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Lucy Wright

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Report No. 303.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

LUCY WRIGHT.

FEBRUARY 29, 1848.

Laid upon the table.

Mr. DONNELL, from the Committee on Revolutionary Pensions, made the following

REPORT.

*The Committee on Revolutionary Pensions, to whom was referred the petition of Lucy Wright, praying for a pension, report:*

The petitioner claims a pension under the act of 4th July, 1836, but, in the judgment of the committee, has failed to prove either sufficient service rendered by her deceased husband, or her intermarriage with him. She alleges in her declaration three different terms of service, amounting in all to eight months. The second term of two months in the latter part of the year 1780, and the third term of three months in the summer of 1781, are satisfactorily proved by the oath of the petitioner, the affidavit of Sam'l Childres, and the affidavit of Benjamin Childres, who served with him during both of those terms, and in the same company; but this does not bring her within the provisions of the act, which requires at least six months' service. The other term of about three months, which was before her alleged marriage, consisted, according to her statement and the corroborating evidence, of service as the driver of a public wagon. "Officers, non-commissioned officers, musicians, soldiers, and Indian spies," are the only beneficiaries within the purview of the act of Congress. Service rendered as the driver of a wagon, although it was a public wagon, does not constitute such a claim as was contemplated by Congress, so far as we can gather its intention from the letter or the spirit of its acts. If a private, who had been drafted and mustered into service, was afterwards detailed from the ranks for such service, the committee would regard it as a case within the spirit and meaning of the act of Congress. But, in this instance, although it is stated that it was

the precise case of the husband of this petitioner, there is no sufficient evidence to sustain it.

But, if this point were satisfactorily made out, there is no proof of the marriage. After showing that there is no recorded evidence of the marriage by the certificate of the proper officer, she produces two affidavits professing to give copies of the register in the family Bible. One of them by James L. Pearce, a justice of the peace in Nelson county, Va., certifies that the following is a true copy, to wit: "Andrew Wright, and Lucy his wife, was married March 11, 1777." "Daughter, Jeannie, born January 9; 1780," &c. The other affidavit is that of Benjamin Wright, a son of the petitioner, and professes to give a copy of the family register as it is in a Bible which he has. It is the same, in all respects, as the above, with the addition of the following memorandum, immediately after that of the marriage, to wit: "Daughter, Sarah S. Wright, February the 25th, 1779, by his first wife." She states in her declaration, that her marriage with Andrew Wright was in February, 1780, and after the first term of his alleged service as the driver of a public wagon. And there is no method of reconciling this apparently conflicting and contradictory evidence, but by the intimation which is given in one of the registers, that Andrew Wright was twice married. This being taken to be the fact, there is no proof of his intermarriage with *this* petitioner. In fact, the copies of the two different family registers raise a presumption against her legal marriage; inasmuch as the register kept by the family, and purporting to contain the memoranda of events of that character, show neither the death of the first wife nor the marriage of the petitioner.

The committee, therefore, recommend that the prayer of the petitioner be not granted.