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Julia Bezier.

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H.R. Rep. No. 437, 23rd Cong., 1st Sess. (1834)

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JULIA BEZIOR:

APRIL 30, 1834:

Read, and laid upon the table.

Mr. WHITTLESEY, from the Committee of Claims, made the following

REPORT :

The Committee of Claims, to which was referred the petition of Julia Bezior, the widow of Benjamin Bezior, report :

That the petitioner states that when General Harrison was holding a treaty with the Indians, in 1806, there were taken from the possession of the clerk of her husband, who was an Indian trader, by the order of General Harrison, silver trinkets to the value of \$500, which were delivered to the Indians according to treaty stipulations, and not paid for. She says her husband was killed by the Indians in the last Indian war; that when he was killed, he lost a horse, saddle, bridle, and a rifle gun, which were worth at least \$100. She says she is poor and has a numerous family, and prays relief. The taking of the trinkets, and that they were not paid for, is attempted to be established by the testimony of Pierre Bordelo, who is represented as having been the clerk of Benjamin Bezior at the time the trinkets were taken. He says they were taken and seized by order of Governor William H. Harrison, and that no compensation was made to said Bezior during his life, nor to his heirs since his death. This is the only evidence offered in support of the claim. The committee notice that Pierre Bordelo, who is represented as having been the clerk of Benjamin Bezior, cannot write his name, and affixes his mark to his deposition. This of itself is no impeachment of his veracity, and it is only mentioned to prevent any additional reliance being placed on his testimony, from the circumstance that he acted as clerk, and therefore might be supposed to have a knowledge of the property and of its value, that belonged to Mr. Bezior.

The committee sent the papers to the Secretary of War for the purpose of obtaining all the information within his power to give. The Secretary has transmitted a report made to him by the Third Auditor, to which the committee refer, and make the same a part of this report. The testimony of General Harrison should be taken before any allowance shall be made. The committee do not think the petitioner has proven the existence of a valid claim, and move the following resolution :

Resolved, That the prayer of the petitioner ought not to be granted.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
Third Auditor's Office, April 12, 1834.

SIR: I have the honor to return the letter of the honorable E. Whittlesey, and the petition it enclosed, this morning referred to me by you for a report. The petition is from Julia Beziar, widow of Benjamin Beziar, deceased, and represents that in 1805 or 1806, he was a licensed trader with the Indians in the town of Vincennes, then in the Northwestern Territory; that in the course of his trade he had bartered for a number of silver trinkets usually worn by Indians, which were to be again bartered to them for furs and peltries; that General William H. Harrison, Governor of the Territory, and commissioner to treat with the Indians, having a treaty on hand, and in order to induce them to come to his terms, promised to restore to them the silver trinkets they had pledged to the traders; that, in pursuance of this arrangement, the trinkets were taken from Pierre Bordelo, the clerk of the deceased, in his absence, by order and authority of General Harrison; that neither the deceased in his lifetime, nor any of his heirs, received any remuneration for the trinkets, then worth \$500; that he was killed in the Indian war, in what is commonly called the "Spur defeat," by the Indians in Ebea prairie, near the mouth of Wild Cat river, on the Upper Wabash, while in the service of his country defending the frontiers; that, previous to that event, his family were comfortable and in good circumstances; that he had large sums due him from the Indians he traded with, which the war and his death prevented from ever being paid; that the petitioner and her children have lived in indigence and penury ever since; and that at the time he was killed he lost a horse, saddle, bridle, and rifle gun, worth at least \$100, which were taken by the Indians; and the petition concludes with a prayer for remuneration for the property taken and lost as aforesaid. The petitioner has sworn to the truth of the matters and things set forth in the petition, and this, and a deposition in corroboration thereof, made by the beforenamed Pierre Bordelo in the present year, constitute all the testimony adduced in support of the claim.

Why the claim has been suffered to remain dormant for 27 or more years, or why testimony to establish it, if correct, has not been obtained from General Harrison, the petitioner has not explained. No certain evidence by which the correctness thereof can be tested is now in the possession of the Government, all the accounts and vouchers for the period in question having been long since destroyed. Resort has been had to the accounts of Governor Harrison on the books in this office, but the information they afford is general in its character. He thereby appears to have received credit,

| | |
|--|-------------|
| "For sundry articles furnished Kickapoo, Delaware, Miami, and other Indians, in 1805 | \$769 98 |
| For horses, saddles, bridles, rifles, kettles, and sundry articles of merchandise delivered to the Pinakeshaws, on their ceding lands to the United States, agreeably to treaty 1,099 99 | |
| These entries are under the head Indian Department, 1805, and under a like head, in 1806, he received credit for presents to Indians as follows: | |
| For sundry articles delivered to the Kickapoos, Weas, and other Indians, per abstract | \$1,079 59" |

He appears to have been supplied with funds by the Government, and it is not presumable that he would have taken articles the property of the deceased, without paying for them.

With great respect,

Your most obedient servant,

PETER HAGNER, Auditor.

The Hon. LEWIS CASS,
Secretary of War.