

PENSIONS TO CERTAIN TEAMSTERS AND EXPRESSMEN OF THE WAR OF 1812.

MARCH 3, 1879.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. MACKEY, from the Committee on Revolutionary Pensions, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill H. R. 5710.]

The Committee on Revolutionary Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 5710) amending the laws granting pensions to soldiers and sailors of the war of 1812, and their widows, approved March 9, 1878, having had the same under consideration, respectfully submit the following report:

The foregoing bill proposes that the act of March 9, 1878, which now provides that all soldiers and sailors of the war of 1812 who served for a period of fourteen days in the military service of the United States during the war of 1812, and their widows, shall receive a pension at the rate of eight dollars per month, shall be so amended as to include all persons who served and did duty in the service of the United States in the war of 1812 as teamsters, driving baggage-wagons for the army engaged with the enemy on the frontier, or as expressmen engaged in the like service, or in either case doing such service or duty with such army actually engaged in battle, shall be entitled to a pension under the act of Congress approved March 9, 1878, in the same manner as though they were in the volunteer militia, and that in case of his death, his widow shall in the like manner be entitled to the same.

The committee, upon consideration of the points relating to this amendment, are of the opinion that it should be adopted. It is in evidence that many of these teamsters and expressmen were enlisted men, and performed this service on account of detail from their commands. Their discharges having been, in many cases, lost, they have no evidence of service, and cannot, therefore, become beneficiaries under the aforesaid act. Others, who were not enlisted, performed arduous and useful labor, and very often as perilous, or more so, than those who as enlisted men served in the ranks.

The labor they engaged to perform was entirely necessary to the health, comfort, discipline, efficiency, and spirit of the Army; for their duty was to convey the baggage and military supplies of the Army, and without which there could have been neither clothing nor rations, and, at times, munitions of war.

The duties they performed were frequently more arduous and perilous than those of the soldier, inasmuch as in most cases they were compelled

to traverse long lines of unprotected country, beset by the enemy and tribes of hostile Indians in the employ of the British Government.

The committee, in view of the foregoing facts, and that this duty was performed in the line of military service, and with a spirit of patriotism and devotion to the government frequently as great as the soldier regularly enlisted in the military service, are of opinion that the amendment should be adopted, and therefore return the bill to the House and recommend the passage of the same.