

6-15-1836

Wealthy Beckwith

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WEALTHY BECKWITH.

JUNE 15, 1836.

Made, and concurred in by the House.

Mr. E. WHITTLESEY, from the Committee of Claims, made the following

REPORT:

The Committee of Claims, to which was referred the petition of Wealthy Beckwith, widow of the late Gurdon Beckwith, report:

That she states her husband enlisted into the service of the United States in 1807, or 1808, for five years, and served out his full term; that he was with General Harrison in his engagement with the Indians, and was afterwards with General Hull, and was surrendered a prisoner at the capitulation of Detroit, and was taken to Quebec, and afterwards exchanged; that on his way home he enlisted for one year, and before that year expired he re-enlisted for during the war under Captain Sweet; that he was taken sick in the summer of 1814, and obtained a furlough to return home; that his sickness increased, and his furlough expired when he was unable to return to camp, and he was reported a deserter; that as soon as his health would permit, in the fall of 1814, he joined and reported himself to Lieutenant Brown, and went with him to Sackett's harbor, where he remained until peace, and was directed to go to New London to get his discharge; but on account of sickness was unable to go to New London; but died on his way there. She says, she understood from him, that he did not get the whole of his first five years' pay; and that neither the said Gurdon, nor the petitioner, has received the bounty land to which he was entitled under his second enlistment for during the war. She prays for the pay that may be due, and for the bounty land.

The jurisdiction of this committee only extends to the application for the pay supposed to be due. The subject of bounty land is within the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Public Lands.

The committee addressed a letter to the Secretary of War for information on the subject embraced in the petition. The report of the Third Auditor, with the documents that accompany it, are referred to. It appears there was due to Gurdon Beckwith, when he died, for services under his last enlistment, the sum of \$39 73. This was for his pay from the 28th of November, 1814, to the 26th of April, 1815. He belonged to the 37th regiment, and was accused of desertion, and confined in the provost guard house at Sackett's harbor on the 28th of November, 1814, from which he was released on the 22d of April, 1815. On the 26th of April, 1815, he was permitted to proceed to New London without delay, and report himself to the commanding officer.

Application was made on the 2d of April, 1826, for the pay due to said soldier, which was refused by the Third Auditor, on the ground that he had forfeited his pay by his desertion, and by not reporting himself to the commanding officer at New London.

This decision was communicated to the honorable Mr. Badger, who presented the application on the 7th of April, 1826. Testimony was taken on the 18th of the same month, to show that the absence of the said Beckwith, in 1814, was owing to his having been confined by sickness, and that the reason he did not report himself at New London, was, that he was sick and died on his way there.

This testimony was submitted to the Secretary of War, and he decided that the said sum of \$39 73 be allowed, and it was paid to Mr. Badger, under a power of attorney, on the 8th of May, 1826.

In relation to money claimed to be due, under the enlistment in 1807, or 1808, Mr. Hagner says, this is the first time an application has been made for it; that the rolls of that period have been generally destroyed; and that he is unable to make any search, because the company nor the regiment in which he served is mentioned.

The documents procured from the Third Auditor, being original papers, their restoration to the files is requested.

The committee do not find that any money was due the deceased, and submit the following resolutions:

Resolved, That so far as Wealthy Beckwith asks the pay she alleged to be due her late husband, Gurdon Beckwith, for his military services, she is not entitled to relief.

Resolved, That the Committee of Claims be discharged from so much of the petition of Wealthy Beckwith as relates to bounty land, and that the same be referred to the Committee on the Public Lands.