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[Robert Gamble]

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

JANUARY 14, 1896.—Ordered to be printed.

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

REPORT:

[To accompany S. 944.]

The Committee on Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (S. 944) granting a pension to Robert Gamble, have examined the same, and report:

A similar bill was introduced in the Fifty-third Congress, referred to the Committee on Pensions, reported favorably, and passed the Senate.

The facts are as follows:

The petitioner, Robert Gamble, claims to have been a soldier in the Florida Seminole war of 1836. His services are set forth in his behalf in papers which your committee also submit in connection with this report, as follows:

[Extract from the report of General Clinch to War Department.]

HEADQUARTERS IN FLORIDA,
Fort Drane, July 4, 1836.

SIR: On the 24th ultimo General Call, commanding volunteers called into service by his excellency, George K. Walker, acting governor of Florida, formed a junction with the regular troops at this post. On the 27th of December Lieutenant-Colonel Fanning arrived with three companies from Fort King. On the 29th the brigade of volunteers composed of First and Second regiments, commanded by Brigadier-General Call, and a battalion of regular troops, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Fanning, took up the line of march for a point on the Withlacooche River, which was represented by our guides as being a good pond. About 4 o'clock on the morning of the 31st of December, after leaving all our baggage, provisions, etc., protected by a guard commanded by Lieut. A. C. S. Dancey, the troops were pushed on with a view of crossing the pond and surprising the main body of Indians, supposed to be concentrated on the south bank of the Withlacooche; but, on reaching the river about daylight, we found, instead of a good pond, a deep and rapid stream, and no means of crossing except in an old and decayed canoe.

The battalion of regulars, consisting of 200 men, about, were attacked by the enemy, who were strongly posted in the swamps and scrubs adjacent to the river. This little band, aided by Colonel Warren, Lieutenant-Colonel Miller, Major Cooper, Lieutenant Yoeman, Adjutant Phillips, and 27 volunteers, however, met the attack of a savage enemy of nearly three times their number, strongly posted, with Spartan firmness, and covered themselves with honor. The troops made three brilliant charges into the swamps and scrubs, and drove the enemy in every direction after the third charge. Although nearly one-third of their number had been cut down, they were found sufficiently firm and steady to justify the formation of a new line of battle. Col. Sam Parkhill, of the Florida volunteers, performed the duties of adjutant-general, displayed much military skill, and the utmost coolness and courage throughout the whole action. His services were of the first importance. Col. I. H. McIntosh, one of my aids, and Major Gamble, aid to General Call, displayed much firmness and courage, and were actively employed on the left flank, etc.

D. L. CLINCH,
Brevet Brigadier-General, Commanding.

[Extract from the report of Adjutant-General L. Parkhill.]

It is proper here to remark that, although there were many volunteers in the hammock on the river bank out of my view, therefore not in open field of battle, they no doubt did their duty; but the few brave volunteers who remained exposed in open field and in line with the regulars, exposed all day to a galling fire of the enemy, deserve notice. I remember Indian Billy, Capt. John Ranch, Major Gamble, aid-de-camp to General Call, Lieut. Pope Hunter, Palmer, Ulmer, and a few others.

Your committee also desire to append herewith a statement of United States Senator Call, of Florida, who has personal knowledge of the petitioner and his needy circumstances, being without means of support in his extreme old age:

I have known Major Gamble from my childhood. I knew from the statements of my uncle, Gen. R. K. Call, who commanded the United States troops in the Seminole Indian war of 1836 and 1842, and in this battle of Withlacoochee, that Major Gamble was in the service and served under him in that and other campaigns, and that he is now without means of support, and is a very old man.

Your committee, therefore, recommend the passage of the bill.

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