

ALMIRA RUSSELL HANCOCK.

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MARCH 12, 1886.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

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Mr. SWOPE, from the Committee on Invalid Pensions, submitted the following

R E P O R T :

[To accompany bill H. R. 5841.]

*The Committee on Invalid Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 5841) granting a pension to Almira Russell Hancock, having had the same under careful consideration; respectfully submit the following report :*

General Hancock was an illustrious actor in the critical hours and dark days which overshadowed the history of his country. It will never be disputed that he met all the demands of these great and memorable occasions with a patriotic self-consecration and with a matchless soldiery that was fruitful of good fortune to his country. Recorded results of General Hancock's part in preserving the Union adorn our military annals. Gazetted for skill and gallantry on the earlier battlefields upon which he figured, his record at Gettysburg and in the desperate struggles of the Wilderness is an imperishable and priceless remembrance. Believing in the institutions of his country, he defended them with ardent zeal and at the cost of his blood. On great battlefields, where valor met valor, and where decisive results of war occurred, Hancock was often an eminent figure. There should be no scant gratitude to a soldier who lives in the annals of war for the Union among its most splendid characters.

His death was a source of universal public grief, as his life had been a public blessing. It was followed by quick testimonials in his honor throughout the land. Every form of popular and official demonstration attested appreciation of an heroic defender of the Republic. Enemies whom he overcame in battle are his eulogists in company with the men he led against them.

He has passed into history without challenge of his honor and his success, where honor and success can be successfully challenged if there be flaw in either. Soldiers are judges and critics of soldiers. Before the tribunal of soldiers Hancock's career is already of final record. Of military success he left abundant memorials. Of his magnanimity Americans he defeated in war are cheerful witnesses.

His services were all that could be demanded of patriotic endeavor and devotion. As a type of American patriotism General Hancock will live in the history of his country and in the hearts of his countrymen regardless of sectional or party divisions.

Brave in war, "tender and true" in peace, his sympathies and active benevolence were to the last days of his life freely and almost lavishly

expended in behalf of his sick and suffering comrades, their widows and their orphans. No appeal from them ever fell upon his unlistening ear. The very last effort of his life was the dictation of a letter, which he had not strength to sign, making a strong appeal in behalf of the widow of a deceased officer.

Supplementary to this report are papers which are official statements of General Hancock's services to his country; services which his countrymen recognize as the sufficient and eloquent plea for what General Hancock would have wished Congress to do for his widow.

The nature of the service in which General Hancock was engaged, the constant drain upon his pecuniary resources, made necessary by the position he occupied, and the further tax upon his means by his full-handed generosity to unfortunate comrades, has left his widow in straightened circumstances and to some extent dependent on private liberality. This a grateful country should not permit. This committee cannot do better than to quote from the report of the Senate Committee on Pensions of the Forty-eighth Congress, which report was ably drawn by Mr. Cullom on the bill granting an increase of pension to the widow of General George H. Thomas. This report concludes as follows:

Although a pension of this amount has only been granted by Congress in one instance, in the case of the widow of Admiral Farragut, excepting the larger pensions to the widows of deceased Presidents, the committee believe that the widow of George H. Thomas should receive the greatest possible consideration at the hands of Congress, and that the unusual and exceptional allowance proposed in her case is a fitting and very appropriate recognition of the nation's indebtedness to her most distinguished husband.

Your committee agree fully with the foregoing sentiments, and considering this one of the exceptional cases in which it becomes their duty to recommend a departure from ordinary precedent and policy, they heartily and unanimously recommend the passage of the bill.

#### A.

WAR DEPARTMENT, ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
*Washington, February 25, 1866.*

Statement of the military service of Winfield S. Hancock, late of the United States Army, compiled from the records of this office:

He was a cadet at the United States Military Academy from July 1, 1840, to July 1, 1844, when he was graduated and appointed brevet second lieutenant, Sixth Infantry; was promoted second lieutenant, June 18, 1846 (regimental quartermaster June 30, 1848, to October 1, 1849, and regimental adjutant October 1, 1849, to November 7, 1855), and first lieutenant January 27, 1853; appointed captain and assistant quartermaster November 7, 1855; promoted major and quartermaster November 30, 1863; appointed brigadier-general United States Army August 12, 1864, for "gallant and distinguished services in the battles of the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, and Cold Harbor, and in all the operations of the Army in Virginia, under Lieutenant-General Grant;" major-general July 26, 1866.

He was appointed brigadier-general United States Volunteers, September 23, 1861, and major general November 29, 1862, and vacated his commission in the volunteer service July 26, 1866.

He received the brevet of first lieutenant United States Army, August 20, 1847, "for gallant and meritorious conduct in the battles of Contreras and Cherubusco, Mexico," and of major-general United States Army, March 13, 1865, "for gallant and meritorious services in the battle of Spotsylvania, Va."

The Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, *Resolved* (joint resolution approved April 21, 1866), "That in addition to the thanks heretofore voted by joint resolution, approved January 23, 1864, to \* \* \* and the officers and soldiers of the Army of the Potomac for the skill and heroic valor which, at Gettysburg, repulsed, defeated, and drove back, broken and dispirited, the veteran army of the rebellion, the gratitude of the American peo-

ple and the thanks of their Representatives in Congress are likewise due, and are hereby tendered, to Maj. Gen. Winfield S. Hancock, for his gallant, meritorious, and conspicuous share in that great and decisive victory."

He joined his regiment October 13, 1844, and served therewith in the Indian territory to April, 1847; on recruiting service to July, 1847; *en route* to and with regiment in the war with Mexico to July, 1848; at Jefferson Barracks, Mo., to September, 1848, and Fort Crawford, Wis., to April 30, 1849; on leave to September 23, 1849; with regiment at Saint Louis and Jefferson Barracks, Mo. (on leave August 2 to September 2, 1851, and July 19 to September 19, 1853), to November 15, 1855, when he accepted appointment as captain and assistant quartermaster U. S. Army, and was ordered on duty in Florida, where he served in the campaign against the Seminole Indians to August, 1857; at Fort Leavenworth, Kans., to October, 1858, with the Army in Utah and *en route* to and in California to August 21, 1861, when he left for Washington, D. C. He commanded a brigade in Smith's Division, Army of the Potomac, from September 27, 1861, to March 14, 1862; the First Brigade, Second Division, Fourth Army Corps, to May 18, 1862; the First Brigade, Second Division, Sixth Corps, to September 17, 1862; the First Division, Second Corps, to May 21, 1863, and from June 1 to 8, 1863; the Second Corps from May 22 to 31, and June 9 to July 4, 1863, when, having received a gunshot wound of the thigh in the battle of Gettysburg, Pa., July 3, 1863, he left his command and was absent on account of wound until December 29, 1863, upon which date he resumed command of the Second Corps and served in the Army of the Potomac until January 12, 1864; recruiting for his corps to March 24, 1864, and in command of the corps in the Army of the Potomac to November 25, 1864; organizing the First Army Corps (veteran) and commanding the same at Washington, D. C., to February 26, 1865, and also, in addition to the corps, the Middle Military Division to July 17, 1865, and the Middle Department to August 9, 1866; commanding the Department of the Missouri to September 11, 1867; the Fifth Military District to March 16, 1868; the Division of the Atlantic March 31, 1868, to March 19, 1869; member of the court of inquiry in the case of General Dyer to May 15, 1869; commanding the Department of Dakota from May 17, 1869 (president of a board to examine officers unfit for the proper discharge of their duties from October, 1870, to January 11, 1871), to December 3, 1872; the Division of the Atlantic and Department of the East from December 16, 1872, to October 29, 1873; Division of the Atlantic to November 8, 1877, and Division of the Atlantic and Department of the East to February 9, 1886, when he died.

J. C. KELTON,  
*Acting Adjutant-General.*

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B.

EXECUTIVE MANSION,  
Washington, D. C., February 9, 1886—4 p. m.

*To heads of Departments:*

Tidings of the death of Winfield Scott Hancock, the senior major-general of the Army of the United States, have just been received. A patriotic and valiant defender of his country; an able and heroic soldier; a spotless and accomplished gentleman, crowned alike with laurels of military renown, and the highest tribute of his fellow countrymen to his worth as a citizen, he has gone to his reward.

It is fitting that every mark of public respect should be paid to his memory. Therefore it is now ordered by the President that the national flag be displayed at half-mast upon all the buildings of the Executive Departments in this city until after his funeral shall have taken place.

DANIEL S. LAMONT,  
*Private Secretary.*

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C.

[General Orders No. 8.]

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,  
ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
Washington, February 10, 1886.

The following order has been received from the War Department:

WAR DEPARTMENT,  
Washington, D. C., February 9, 1886.

With profound sorrow the Secretary of War announces to the Army that Major-General Winfield Scott Hancock died to-day at Governor's Island, in the harbor of New York.

He was born at Norristown, Pa., February 14, 1824. Upon graduating from West Point he entered the Army July 1, 1844, as second lieutenant of the Sixth Infantry. After a short service in the Indian territory he accompanied his regiment to Mexico, and took part in the brief but brilliant campaign which ended in the capture of the Mexican capital. He won a brevet for gallant and meritorious services at Contreras and Cherubusco, where he displayed those splendid qualities which, later and in a wider field, placed his name among the great soldiers of our Army. On his return from Mexico he served against the Seminole Indians, and was engaged in quelling the disturbances in Kansas and Utah. Upon the breaking out of the war of the rebellion he was appointed brigadier-general, and soon after major-general of volunteers. His eminent services as commander of the Second Army Corps are inseparably connected with the eventful career of the Army of the Potomac.

A soldier without fear, a citizen without reproach, a patriot without guile, he will ever be a noble and impressive figure in our history; and his countrymen will always recall with pride and pleasure his heroic and inspiring conduct during those last memorable hours on the field of Gettysburg. For his meritorious and conspicuous share in that great and decisive victory he has received the gratitude of the American people and the thanks of Congress.

The flag will be placed at half-staff at all military posts and stations, thirteen minute-guns will be fired on the day after the receipt of this order, and the usual badges of mourning will be worn for thirty days.

By command of Lieutenant-General Sheridan:

Official:

WM. C. ENDICOTT,  
*Secretary of War.*

R. C. DRUM,  
*Adjutant-General.*

J. C. KELTON,  
*Assistant Adjutant-General.*