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Report : Petition of R. Jemison

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IN SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

JANUARY 20, 1851.

Submitted, and ordered to be printed.

Mr. Rusk made the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill S. No. 413.]

The Committee on the Post Office and Post Roads, to whom was referred the petition of Robert Jemison and Benjamin Williamson, praying compensation for extra services in carrying the mail, have had the same under consideration, and respectfully report:

That the claimants were mail contractors, in 1836, to carry the United States mail on route 2656, from Montgomery, Alabama, via Selma, to Tuscaloosa, and in consequence of disturbances with the Creek Indians, were required to carry mails not belonging to their contract. Owing to the failure of the contractors on route 2696, from Selma to Elyton, they were also obliged to carry the mail over said route, for which they never had contracted. At the second session of the 25th Congress, a law was passed authorizing the Postmaster General to cause to be paid to them, as they supposed at the time, the value of all of the extra service thus performed; but that officer, in acting under said law, felt himself constrained, by the terms thereof, to restrict the allowance to the extra services imposed by the Creek disturbances only. (See report and bill on file.) The claimants now ask Congress to pass a law allowing them, in addition to the compensation already granted, the remuneration to which the original contractors from Selma to Elyton would have been entitled, during the same time, had they continued to comply with their contract. The fact of the petitioners having carried the mail from Selma to Elyton, after the original contractors failed to do so, is established by certificates of the postmasters on the route for a great portion of the time, and there can be no reasonable doubt that such was the case. It is further in evidence that, in order to perform the service thus unexpectedly thrown upon them, the claimants were obliged to add to their stock, at a considerable expense.

Under these circumstances, your committee recommend the passage of the accompanying bill.