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Report : Memorial of S. Buchanan

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

JANUARY 21, 1881.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. WITHERS, from the Committee on Pensions, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bills S. 7 and H. R. 3292.]

The Committee on Pensions, to whom were referred the bills (H. R. 3292 and S. 7) granting a pension to Sally M. Buchanan, have examined the same, and report :

That they find the facts to be as stated in report No. 75, House of Representatives of Forty-sixth Congress :

That the memorialist, in her petition filed in this case, substantially sets forth the military history of the said Robert C. Buchanan, and the same will be briefly mentioned in this report to show the grounds upon which the favorable action of this committee is based. The said Robert C. Buchanan entered the Army of the United States as brevet second lieutenant on the 1st day of July, 1830, being attached to the Fourth Infantry, ordered to Fort Crawford, Prairie du Chien, and served with it in and until the close of the "Black Hawk War"; was in command of the gunboats on the Wisconsin River on the night of the capture of Black Hawk; was present at the making of the treaty of General Scott with Keokuk, by which large portions of what is now Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota were ceded to the United States; that he accompanied his regiment, as its adjutant, to Florida, and in 1838 to Fort Cass, in Tennessee, to assist in removing the Cherokees to Fort Gibson, Arkansas, and in command of his company, as its captain, again served in Florida and until the close of the war; that in 1844 he was ordered to Louisiana, where his regiment, with the Third Infantry and the Second Dragoons, formed the "Army of Observation"; that in July, 1845, he proceeded with his regiment to Corpus Christi, Tex., where they formed the "Army of Occupation"; that he served with the troops under General Taylor until after the capture of the city of Monterey, when, at the request of the officers of the Maryland and District of Columbia Volunteers, he was assigned to the command of those troops, and commanded them until they were discharged at Tampico, Mexico, in May, 1847; that he then rejoined his regiment, and was assigned its junior major, and served in that capacity until after the capture of the city of Mexico; that in January, 1848, he was appointed by General Scott acting assistant inspector-general to the army in Mexico, in which capacity he served until the regiment of voltigeurs was mustered out of the service in September, 1848. In the spring of 1856 he was assigned by General Wool to the command of the district of Southern Oregon and Northern California, to command the troops operating against the Indians in what is known as the "Rogue River War," and in the period of three months, with about 350 men, succeeded in bringing the war to a final close, having beaten the Indians several times, and capturing about 1,800 prisoners, and removing them about 200 miles north of the depot. He commanded a brigade of regular troops in the Army of the Potomac, under Generals McClellan and Burnside, until after the battle of Fredericksburg; in 1863-'64 he was assigned to duty as assistant provost-marshal-general of the State of New Jersey, until the fall of 1864, when he was ordered to New Orleans to command his regiment in the Department of the Gulf; in the following year he was placed on duty at Washington, under the immediate command of the then Secretary of War, E. M. Stanton; and in the latter part of 1867 was ordered to New Orleans to command the district of Louisiana, with his brevet rank of brigadier-general; and in March, 1868, succeeded General Hancock in the command of the fifth reconstruction district, with his brevet rank of major-general, until after the State of Louisiana was admitted into the Union;

he then organized the Department of Louisiana, which he commanded, after the death of General Rousseau, until April, 1869, when he was ordered with his command to Fort Wayne; and on the 31st day of December, 1870, at his own request, after a service of more than forty years, he was placed upon the retired list, with the rank of colonel and brevet major-general.

The deceased died of apoplexy on the 29th day of November, 1878, nearly eight years after he was placed upon the retired list. It is therefore impossible to connect his death with disease contracted in the service in the line of duty. Your committee, while fully appreciating the fact of the honorable, distinguished, and long-continued services of General Robert C. Buchanan, do not feel that such services justify them in making the widow of General Buchanan an exception to the general rule, that widows of officers or enlisted men are not entitled to pension where their husbands died of disease not contracted in the service in the line of duty. They therefore report adversely.