

2-23-1858

Report : Mr. Foster

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

FEBRUARY 23, 1858.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. FOSTER made the following

REPORT.

[To accompany Bill S. 163.]

The Committee on Pensions, to whom was referred the petition of Mrs. Eliza A. Merchant, widow of Brevet Captain Charles G. Merchant, praying Congress to grant her a pension, beg leave to report:

That petitioner, on behalf of herself and child, claims a pension for the reason that her husband, the late First Lieutenant and Brevet Captain Charles G. Merchant, died in the military service of the United States, at Pascagoula, Mississippi, on the 4th of September, 1855. Petitioner alleges that her husband, Lieutenant Merchant, graduated at the United States Military Academy at West Point on the 30th day of June, 1843, and was promoted to brevet second lieutenant in the 8th regiment United States infantry, July 1, 1843; that he served during the war with the Mexican republic, and was brevetted first lieutenant, September 8, 1847, for gallant and meritorious conduct at the battle of Molino del Rey, and brevet captain, September 13, 1847, for gallant and meritorious conduct at the battle of Chapultepec; and on his return from Mexico he was ordered to Texas, and in an affair with Indians, May 20, 1850, was severely wounded, from which he never fully recovered; in April, 1858, he was ordered to East Pascagoula, Mississippi. The testimony of J. J. B. Wright, surgeon United States army, and John F. Randolph, who was acting assistant surgeon United States army, both strongly corroborate the statement of petitioner that the wound alluded to was the cause of his death. The Commissioner of Pensions, in a letter to this committee, dated January 2, 1857, says: "If the committee are of opinion, from the medical testimony, that his death was hastened by the wound, the claim of the widow to a pension would seem to be as meritorious as some others which have been allowed by special act." It is also disclosed by the Commissioner of Pensions that Charles G. Merchant was a first lieutenant at the time of his death. The committee, after a careful examination of the testimony, are of opinion that the death of Lieutenant Charles G. Merchant was hastened by a wound received in a battle with Indians May 20, 1850, and the application of Mrs. Eliza A. Merchant, his widow, is worthy the favorable consideration of Congress, and report the accompanying bill.