLAYTON H. ADAMS

STATE OF ILLINOIS, *Montgomery County, ss:*

On this 31st day of March, A. D. 1913, before me, a notary public within and for the county and State aforesaid, personally came and appeared Clayton H. Adams, of the town of Riverton, Wyo., who, being by me duly sworn according to law, on oath declares that he was sworn in the United States service on the ram *Monarch* at Mound City, Ill., September 1, 1862, by Gen. Alfred Elliott, commanding the Mississippi ram fleet; that he was furnished the required arms (Navy revolver, musket, and saber) to use in service and that he did military service during the time he served in the war; also detailed to do carpenter work. In March, 1863, he was furnished transportation to St. Louis and received his discharge at Memphis, Tenn.

CLAYTON H. ADAMS.

Subscribed and sworn to before me in and for the county and State aforesaid, this 31st day of March, A. D. 1913.

[SEAL.]

H. R. CRAWFORD, *Notary Public.*