

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

MARCH 30, 1880.—Ordered to be printed.

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

REPORT:

[To accompany S. Res. 71.]

*The Committee on Military Affairs, to whom was referred the resolution (S. Res. 71) directing the restoration of the official letter books of the executive department of the State of North Carolina, have duly considered the same, and submit the following report:*

Your committee referred the joint resolution to the Secretary of War for information and the views of his department as to the propriety of passing the said resolution, and received the following reply, to wit:

WAR DEPARTMENT,  
Washington, D. C., February 12, 1880.

Hon. F. M. COCKRELL, *United States Senate:*

SIR: In reply to yours, inclosing Senate resolution in reference to the return of the records of the State of North Carolina, I have the honor to say that there is no definite evidence on file going to show how these records came into the possession of this department, but it is believed they were captured by the forces of the United States among the records of the Confederate Government.

The records consist of two (2) letter-books, demy size, containing 709 pages of closely written matter.

They contain correspondence with the Confederate States authorities on a variety of topics, mostly military, with officers of the conscript service, with private persons, with officers and agents of the State engaged in furnishing supplies at home and abroad, with officers of North Carolina troops and civil officers of the State; also proclamations, notices of elections, appointments, orders, &c.

All these treat on a great variety of subjects, mostly military, and show the relations of the State to the Confederate States and the part she took in the war, and cover the period from September 6, 1862, to March 18, 1865.

To copy these books would require the services of a copyist not less than three months, which at \$75 per month, the usual price, would amount to \$225, to which adding the cost of necessary books would make the expense not less than \$250.

In my opinion these original books should remain in this department, and if copies are made, the latter should be furnished to the State of North Carolina, for the following reasons:

1. They pertain to the history of a State in rebellion against the Federal Government, and all such records are as properly subject to capture as those of the Confederate States, since the majority of their contents pertains to subjects bearing on the maintenance of that rebellion.

2. They have been used before high judicial tribunals, where copies would not be admitted, in defeating large claims against the United States. They may be needed for this purpose again.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ALEX. RAMSEY,  
*Secretary of War.*

Your committee find that it is important that the executive department of the State of North Carolina should have complete records of the

action and proceedings of each of the executives of the State, and that the letter-books referred to in the resolution contain the official actions of the then executive of the State from September 6, 1862, to March 18, 1865, an important period in the history of the State, and that the State has now neither duplicates nor copies of said letter-books, and its record of executive actions and proceedings for the period named is incomplete.

Your committee also find that it is highly important to the best interests of the general government that the original letter-books referred to should be kept in its archives for many purposes and reasons. And, further, that in order to complete the record of the State, duly certified copies of said letter-books should be furnished to the executive department of said State, and the originals be retained in the War Department of the general government, and that the cost of copying the same will not exceed \$250 to \$300.

Your committee therefore recommend that said resolution be so amended as to authorize the Secretary of War to cause a duly-certified copy of each of said two letter-books to be made out and delivered to the executive department of said State, and that, as so amended, said resolution be passed.

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