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George C. Johnson.

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Recommended Citation

H.R. Rep. No. 72, 39th Cong., 1st Sess. (1866)

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GEORGE C. JOHNSON.

[To accompany bill H. R. No. 142.]

JUNE 15, 1866.—Ordered to be printed.

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

REPORT.

The Committee of Claims, to whom was referred House bill No. 142, for the relief of George C. Johnson, with the memorial and papers, having had the same under consideration, make the following report:

That on the 29th of July, 1831, certain chiefs of the Shawnee nation of Indians acknowledged an indebtedness to claimant of \$20,510. That on the 9th of August, 1832, they provided for its payment by a bond for \$4,000, payable when they should receive their first payment for lands sold to the United States, and by giving eight drafts on the Secretary of War, payable out of accruing annuities, which drafts matured in the years from 1833 to 1840, inclusive, being for \$2,000 each, except the last, which was for \$2,510. Four of these drafts have been paid and \$2,000 on the bond, leaving \$10,510 of the original sum unpaid. No further payments could be made, as the annuities expired in the year 1846. The unpaid drafts and bond are not produced, and are said to be lost.

The Shawnee nation were moved to Kansas in 1832. In 1833 certain chiefs of the nation acknowledged the validity of the claim, on the personal application of the claimant to them in Kansas. In 1850 they gave an order on R. W. Thompson by certain chiefs for the balance then due, to be paid in case the Shawnee nation should recover from the United States 100,000 acres of land which they claimed.

The committee have only printed copies of this order, and of the acknowledgment of the claim in 1833 and of the original contract.

The Shawnee nation now resist the claim. They present evidence in regard to Johnson's dealings with the tribe rendering it doubtful if he could have had so large a claim. They deny that the nation, as a nation, owed any debt in Ohio. Johnson was a licensed trader among them in Ohio, having only a small store of goods, kept in a log house fourteen by sixteen feet square, and consisting of a few articles of Indian trade.

James B. Gardner, agent of the Shawnees, who was present at the first acknowledgment of the debt in Ohio, says, in his certificate, "that he knows nothing of the validity of the claim, nor of Johnson's dealing with the Shawnees."

The Shawnees present the affidavit of Charles Bluejacket and Charles Tucker that the reacknowledgment of the claim in Kansas, in 1833, was obtained by fraud; that Johnson then represented that he was getting their permission to come among them again as a trader.

How the order on Thompson was procured there is no evidence. It might have been procured in order to obtain influence for the Indians in securing the 100,000 acres of land claimed by them of the government.

On a careful review of the evidence, the committee cannot find sufficient proof to support the claim. The petitioner asks for a law authorizing the retention of future annuities to pay the balance of his claim. The contract made in Ohio is alleged to have been contrary to the customs of the tribe, because it made them liable, as a tribe, for the individual debts of its members; and considering the extent of the claimant's business as a trader, the amount seems unreasonably large. If the original claim was valid, the committee cannot see why the petitioner went to Kansas, in 1833, to procure its re-acknowledgment. The testimony that this was obtained by falsehood and misrepresentation surrounds the case with strong circumstances of suspicion.

Under these circumstances, the committee feel compelled to report adversely, and recommend that the bill be laid on the table.

ELIZA T. MOREHEAD.

JUNE 15, 1866.—Ordered to be printed.

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

REPORT.

The Committee of Claims, to whom were referred the memorial and evidence of Mrs. Eliza T. Morehead, of the District of Columbia, having had the same under consideration, report :

That this is a claim for the price of five slaves emancipated by the act of Congress approved April 16, 1862, entitled "An act for the release of certain persons held to service or labor in the District of Columbia."

By the second section of said act, all persons *loyal* to the United States holding claims to service or labor against persons discharged therefrom by said act were authorized, *within ninety days* from the passage of said act, *but not thereafter*, to apply for compensation for such service in the manner prescribed by the act aforesaid. The petitioner did not apply within the time limited by the act of emancipation. She attempts to escape the neglect in such manner as to require special legislation for her relief.

The committee do not think she has succeeded in this attempt.

It is a remarkable circumstance, connected with this application, that the petitioner and her husband were within the rebel lines during the entire duration of the war; and that her husband was all the time an officer of the rebel army, serving first under *Beauregard*, then under *Jackson*, then under *Lee*.

There are strong reasons for believing that the two daughters of petitioner, in whose behalf compensation is in part prayed for, were during the war violent *secessionists*, and rendered to the rebel authorities all the aid and comfort in their power.

The committee will also remark that the husband of the petitioner is still the owner, as they are informed, of some six hundred acres of land near Culpeper, Virginia, and that the entire case, as presented by the petitioner, leads to the conclusion that after the war commenced the petitioner availed herself of the first opportunity to leave Washington and to join her husband, then in the rebel army; and that she remained with him, sympathizing in the rebellion, until the capture of Richmond and the surrender of Lee rendered the cause hopeless.

Entertaining these convictions, the committee cannot suppress the hope that this claim will never receive a favorable report before this or any future Congress.

They therefore recommend its rejection, for want of justice, loyalty, and merit.