

6-24-1884

Report : Petition of M. Ord

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

JUNE 24, 1884.—Ordered to be printed.

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

REPORT:

[To accompany bill H. R. 1569.]

The Committee on Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 1569) granting a pension to Mrs. Mary M. Ord, have examined the same, and report:

The facts in this case are set forth in the report of the House Committee on Invalid Pensions during the present session (H. R. Report 1144), as follows:

General Ord entered the Military Academy as a cadet September 3, 1835, and graduated June, 1839. He was assigned to the Third Artillery as a second lieutenant July 1, 1839. From that time until his retirement from the active service, December 6, 1880, he was continuously in the military service of the United States, a period of more than forty-five years, counting from the date of his entrance into the Academy as a cadet.

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 was retired on the ground of age, having reached the age of sixty-two, as your committee is advised, on the 19th of October, 1880.

The official history of General Ord is given in the following order, furnished by the Adjutant-General at the time of the announcement of General Ord's death:

[General Orders, No. 54.]

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, July 24, 1883.

With profound sorrow the General of the Army announces the death at Havana, Cuba, at 7 o'clock on the evening of the 22d instant, of Maj. Gen. Edward O. C. Ord, retired, and lately brigadier-general and brevet major-general on the active list.

General Ord was graduated at the Military Academy and appointed second lieutenant in the Third Artillery July 1, 1839. Having passed through the several grades to include that of lieutenant-colonel in the artillery arm he received his appointment as brigadier-general of the permanent establishment on the 26th of July, 1866. He had, on the 14th of September, 1861, for service in war, been appointed brigadier-general of volunteers, and on the 2d of May, 1862, major-general of volunteers. He was mustered out of the volunteer service September 1, 1866.

For gallant services in action at Drainesville, Va.; Iuka, Miss.; the Hatchie, Mississippi, and at the assault of Fort Harrison, Virginia, he received, successively, the brevets of lieutenant-colonel, colonel, brigadier-general, and major-general, United States Army. He served in the Florida war against the Seminole Indians, on the Pacific Coast in the war against Mexico, and in Indian campaigns on the same coast.

In the Army of the Potomac he was a brigade and division commander; in the Army of the Tennessee, he commanded the left wing from August to September, 1862; and subsequently he commanded, successively, the Thirteenth, Eighth, Eighteenth, and

Twenty-fourth Corps and the Army of the James. He was severely wounded in the battle of the Hatchie, Mississippi, and was wounded in the assault and capture of Fort Harrison, Virginia.

Since the late war he has at different times commanded the Departments of Virginia, the Ohio, Arkansas, California, the Platte, Texas, and the Fourth Military District.

He was retired on the 6th day of December, 1880, and by act of Congress approved January 28, 1881, he became a major-general on the retired list. Retirement did not close his active life, for immediately thereafter he engaged in civil pursuits and continued therein until death suddenly came upon him.

Distinguished among his country's defenders, General Ord was a soldier of national repute. Through his long military service, reaching towards half a century, his career has been marked by faithful, devoted, and intelligent discharge of duty, by personal gallantry, by honest administration, and by a firmness which was not weakened by his great kindness of heart. As his intimate associate since boyhood, the general here bears testimony of him that a more unselfish, manly, and patriotic person never lived.

By command of General Sherman.

GEO. D. RUGGLES,
Acting Adjutant-General.

General Ord died at Havana, Cuba, July 22, 1883, of yellow fever, contracted at Vera Cruz on shipboard. Under the law the widow cannot receive a pension because the direct cause of death was not due to the military service. It is true, however, that General Ord was worn out by his long military service, which made him susceptible to any epidemic disease to which he might be exposed, and not having strength of constitution or vitality to throw it off, became an easy victim.

In view of the long and distinguished services of General Ord, and the acknowledged poverty of the widow, who had but the small sum of \$600 left by her husband and no real property whatever, your committee report favorably on the bill and recommend that it do pass.

Recently this committee has declined to recommend the passage of bills in similar cases to this at the rate of \$50 per month, and are disposed to adhere to \$30, the rate fixed by general law. Therefore your committee recommend the passage of the bill with the following amendment: In line 6 strike out the word "fifty" and insert in lieu thereof the word "thirty."