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On the Relief of Gen. Ord

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

JANUARY 11, 1881.—Ordered to be printed.

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

REPORT:

[To accompany bill S. 1922.]

The Committee on Military Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (S. 1922) for the relief of Brig. Gen. and Bvt. Maj. Gen. E. O. C. Ord, respectfully submit the following report:

General Ord entered the United States Military Academy as a cadet September 1, 1835; graduated in June, 1839; and was assigned to the Third Artillery as second lieutenant July 1, 1839. From that time until the date of his retirement from active service (December 6, 1880) he was continuously in the military service of the United States, a period—counting from the date of his entrance into the Academy as a cadet—of more than forty-five years; or, counting from the date of his commission as second lieutenant, Third Artillery, of more than forty-one years.

General Ord was retired from active service December 6, 1880, by the President, by virtue of the following section of the Revised Statutes:

SECTION 1244. When any officer has served forty-five years as a commissioned officer, or is sixty-two years old, he may be retired from active service, at the discretion of the President.

General Ord had served forty-one years, five months, and six days as a commissioned officer at the date of his retirement. Hence, his retracry was not put on length of service, but on the ground that he was sixty-two years old; he was sixty-two years old, as the committee is advised, on the 19th of October, 1880.

The committee subjoin the official history of General Ord, furnished by the Adjutant-General of the Army and transmitted to the committee by the Secretary of War, as follows:

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, December 22, 1880.

Military history of E. O. C. Ord, of the United States Army, as shown by the files of this office.

Graduated at the United States Military Academy and appointed second lieutenant Third Artillery, July 1, 1839; first lieutenant Third Artillery, July 1, 1841; captain Third Artillery, September 7, 1850; brigadier-general of volunteers, September 14, 1861; major Fourth Artillery, November 21, 1861; major-general of volunteers, May 2, 1862; lieutenant-colonel First Artillery, December 11, 1865; brigadier-general United States Army, July 26, 1866; mustered out of volunteer service September 1, 1866; brevetted lieutenant-colonel December 20, 1861, for gallant and meritorious service in the battle of Drainesville, Va.; colonel, September 19, 1862, for gallant and meritorious service in the battle of Iuka, Miss.; brigadier-general, March 13, 1868, for gallant and meritorious service in the battle of the Hatchie, Mississippi; and major-general, United States Army, March 13, 1865, for gallant and meritorious service in the assault on Fort Harrison, Virginia.

Service.—Joined regiment November, 1839, and served therewith in the Florida war against Seminole Indians to February 14, 1842; on leave of absence to April 14, 1842, and on detached service to July 29, 1842; on duty with regiment at Fort Macon, North Carolina, to October 28, 1844, and Fort McHenry, Maryland, to November 25, 1845; on Coast Survey duty to May 24, 1846, and recruiting service to June 19, 1846; with regiment en route to and in California to April 9, 1849; on leave to August 23, 1850, and on duty with regiment in California to December, 1850; en route to and at Fort Independence, Massachusetts, to December 30, 1852; on Coast Survey duty to March 29, 1855; on duty with regiment in California (participating in Yakima expedition in 1855, Rogue River expedition in 1856, and Spokane expedition in 1858) to October 10, 1858; on detached service at Washington, D. C., to February 18, 1859; with regiment at Fort Monroe, Virginia, to October 16, 1860; on detached service and en route to join regiment in Washington Territory to March 31, 1861; with regiments at Fort Vancouver, Washington Territory, to May 7, 1861, and Presidio of San Francisco, Cal., to September 28, 1861; commanding a brigade in the Army of the Potomac from November, 1861, to May 2, 1862, and a division in the Department of the Rappahannock May 16 to June, 1862; in command of Corinth, Miss., from June to August 5, 1862; left wing, Army of the Tennessee, from August to September, 1862, and district of Jackson, Tennessee, to October 5, 1862, when severely wounded in the battle of the Hatchie, Tennessee; absent on account of wounds to November 20, 1862; member of a military commission to March 13, 1863; on duty in the Department of Virginia from April 20 to May 28, 1863; commanding Thirteenth Army Corps from June 18 to October 28, 1863; on sick leave of absence to January 8, 1864; commanding Thirteenth Army Corps to February 20, 1864; awaiting orders to March 23, 1864; commanding troops in the Department of West Virginia April 6 to June, 1864; awaiting orders to July 9, 1864; commanding Eighth Army Corps July 11 to 21, 1864, and Eighteenth Army Corps, Army of the James, to September 29, 1864, when wounded in the assault and capture of Fort Harrison, Virginia; absent on account of wounds to December 1, 1864; commanding Twenty-fourth Army Corps December 3, 1864, to January 7, 1865; Department of Virginia and North Carolina, January 8 to February 6, 1865; Department of Virginia, February 6 to June 14, 1865; Department of the Ohio, July 5, 1865, to August 6, 1866; Department of Arkansas, August 29, 1866, to March 11, 1866; Fourth Military District, March 26, 1867, to January 9, 1868; Department of California, April 24, 1868, to December 4, 1871; Department of the Platte, December 11, 1871, to April 6, 1874; and Department of Texas, April 11, 1874, to December 6, 1880; when, being over 62 years of age, he was, by direction of the President, retired from active service, in conformity with section 1244 Revised Statutes.

R. W. DRUM,
Adjutant-General.

For still further information the following letter was addressed to General W. T. Sherman, commanding the Army:

UNITED STATES SENATE CHAMBER,
Washington, December 20, 1880.

GENERAL: I have the honor to call your attention to the accompanying bill (S. 1922) for the relief of Brig. Gen. and Bvt. Maj. Gen. Edward O. C. Ord, which has been referred by the Senate to the Committee on Military Affairs, and by that committee to me for investigation and report to the committee. And I respectfully invite your attention to the following points:

1st. State how long you have known General Ord, and what is your estimate of him as an officer and a gentleman, and of his services to the country.

What is his physical condition, as well as mental, and what are his habits?

If you have personal knowledge of his condition as respects property, and if your reply should be that he is a poor man, then state, if you can, what special demands have been made upon his purse, and how long has that special demand existed.

In calling your special attention to these points, I beg not to be understood as designing a limit upon your reply, but shall be much gratified to have it as full as you deem proper to make it.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

S. B. MAXEY,
Of Senate Military Committee and Subcommittee in Charge.

This communication elicited the following indorsement upon the bill:

NEW YORK, *December 21, 1880.*

I indorse most heartily the within bill.

W. T. SHERMAN,
General.

And also the following reply :

General Sherman's letter.

FIFTH AVENUE HOTEL, MADISON SQUARE, NEW YORK,
December 21, 1880.

MY DEAR SIR: I am here for a few days, as you can well understand, subject to constant interruptions; but as you doubtless want an early answer to your questions, I will give them, somewhat categorically.

1. How long have I known General Ord?

Answer. Since June, 1836.

2. What is my estimate of him as an officer and gentleman, and of his services to his country?

Answer. It would need a volume to record all this. See Cullum's History of the West Point Graduates, Class of 1839. He has been a prominent actor in every war since 1839—Florida, Mexican, Rogue River, Oregon, the civil war, &c. Always on duty at the most exposed points. Wounded many times. Never sick or absent. He has had all the hard knocks of service, and never on soft or fancy duty. He has always been called on when hard duty was expected, and never flinched. He was a corps commander, and at the close of the war commanded in chief the Army of the James; and I have always understood that his skillful, hard march, the night before, was one of the chief causes of Lee's surrender. His habits have always been good, and he is the impersonation of honesty and fidelity to the government.

3. What is his physical condition, as well as mental, and what his habits?

Answer. As a young man he was noted for his physical endurance, and what he has endured since was enough to have killed a dozen ordinary men. When I saw him last, about two years ago, he was the same hardy man; and I infer he is still unusually vigorous and strong for his years—now 62. His mental strength is the same as ever, as evinced by his orders, his written letters, and accounts.

4. Respecting my personal knowledge of his condition as to money, property, &c.

Answer. I know, of my own knowledge, that he has always since 1840 contributed largely to the care of his father, mother, and to the education of a sister. Since about 1855, when he married in San Francisco, he has been charged with the expenses of a large family—I think seven or eight children—their education and preparation for life. He has been ordered about very often at heavy personal expense. Never attempted any speculation in property, even in the temptations of California in 1848-'49. Never engaged in any lucrative business to supplement his small pay as lieutenant or captain; and I am informed that he to-day has not laid by the money needed to bring his family from San Antonio to Washington City—his home in 1835, which he then left a boy. He well knew he was subject to be retired during 1880, but hoped and begged for promotion to major-general first, so as to have the advantage of the increased pay. He is a pure and thorough officer, but singularly unfitted to embark in any civil occupation.

I hope your bill will be passed quickly, that our great and rich country may soon be relieved of the imputation of turning out to charity so worthy a public servant, and one who has helped to establish our national fame.

With great respect,

W. T. SHERMAN.

Hon. S. B. MAXEY,
United States Senate, Washington, D. C.

The committee are of opinion that this splendid military record of General Ord, running through three wars—in the last twice wounded, once severely—and covering a period of more than forty-one years, needs no comment.

General Ord was placed on duty according to his brevet rank in 1867, by virtue of the following order:

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, November 23, 1867.

[SPECIAL ORDERS No. 503.]

[Extract.]

4. By direction of the President, the following-named officers are hereby assigned to duty according to their brevet rank :

Bvt. Maj. Gen. Irvin McDowell, brigadier-general; Bvt. Maj. Gen. Lovell H. Rous-

seau, brigadier-general; Bvt. Maj. Gen. John M. Schofield, brigadier-general; Bvt. Maj. Gen. E. R. S. Canby, brigadier-general; Bvt. Maj. Gen. E. O. C. Ord, brigadier-general.

By command of General Grant.

E. D. TOWNSEND,
Assistant Adjutant-General.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
January 5, 1881.

Official copy.

GEO. D. RUGGLES,
Assistant Adjutant-General.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, May 14, 1870.

[SPECIAL ORDERS No. 112.]

[Extract.]

* * * * *
9. By direction of the President, the following-named officers are hereby assigned to duty according to their brevet rank :

Brig. and Bvt. Maj. Gen. P. St. George Cooke; Brig. and Bvt. Maj. Gen. E. O. C. Ord.

By command of General Sherman :

E. D. TOWNSEND,
Adjutant-General.

ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,
January 5, 1881.

Official copy.

GEO. D. RUGGLES,
Assistant Adjutant-General.

This order has never been revoked. His assignment to the command of the Department of Texas, a command larger even than that prescribed by law for a major-general, placed him on duty there according to his brevet rank of major-general. (See sec. 1114, Rev. Stats.)

He was placed in command of the Military Department of Texas, as shown by his military history, on the 11th day of April, 1874.

He continued in command of that military department till December 6 last, the date of the order retiring him from active service.

General Ord's military record manifests his qualities and great service as a soldier.

In command of the Department of Texas he was called upon to discharge the most delicate and difficult duties, demanding a knowledge of international law, a knowledge of the Mexican and Indian character, and a high order of executive ability. The Texas frontier, between the United States and Mexico, is over 1400 miles in extent. It is a river fordable at intervals along its entire length. Great anxiety was felt everywhere in respect to the disturbed condition of that frontier at the time General Ord took command of the Department of Texas. It was made the subject of remark in numerous messages from the President to Congress. By consummate skill, energy, and great prudence General Ord contributed greatly, and all that any department commander could contribute, towards securing and preserving amicable relations with Mexico, and at the same time protecting our people from robbery, rapine, murder, and arson, which had been sadly frequent for many years along that frontier, perpetrated by lawless Indians and Mexican banditti who

crossed the river and invaded our territory in pursuance of their criminal designs.

The present condition of comparative peace and safety and of prosperity on the border speaks volumes in favor of the administration of General Ord.

In the opinion of this committee, this exceptionally valuable service to the whole country would, in some degree, meet recognition by the passage of the accompanying bill; and a just recognition of exceptionally important services rendered by the public servant to his country is wise in any government.

Wherefore the committee recommend the passage of the accompanying bill, which they report back amended as shown by the bill.

And, in making this recommendation, the committee are governed by the facts of this case, which, in their judgment, not only justify the passage of the bill, but render it eminently just, wise, and proper; and whilst the committee would not recommend a bill for retiring an officer in a grade higher than his actual grade, except for some special reason justifying a departure from such rule, they believe the facts in this case fully warrant the recommendation.

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