

THOMAS LITTLE.

MARCH 9, 1830.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

Mr. UPSON, from the Committee on Military Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill H. R. 2513.]

The Committee on Military Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 2513) for the relief of Thomas Little, report:

That Thomas Little enlisted as a private in the United States Army and was assigned to the Fourth Artillery September 29, 1856; promoted corporal September 1, 1857; sergeant, June 1, 1859, and first sergeant, March 1, 1860; re-enlisted August 31, 1861, and discharged as first sergeant October 13, 1861; re-enlisted November 8, 1861, and appointed same date; discharged July 2, 1862, by reason of appointment as second lieutenant Thirteenth Infantry, May 31, 1862; appointed first lieutenant August 15, 1862; appointed captain November 1, 1867; brevetted captain July 4, 1863, for gallant and meritorious services at the siege of Vicksburg, Miss., and major November 25, 1863, for gallant and meritorious services at the battle of Missionary Ridge, Tenn. Served in the Florida Indian war in 1856 and 1857. Participated in the following battles, viz: Chickasaw Bayou, December 29, 1862; Arkansas Post, January 11, 1863; Walnut Hills, May 19, 1863; siege of Vicksburg, 1863; Colliersville, Tenn., October 11, 1863; Missionary Ridge, November 24 and 25, 1863; in two engagements with Sioux Indians in Dakota in 1867 and 1868, and in pursuit of Comanches and Kiowas in Texas and Indian Territory; in two engagements with Kiowas in 1872; in battle of the Wichita Agency August 11, 1874. Wounded twice—once slightly in Florida and once severely in action before Vicksburg. Dismissed from service December 20, 1877.

Before a court-martial convened at Fort Clark, Texas, October 31, 1877, the said Thomas Little was tried and dismissed the service on the charge, mainly, that in an examination before a justice of the peace, September 5, 1877, at Brackettville, which was a small frontier town adjoining Fort Clark, of a prostitute accused by said Little of having stolen from him about \$45 in money, it appeared from the statement of said Little before the justice that this woman, after dark, between the hours of 7 and 11 at night, took or seized hold of his arm and walked with him in the street for about 25 yards; that he went to her house and remained there with her about one hour; that while at her house he missed his pocket-book which contained \$46, including one silver dollar, and he never saw it afterwards.

This occurrence it appears was after dark and witnessed by no reliable witness, excepting by one witness who stated in substance that he

and Little having taken a lunch in a saloon walked out, when the woman referred to walked up to Little and said, "I wish to see you a moment;" that Little walked off a few steps with her; that he saw her snatch his arm a second, not more, and saw them walk across the street. The statement of Little before the justice as to what occurred between him and the woman, not legitimately connected with the charge of theft, appears to have been drawn out by the attorney of the woman.

The justice in answer to the question, "Did not Mr. Clamp, when acting as counsel for the defense, press the accused with questions purposely made obscene and on matters not necessarily relevant to the case, and was not this the cause of irritation on Captain Little's part?" says, "Yes, sir; I came very near fining him for contempt of court for pressing such obscene questions."

It would seem from the proceedings of the court-martial that the gist of the charge against Captain Little was that, in prosecuting the woman for theft, he had voluntarily published his own dishonor, not from the fact that he had been guilty of improper conduct. Whatever of publicity may have been given to the matter does not seem to have been voluntarily given by Captain Little, but to have been drawn out by inquisitive and insolent counsel, and designedly made more public by preferring the charges, based upon the testimony, as taken down before the justice, surreptitiously obtained.

During the entire service of Thomas Little in the United States Army for upwards of twenty-one years, as a private, as sergeant-major, as first and second lieutenant, as captain, and brevet major, he appears to have uniformly borne the character of a good soldier and an efficient officer, of being scrupulous in the discharge of duty, as marked for personal bravery and coolness in danger, and distinguished for gallantry and daring in battle. He was twice wounded and twice brevetted, once as captain and once as major, for gallant and meritorious conduct in battle. Considering the long and valuable services rendered by Thomas Little to the United States, his adopted country, and his uniformly good character as a soldier and a citizen, as well as the evidence upon which he was tried, it is believed that, for the peccadillo charged, his dismissal from the service was unwarranted, and that a generous and just government should restore him to the rank which he held in the Army at the date of his dismissal therefrom.

Therefore your committee report back bill H. R. 2513, and recommend its passage.