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Report : Memorial of G. Getty

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

JANUARY 16, 1885.—Ordered to be printed.

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

REPORT:

[To accompany bill S. 790.]

The Committee on Military Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (S. 790) to authorize Col. George W. Getty, United States Army (retired), to be placed upon the retired list of the Army with the rank and pay of a major-general, have considered the same, and respectfully report:

The committee present the following memorial of General George W. Getty, and make the same a part of their report:

To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled:

Your petitioner respectfully represents that on the 3d day of February, 1883, the honorable Secretary of War transmitted to the honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Forty seventh Congress the following, to wit:

Letter from the honorable Secretary of War transmitting a petition of Col. G. W. Getty, Fourth Artillery, brevet major-general, United States Army, praying for the passage of an act authorizing his retirement.

FEBRUARY 3, 1883.—Referred to the Committee on Military Affairs and ordered to be printed.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington City, February 2, 1883.

The Secretary of War has the honor to transmit to the United States Senate a petition of Col. George W. Getty, Fourth Artillery, brevet major-general, United States Army, embodying his military history and praying for the passage of an act authorizing his retirement October 2, 1883, with the rank, retired pay, and emoluments of a general officer in the Army. Accompanying is an indorsement of the General of the Army submitting the petition to this Department.

ROBERT T. LINCOLN,
Secretary of War.

The PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE.

[Petition of George W. Getty, colonel Fourth Regiment of Artillery, and brevet major-general, United States Army.]

To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled:

Your memorialist, George W. Getty, colonel Fourth Regiment of Artillery, and brevet major-general in the United States Army, respectfully represents:

That he was born in the District of Columbia in 1819; was appointed from that District, and entered the United States Military Academy at West Point, N. Y., as a

cadet in 1836; was graduated and promoted in the Army to be second lieutenant Fourth Regiment of Artillery July 1, 1840, and has remained continuously in the Army since that date, a period of nearly forty-three years, to wit:

Served in the State of Michigan, engaged during the fall and winter of 1840-'41 in removing the Pottawatomie tribe of Indians from that State to their reservation west of the Mississippi River, and on the northern frontier during the Canada border disturbances, 1841-'42.

Promoted first lieutenant, Fourth Artillery, October 31, 1845.

Served in the war with Mexico (1847-'48), being engaged in the battles of Contreras and Churubusco, August 19-24, 1847; battle of Molina del Rey, September 8, 1847; the storming of Chapultepec, September 13, 1847; and the assault and capture of the city of Mexico, September 13-14, 1847.

Brevetted captain "for gallant and meritorious conduct in the battles of Contreras and Churubusco."

Served in the Florida hostilities against the Seminole Indians, 1849-'50.

Promoted to be captain, Fourth Artillery, November 4, 1853.

Served in the Florida hostilities against the Seminole Indians, 1856-'57, and on frontier duty in Kansas, 1857-'58, in quelling disturbances in that State; on frontier duty, Platte Bridge, Nebr., Fort Laramie, Nebr., and Fort Randall, Dak., 1858-'61.

Served during the rebellion of the seceding States, 1861-'66: In command of an artillery battalion at Cincinnati, Ohio, May-August, 1861; in command of the artillery in the engagements with Confederate batteries on the Potomac River near Budd's Ferry, Maryland, November and December, 1861.

Transferred to the Fifth Regiment of Artillery (new regiment) May 14, 1861.

Appointed lieutenant-colonel, staff, additional aid-de-camp, September 28, 1861.

Served in the Virginia peninsular campaign, Army of the Potomac, March-August, 1862, in command of four batteries of field artillery, being engaged in the siege of Yorktown, April 5-May 4, 1862; battle of Gaines's Mill, June 27, 1862, and battle of Malvern Hill, July 1, 1862; in the Maryland campaign, Army of the Potomac, September-November, 1862, being engaged in the battle of South Mountain, September 14, 1862; battle of Antietam, September 17, 1862; and the march to Falmouth, Va., October-November, 1862.

Appointed brigadier-general of volunteers, September 25, 1862.

Served in the Rappahannock campaign, Army of the Potomac, December, 1862, to March, 1863, being engaged in the battle of Fredericksburg, Va.; December 13, 1862, in the operations about Suffolk, Va., on the line of the Nansemond River; in command of third division of the Ninth Army Corps during the defense of Suffolk, April 11 to May 3, 1863; in command of storming column in the assault of Hill's Point works and battery, April 19, 1863; in making reconnaissance and commanding in engagement on Providence Church road, near Suffolk, May 3, 1863; and in command of troops constructing intrenched lines covering Norfolk and Portsmouth, Va., May 13 to June 23, 1863; in command of expedition from White House to South Anna Bridges, July 1 to 8, 1863.

Brevetted lieutenant-colonel (Regular Army) "for gallant and meritorious services during the siege of Suffolk, Va."

Promoted to be major Fifth Artillery August 1, 1863.

Acting inspector-general of the Army of the Potomac, January 27 to March 18, 1864.

Served in the Richmond campaign, Army of the Potomac, in command of the second division of the Sixth Army Corps, being engaged in the battle of the Wilderness, May 5, 6, 1864, where he was severely wounded while in command of the division.

Brevetted colonel (Regular Army) March 5, 1865, "for gallant and meritorious services at the battle of the Wilderness," Virginia.

On the march from White House, Virginia, to James River, June, 1864, and in the siege of Petersburg, and expedition to Ream's Station and Weldon Railroad, June 28, to July 10, 1864; in the defense of Washington City, July 11, 12, 1864, and in pursuit of the army under General Early to the Shenandoah Valley, July 13 to August 9, 1864.

Served in the Shenandoah campaign, August 10 to December 2, 1864, being engaged in the action of Charlestown, August 21, 1864; battle of Opequan, September 19, 1864; battle of Fisher's Hill, September 22, 23, 1864, and battle of Cedar Creek, October 19, 1864.

Served in the siege of Petersburg, December 12, 1864, to April 2, 1865, being engaged in the assaults of March 25 and April 2, 1865, upon the enemy's works.

Brevetted major-general of volunteers August 1, 1864, "for gallant and meritorious services at the battles of Winchester and Fisher's Hill, Virginia."

Brevetted brigadier-general (Regular Army) March 13, 1865, "for gallant and meritorious services at the capture of Petersburg, Va."

In the pursuit of the Army of Northern Virginia, April 3 to 9, 1865, being engaged in the battle of Sailor's Creek, April 6, 1865, and was at the capitulation of General R. E. Lee, with that army, at Appomattox Court-House, Va., April 9, 1865; was on the march to Danville, Va., and to and about Washington, D. C., April 10 to June 28, 1865.

Brevetted major-general (Regular Army) March 13, 1865, "for gallant and meritorious services in the field during the war of the rebellion."

Served in command of the First Division Provisional Corps, June 28 to July 17, 1865; in command of the District of Baltimore, Md., August 9, 1865, to January 29, 1866; in command of the District of the Rio Grande, Texas, February 19 to August 31, 1866, and in the District of Texas, August 31 to October 9, 1866.

Appointed colonel Thirty-seventh Regiment of Infantry (new regiment) July 28, 1866.

In command of the District of New Mexico April 11, 1867, to February 1, 1871.

Transferred to Third Regiment of Infantry March 15, 1869.

Transferred to Third Regiment of Artillery January 1, 1871, and to Fourth Artillery July 17, 1882.

In command of Third Artillery from March, 1871, to March 1, 1877; in command of the United States Artillery School by special assignment by the President from March 1, 1877, to the present time.

Your memorialist further represents that he has been almost continuously on duty as a general officer, by virtue of his commission as brigadier-general of volunteers, in command of the Third Division of the Ninth Army Corps and Second Division of the Sixth Army Corps in the field during the war of 1861-'66, or by special assignment by the President of the United States according to his brevet rank of general officer from September 25, 1862, to the present time, and that under such special assignments last named he has not received additional compensation to his pay as colonel, in any sense, from November 23, 1864, when he was first assigned to duty according to his brevet of major-general.

Your memorialist further represents that under the operation of existing law he will be retired from active service on the 2d day of October, 1883, with the rank and retired pay of colonel in the Army.

Therefore he prays your honorable bodies, in view of his long and faithful service to the country, abundantly testified to by the records of the War Department, for the passage of an act authorizing his retirement on the 2d day of October, 1883, above named, with the rank, retired pay, and emoluments of a general officer in the Army.

Wherefore your servant will ever pray.

GEO. W. GETTY,

Brevet Major-General, and Colonel Fourth Artillery, U. S. Army.

FORT MONROE, VA., January 18, 1883.

ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,

January 27, 1883.

Respectfully submitted to the Secretary of War, with a copy of the petition and indorsement thereon of the General of the Army, for each House of Congress.

R. C. DRUM,

Adjutant-General.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,

Washington, D. C., January 26, 1883.

This petition of Col. George W. Getty, Fourth Artillery, brevet major-general United States Army, is hereby most respectfully forwarded to the honorable Secretary of War, with an earnest recommendation that he will forward a copy to each of the two houses of Congress with such favorable recommendation as will command the attention of that body.

On the 2d day of October, 1883, General Getty will be sixty-four years of age, and by existing law will be retired on three-fourths of the pay proper of a colonel. His petition recites in detail his most honorable career of service in the Army of the United States continuously since the year 1836, and it so happens that I am able, from memory, to verify nearly every fact therein set forth, and as we were classmates at West Point, and have from time to time been associated ever since, I ask the privilege not only to indorse his petition, but to add my own, that this act of simple justice may be done as an example to younger men who may thereby be encouraged to imitate his example.

George Getty, as a boy and man, through a long, eventful life, has been a model gentleman and soldier. Of unexceptionable habits, a superior intelligence, and high professional acquirements, he has always been selected, in war and peace, for high and responsible commands.

Modest to a fault, he has never pushed himself forward into undue prominence, but has done well all that he was appointed to do, and has always been sought for by his seniors for posts requiring high qualification and professional excellence. He has commanded divisions in battle, departments or districts in peace, and is now serving on his brevet rank of major-general.

It does seem to me unfair that a great nation like the United States should compel a colonel to do the work of a major-general, on the pay of a colonel, through years of

life, and when age brings its natural infirmity to turn him out on the diminished pay of his lowest rank.

It would seem more just to meet these exceptional cases by a general law, but as Congress reserves to itself to deal with these cases, I most respectfully represent that the principle of common justice seems to demand that General Getty should, during his few remaining years, have for the support of himself and of his dependent family the retired pay of a major-general. Even this will fall far short of compensation for the labor and responsibility imposed on him by superior authority, in exacting from him the work of a major-general on the pay of a colonel.

W. T. SHERMAN,
General.

Your petitioner also further represents that the foregoing received the following action, viz:

[From the Congressional Record, No. 61, February 15, 1883. Senate, February 14, 1883.]

Mr. HOAR. I present the petition of Charles Devens, late brigadier-general and brevet major-general, and a very large number of other very distinguished officers in the late war, some of them now officers of the military forces of the United States, praying Congress to pass an act authorizing the placing of General George W. Getty, colonel of the Fourth Artillery, upon the retired list of the Army, when he shall be retired, with the rank of major-general, the rank which he held when wounded at the head of his division at the battle of the Wilderness. The petition states the estimate in which this Army officer is held by the petitioners. It is stated very fully and eloquently, and is of itself a very distinguished honor to the officer in whose behalf the petition is made. I move that it be referred to the Committee on Military Affairs.

The motion was agreed to.

Petition referred to by Mr. Hoar:

To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled:

The undersigned, now or late officers of the military forces of the United States, earnestly pray your honorable bodies to pass an act authorizing the placing of General George W. Getty, colonel Third Artillery, upon the retired list of the Army, with the rank of major-general, a rank which he held when wounded at the head of his division at the battle of the Wilderness.

Modest and unassuming, he was cool, prompt, and resolute in danger. A strict disciplinarian, he was ever careful of the lives, the health, and the comfort of his soldiers. Prompt and efficient in executing difficult and dangerous enterprises, he fought his troops with great vigor and determination, and held a position once occupied with unyielding tenacity. His habitual post in battle was on the line with his troops. He possessed the confidence of superiors in command and the enthusiastic devotion of his troops, and deserved both. For three years during the war he held command, and much of the time the rank of a major-general, and as such commanding the Third Division, Ninth Corps, and later the Second Division, Sixth Corps, bore a distinguished part in the battles fought by the Army of the Potomac and in the Shenandoah Valley campaign under Sheridan. To confer upon his declining years that rank on the retired list which, during his manhood's prime he so honored in active service, would, we submit, be but just to General Getty, honorable to the nation, and gratifying to all who served under his banner.

And your memorialists will ever pray.

(Signed:) Chas. Devens, late Brig. and Bvt. Maj. General; J. M. Forbes; Stephen M. Crosby, Bvt. Colonel; George A. Bruce, late Bvt. Lieut. Colonel; Wm. J. Ladd, Bvt. Captain; John F. Tarbell, Paymaster, U. S. N.; Daniel D. Gilbert, M. D., U. S. Navy; Wm. G. Howe, late Prov. M. 4th Mass. D.; James H. Rice, Bvt. Lieut. Col., U. S. A.; Horace C. Bacon, Capt., 11th N. H. Vols.; Edward Sullivan; J. E. Fiske, Capt. Co. H, 2d Mass. H. A.; A. E. Paine, A Surg. 104th Col'd Troops; W. H. Jones, 1st Lieut., 31st Mass. Vols.; Charles Jones, jr., 1st Mass. Vols.; Isaac H. Hazelton, Ass't Surg., U. S. N.; Edward Cowles, Ass't Surg., U. S. A.; H. W. Fitch, Engineer, U. S. N.; C. A. Gove, Ensign, U. S. N.; E. P. Nettleton, late Bvt. Col., U. S. Vols.; Wm. H. Long, late Bvt. Col., U. S. Vols.; S. A. Ranlett, Adj't, 36th Mass. Vols., 9th Corps; T. H. Talbot, Bvt. Brig. Gen., 1st Me. H. A.; Daniel T. Bunker, Major, 3d Mass. Cav.; Edward T. Bouve, Major, 26th N. Y. Cav.; Geo. S. Follansbee, Capt. 1st Mass. H. A.; D. W. Ler, Capt., Irish Brigade, 9th Corps; Jos. H. Lathrop, Adj't. 4th Mass. Cav.; Chas. E. Bowers, 1st Lieut., 26th N. Y. Cav.; Wm. W. Douglass, late Capt., 5th R. I. Art'y.; A. P. Martin, 3d Mass. Battery; Winslow Warren;

L. F. Rice, late Capt. and Bvt. Maj., 31st M. V. ; William West, late Capt. 118th Penn. Vols.; Jas. H. Denny, Asst. Surg. 2d Mass. Art'y. ; Peter Pineo, Lt. Col. and Med. Ins., U. S. A. ; C. A. Campbell, Lt., 40th Mass. Vols. ; W. V. Hutchings, Chief Q. M. 25th A. C. ; James Thompson, Q. M., 24th Regt. ; George H. Preble, Rear Admiral, U. S. N. ; J. Henry Sleeper, Bvt. Maj., U. S. Vols. ; E. C. Blasland, Bvt. Lt. Col., 33d Mass. ; Theo. A. Dodge, Bvt. Lt. Col., U. S. A. ; Wm. P. Shreve, Bvt. Maj., U. S. Vols. ; Thos. Sherwin, Bvt. Brig. Gen'l., U. S. Vols. ; Edward P. Brown, Bvt. Maj., U. S. Vols. ; C. E. Hapgood, Col., U. S. Vols. ; Edward T. Barker, late U. S. A. ; G. E. Pollard ; Albert A. Pope, late Bvt. Col., U. S. Vols. ; J. M. Blanchard, Capt., U. S. Vols. ; Henry L. Pope, Lt., Mass. Cavalry ; Chas. S. Halladay, late U. S. N. ; A. M. Benson, late U. S. Vols. ; George Pope, late Lt. Col., U. S. Vols. ; W. B. Sears, late Capt., 2d R. I. Vols. Infy. ; E. J. Bartlett, Lt., 5th Mass. Cav. ; Wm. Roberts, late Chief Engineer, U. S. N. ; Wm. T. Durell, Maj., 4th U. S. Col'd Troops ; Chas. F. Joy, Capt., 54th Mass. Vols. ; Geo. B. Dyer, Major, 9th Me. Vols., Bvt. Col. ; Edgar Parker, Ass't Surg., 13th Mass. Vols. ; Ed. N. Whittier, 5th Battery, Me. Vols. ; John H. Ammon, Col. 16th N. Y. Vols. ; C. F. Hildreth, Surg., 40th Mass. Vols. ; Wm. Hedge, late Lieut., 44th Mass. Vols. ; Henry W. Fuller, Bvt. Brig. Gen. Vols. ; Henry B. Jones, Lieut., 3d Mass. H. A. ; C. A. Currier, late Capt., 40th Mass. Vols. ; C. H. C. Brown, Adjt., 7th U. S. C. T. ; W. H. Cundy, late Capt., 40th Mass. Vols. ; E. E. Edwards, late Co. G, 40th Mass. Vols. ; H. C. Lee, late Col. 27th Mass., Bvt. Brig. Gen. ; S. M. Quincy, Col. 2d Mass. Infy. ; L. N. Tucker, late Capt., 18th Mass. Vols. ; W. S. Gile, Capt., 18th N. H. Vols. ; N. G. Smith, Capt., 75th U. S. C. T. ; Charles E. Pratt ; Edgar J. Sherman, Bvt. Maj., U. S. Vols. ; Arnold A. Rand, Col. 4th Mass. Cav. ; Hazard Stevens, Bvt. Brig. Gen., U. S. Vols.

[From Congressional Record No. 71, February 27, 1883, Forty-seventh Congress, second session, page 55. House of Representatives, February 26, 1883.]

COL. GEORGE W. GETTY.

Mr. Rosecrans introduced a bill (H. R. 7645) to reward the long, faithful, and distinguished services of Col. George W. Getty, Fourth United States Artillery, and brevet major-general, United States Army; which was read a first and second time, referred to the Committee on Military Affairs, and ordered to be printed.

Your petitioner now has the honor to renew his prayer as hereinbefore set forth, and prays in addition thereto that in view of the fact that he was severely wounded in battle while in actual command of a division, thereby entitling him to the privilege of retirement with the rank of major-general, under the then existing law, your honorable bodies may pass an act placing him on the retired list of the Army with the rank, pay, and emoluments of a major-general.

Wherefore your servant will ever pray.

GEO. W. GETTY,

Brevet Major-General, Colonel, U. S. Army (retired).

FORT MONROE, VA.,

October 2, 1883.

General Getty was a distinguished officer of the Army of the United States, having been retired in accordance with the law at the age of sixty-four years. He was severely wounded, as shown by the records, while a major general of volunteers, commanding a division. He would at that time, and for several years thereafter, have been entitled to retire with the full rank of major-general, but the law permitting such retirement has been repealed.

The indorsement of the general commanding the Army as to the high character of this officer, his eminent services to the country through a long period of years, including the high commands held by him in the late war, are convincing proofs to the committee that some mark of recognition should be granted to General Getty, and they therefore recommend the passage of this bill with an amendment fixing his rank on the retired list as a brigadier-general of the United States Army.