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Conrad Widrig

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H.R. Rep. No. 147, 26th Cong., 1st Sess. (1840)

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CONRAD WIDRIG.

[To accompany bill H. R. No. 157.]

MARCH 5, 1840.

Mr. TAYLOR, from the Committee on Revolutionary Pensions, made the following

REPORT :

The Committee on Revolutionary Pensions, to whom was referred the petition of Conrad Widrig, concur in the annexed report made at the 3d session of the 25th Congress, and report a bill.

JANUARY 16, 1839.

The Committee on Revolutionary Pensions, to whom was referred the resolution submitted by Mr. Mann, of New York, inquiring into the expediency of placing the name of Conrad Widrig, a soldier of the revolution, upon the pension-roll, report :

That the petitioner sets forth in his claim that he volunteered into the service of the United States, at about fifteen years of age, under Captain Henry Starling, of the New York militia ; that, during the service, he was in the battle at Fort Mike, and was one of the eleven Americans who fought and successfully repelled an attack upon that fort by a party of two or three hundred British, Indians, and tories ; that he was engaged in frequent skirmishes with the Indians and tories. He was frequently called to, and served in, other forts along the Mohawk river, to wit: Forts Stanwix, Schuyler, Dayton House, Herkimer, Willet, Wintakef, &c. ; that his service under Captain Starling amounted to about one year, and he was then left under the command of Sergeant Bary, under whom he served for more than two years ; that, while he served under Sergeant Bary, he assisted in tending the ferry across the Mohawk, at Fort Plain, at the time when Colonel Willet and his army crossed in pursuit of Major Ross and his party. His principal station was at Fort Mike, but he was frequently employed in transporting and guarding baggage from fort to fort. His company was under command of Colonel Bellinger. He knew Colonels Willet, Vanschaik, Van Dyke, and Ganssevoort, and frequently assisted them in the transportation of their baggage, &c. ; and was honorably dismissed after about three and a half years' service, but has no documentary evidence of the fact.

Christian Hoffstader testifies that he is ninety-four years of age ; that he has known the petitioner ever since he was born ; that deponent receives a pension for services in the revolutionary war ; that deponent assisted in

tending the ferry at Fort Plain when Colonel Willet's army crossed; that the petitioner attended to the same duty at the same time; that the said duty was performed in pursuance of the orders of Colonel Willet; that deponent frequently saw petitioner in the service, and believes his statement to be correct, knowing him to be a true and faithful soldier, always active and ready, and a man of truth and veracity. Deponent recollects that the battle at Fort Mike was fought a year or more before they tended the ferry.

Jacob Widrig testifies he is seventy-eight years of age, and is the brother of the petitioner; that the deponent, as well as his brother, (the petitioner) was one of the eleven who served in the Fort Mike battle; that deponent was made a prisoner shortly after that battle, at which time the petitioner still remained in the service.

These two witnesses are certified to be men of good reputation, and their testimony entitled to credit.

The objections made by the War Department (see letters of J. L. Edwards, Esq., of August 5th and 22d, 1833, appended and made part of this report) to the admission of the claim, were, first, that it did not appear that the petitioner served in an embodied corps; and, secondly, that his alleged service under a sergeant, tending ferry, &c., was not provided for. One of the witnesses testifies that the battle at Fort Mike was about a year prior to ferrying Colonel Willet's army across the Mohawk: this would make one year's service. The letter of Mr. Edwards of August 22, 1833, speaking of the frontier settlers of New York, says: "*From the irresistible influence of their local position, they were subjected to the most arduous patrol and guard duty.*" These facts, taken in connexion with another fact, that the petitioner was one of the eleven Americans who gallantly fought and repelled the attack upon Fort Mike of two or three hundred British, Indians, and Tories, present a case which the committee think has some merit. They, however, take no exceptions to the general principles contained in Mr. Edwards's letters of the 5th and 22d of August, 1833, and can by no means allow the petitioner all that is claimed. From the character of the service, the doubt as to the amount of the time served, and the doubt as to the petitioner's ability to perform much service at the age of fifteen years, the committee are disposed to allow him a pension for six months' service; and they therefore report a bill.