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Margaret C. McKay.

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MARGARET C. MCKAY.

JUNE 29, 1897.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. SHOUP (for Mr. CANNON), from the Committee on Pensions,  
submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany S. 1156.]

The Committee on Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (S. 1156), for the relief of Margaret C. McKay, have examined the same and report:

A similar bill was introduced in the Senate during the Fifty-fourth Congress, reported favorably, and passed the Senate.

The report was as follows, which your committee adopt, and recommend the passage of the bill:

The bill proposes to grant a pension to the beneficiary on account of services rendered the Government by her husband during the Indian wars in the Northwest. The reports on file in the War Department show the employment in the Quartermaster's Department of William C. McKay by Lieut. William Borrowe, acting assistant quartermaster, Fort Dalles, Oreg., as interpreter for Indian scouts from October 26, 1866, to November 30, 1866; from December 1, 1866, to April 1, 1867; from May 1 to 31, 1867, and from June 1 to 30, 1867, when transferred to Capt. H. C. Hodges, assistant quartermaster, Fort Vancouver, Wash., who reports him employed as interpreter with Indian scouts from July 1 to August 31, 1867, with pay and allowance of second lieutenant of cavalry. He is next reported by Lieut. R. I. Eskridge, acting assistant quartermaster, with expedition against the Indians, Department of the Columbia, as interpreter, with pay and allowance of second lieutenant of cavalry, from September 1 to October 31, 1867, and by Captain Hodges, Fort Vancouver, Wash., from November 1 to December 5, 1867, when discharged. While the above record does not show that the said McKay was regularly enlisted as a soldier, it appears that he rendered valiant service and endured all the hardships incident to a soldier's life during the Indian wars referred to. It also appears from evidence on file that he took the oath required of officers and enlisted men and was subject to the orders of his superior officers. The present legislature of the State of Oregon has memorialized Congress praying for the passage of this bill.

The beneficiary named in the bill is quite aged and is suffering from great physical infirmities, and, in addition, is in destitute circumstances. Over 200 citizens have signed the following petition, which is on file with other papers in this case:

"We, the undersigned citizens of the United States, respectfully petition that an act be passed by Congress granting a pension to Mrs. Margaret C. McKay, widow of the late Dr. William C. McKay, of Pendleton, Oreg. Dr. McKay was a great hero in the Oregon Indian wars, and did as much or more than any other one man in saving the settlers of the Northwest from their ravages, and his heroic services should be recognized by the protection of his wife, who is now a cripple and in financial straits."

Dr. J. M. Pruett and Dr. C. J. Smith, both of the city of Pendleton, Oreg., examined the claimant on December 29, 1894, and reported as follows:

"At the present time she is suffering from the results of an impacted fracture of the neck of the femur of right side, which occurred, to the best of our knowledge, about nine years ago, together with an injury received at the same time at the lumbosacral junction of the spinal column, the result of which injury has been to atrophy the muscles in the lumbar and sacral regions of the back, together with those of the thigh and leg of right side, resulting in a permanent shortening and partial paralysis of this limb."

Senator John H. Mitchell has filed a written statement with the committee relative to the faithful and efficient service of the late William C. McKay, and that his widow is left in destitute circumstances.

After a careful examination of the facts in this case, your committee believe that this is a proper subject for special legislation.