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Report : Mr. Shields

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

FEBRUARY 6, 1855.—Submitted and ordered to be printed.

Mr. SHIELDS made the following

REPORT.

The Committee on Military Affairs, to whom was referred documents, &c., in favor of the claim of William Read, having had the same under consideration, report:

It is in evidence before the committee, and satisfactorily proven, that the memorialist, when the early settlers of Tennessee were about being overrun by hostile Indians, was selected to go to Congress, then sitting in Philadelphia, to procure aid and protection against their dangerous enemy. In 1793 he started upon this mission through a wilderness of nearly four hundred miles, inhabited only by Indians and wild beasts. Returning from Philadelphia to Nashville, he bore dispatches from the President to the governor of Tennessee, and his mission resulted in saving the settlers from the knife and tomahawk of the Indians.

The memorialist states that he paid his own expenses in going and returning—amounting to \$400 dollars; lost horse worth \$250 on the way, and spent eight months of time in the service of his country, without ever receiving one dollar of compensation therefor from any source whatever.

The legislature of the State of Tennessee, in February, 1854, voted “to instruct their senators and representatives in Congress to use their best exertions to procure the passage of a law allowing the memorialist such compensation as may be just and reasonable in view of the dangerous, expensive, and distinguished services rendered by him.”

The services rendered by the memorialist were very valuable to the inhabitants of the Territory of Tennessee, and, in the opinion of the committee, compensation ought to have been made to him by the government of the Territory at the time the services were rendered, or by the State government since. But there seems to be nothing in the nature of the case to make it a just claim upon the government of the United States. The committee, therefore, report as follows:

Resolved, That the prayer of the petitioner be denied.