

CAPTAIN M. M. HAWES, ASSISTANT QUARTERMASTER.

[To accompany bill H. R. No. 754.]

FEBRUARY 13, 1863.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. BUFFINTON, from the Committee on Military Affairs, made the following

REPORT.

The Committee on Military Affairs, to whom was referred the petition of Captain M. M. Hawes, assistant quartermaster, for relief from losses of government funds by theft, have had the same under consideration, and beg leave to report :

The facts in the case, amply substantiated by the accompanying papers submitted to the committee, are as follows :

An iron safe in his possession, containing one thousand six hundred and ninety-eight dollars and twenty-seven cents of government funds, and also a receipt roll signed by government employes engaged and paid by him, was stolen from under his bed in his tent, in camp near Sharpsburg, Maryland, during the night of November 4, 1862. Captain Hawes had counted the bills and examined the papers the preceding day, and had the safe carefully watched during the daytime and placed under the bed on which he slept at night.

On the morning of November 5, 1862, the safe was found some distance from the captain's tent, at the bottom of a well, broken open and rifled of its contents.

Captain Hawes used every effort to discover the robbers and recover the money and papers, but without success. He did succeed, however, in getting all the receipts for disbursements of government funds embraced in the receipt roll renewed, excepting those for two payments—one of \$100 to Richard Kerens, and one of \$90 to John W. Bryan, who were employed as assistant wagon-masters, the one from June 1 to September 10, and the other from June 1 to September 1, at the rate of \$30 each per month, and were paid the above-mentioned sums on September 10, 1862.

To all these facts Captain Hawes himself makes oath. His clerk, Jeremiah Dare, makes oath to all the facts connected with the payment of the two assistant wagon-masters, whose receipts cannot be recovered.

Brigadier General George H. Gordon, United States volunteers, makes oath that Captain Hawes was assistant quartermaster on his staff; that he was always faithful, energetic, and perfectly reliable; and that he would always accept his statements as true without the slightest hesitation. He also makes oath that usual care and all proper precautions were taken by Captain Hawes for securing the government property.

The general also testifies that he looked over the ground of the larceny, visited the well, saw the rifled safe, aided in attempts to discover the thief, arrested suspicious persons, &c. He also recounts the facts of the safe being taken from under Captain Hawes's bed while he was asleep, and of its containing the money and papers mentioned, and says that, although these did not come within his personal knowledge, he has not a shadow of doubt of their truth.

Other parties, including Marcus Morton, jr., of Massachusetts, certify to the perfect truthfulness, probity, and general high character of Captain Hawes.

The committee are therefore of the opinion that there can be no doubt of the facts as recited above, or of Captain Hawes having done his whole duty, and having been entirely innocent of any blame throughout the matter. They therefore think it but just to him that Congress should relieve him from liability for the money stolen and for the missing receipts, and beg leave to report a bill accordingly.