

SARAH L. LARIMER.

JUNE 2, 1886.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

Mr. LANHAM, from the Committee on Claims, submitted the following

R E P O R T :

[To accompany bill H. R. 9124.]

The Committee on Claims, to whom was recommitted the bill (H. R. 6051) to compensate Mrs. Sarah L. Larimer for important services rendered the military authorities in the year 1864, at Deer Creek Station, in Wyoming Territory, and for loss of property taken by the Sioux Indians, report as follows :

It appears from the evidence that in July of the year 1864 Lieutenant Larimer and his wife, the claimant, Mrs. Sarah L. Larimer, and their child, Frank E. Larimer, left their home in Kansas to cross the plains for the restoration of said Lieutenant Larimer's health, he having been a commissioned officer in the Union Army and honorably discharged because of his health having given out through hard service in the war ; that they took with them horses, and wagons, and goods, and some money ; and that when they were in Wyoming Territory, and in company with several other traveling persons, they were surprised by a band of Sioux Indians, who murdered three of the party, wounded two, and captured claimant, Mrs. Sarah L. Larimer and her child, and one other lady and child.

Claimant, Mrs. Sarah L. Larimer, and her child, Frank E. Larimer, were carried far into the mountainous hills, a distance of 75 miles or more. That she finally escaped from her savage captors in the darkness of night, carrying her child in her arms, and with great hardship and much suffering, being unaided and alone, they traveled on foot over the wild and dangerous hills, arriving at the immigrant road in almost a nude condition, their clothing having been torn from their persons. At this immigrant road, and at a place called Deer-Creek Station, claimant met Captain Shuman and Captain Marshall, of the Eleventh Ohio Cavalry, then moving against the Indians, and communicated to these officers much valuable information as to the designs of the Indians.

These two commanding officers, Captains Shuman and Marshall, swear that if it had not been for the information given by Mrs. Sarah L. Larimer the command with which they were about to start out at that hour would have been massacred and destroyed, but by acting under her information, dismounting and arming the teamsters, and gathering in all the available and additional forces within immediate reach, and by following the directions given by Mrs. Sarah L. Larimer, they were able to avoid the great destruction to the command and to citizens that otherwise would have happened.

It further appears that claimant, as well as citizens, testify to the fact of claimant's captivity and to her loss of property by the Sioux Indians at said time and place.

It seems that by acts of Congress, in the year 1870 and in the year 1872, the lady, Mrs. Fannie Kelly, who was captured at the same time and place and by the very same Indians who captured Mrs. Sarah L. Larimer, has been allowed payment for valuable information and loss of property. (See vols. 16 and 17, Statutes at Large.)

The affidavits of Captain Shuman and of Captain Marshall, two of the witnesses offered in support of this claim, are herewith attached and made a part hereof.

The committee report the accompanying substitute for the original bill and recommend its passage.

STATE OF ILLINOIS, *County of Clay, ss:*

In the claim of Mrs. Sarah L. Larimer, for Indian depredations, and pay for information furnished United States troops, personally came before me, Levi G. Marshall, of Clay City, county of Clay, State of Illinois, who, being first duly sworn, declares in relation to the aforesaid claim as follows:

On or about the 13th day of July, 1864, property belonging to the said claimant was taken and destroyed by Indians of the Sioux tribe at or near Box Elder Creek, in Wyoming Territory, under the following circumstances: I was captain of Company, Eleventh Regiment Ohio Cavalry Volunteers, and with my command was stationed at Fort Laramie, Wyoming, at the time (later being mustered out as major). That on or about the 13th day of July, 1864, I was ordered to move against the Sioux Indians with 200 mounted men; Captain Shuman, being the other captain, was ordered with me; that when 115 miles out and at Deer Creek Station, we were met by Mrs. Sarah L. Larimer, who had been carried off by a band of Sioux Indian warriors, but had escaped in the darkness of night from their camp with her child in her arms, and climbed the hills for a distance of 75 or more miles on foot and alone. As commanding officer I procured of Mrs. Sarah L. Larimer very valuable information about the movements of the enemy, as well as of their number and arms and how mounted, so that being forewarned, I was able to avoid the ambushes and surprise that otherwise would have happened, to the death and destruction of my command. A few of my men, acting contrary to orders, fell into one of the ambushes, where their leader, Lieutenant Brown, lost his life. Mrs. Larimer was now destitute, bare of head and foot, all her property, which I understood had amounted to about (cannot tell how much), having been taken or destroyed by the Indians when she and her child were carried off by said Indians. Her husband had been a commissioned officer of a Kansas regiment, but was discharged and in poor health, and now had the addition of a severe arrow-wound near the groin. I know that all of her property was destroyed by the Indians; I do not now remember as to the value of said property.

I have no interest in said claim and am not concerned in its prosecution.

LEVI G. MARSHALL,

Late Major Eleventh Ohio Volunteer Cavalry.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this day, by the above-named affiant; and I certify that I read said affidavit to said affiant, and acquainted him with its contents before he executed the same. I further certify that I am in no wise interested in said claim, nor am I concerned in its prosecution.

Witness my hand and official seal this 12th day of March, 1886.

[SEAL.]

E. MCGILTON,
Notary Public.

STATE OF MISSOURI,
County of Pettis, ss:

In the matter of the claim of Mrs. Sarah L. Larimer for Indian depredation, and for information furnished to the United States troops after her escape from the Sioux Indians, by whom she had been captured and her property destroyed, personally came before me, B. H. Ingram, clerk of the circuit court of Pettis County, Missouri, Jacob S. Shuman, of Sedalia, in said Pettis County, Missouri, who, being first duly sworn, on his oath states that on the 13th day of July, 1864, this affiant, Jacob S. Shuman, was captain of and in command of Company — of the Eleventh Ohio Cavalry, and, with my command, was stationed at Fort Laramie, Wyoming, and that on or about that date, having information that the Sioux Indians had made a raid on the emigrant road, captured and destroyed a train of emigrants, and had carried into captivity

the said Mrs. Sarah L. Larimer and her little child, I immediately moved against the Indians up Platte River in a northwesterly direction about 115 miles to a place called Deer Creek Station. I there learned that the capture of Mrs. Larimer and her child, and the destruction of her property, and the murdering of several persons who were with the train, had taken place on Box Elder Creek, and as I was about to move against the Indians with the force I had, which consisted of my own company and a force under Captain Marshall, the said Sarah L. Larimer came into camp carrying her little child in her arms, she having escaped from the Indians, after having been carried by them about 75 miles, and returned on foot to the emigrant road, where she met my command.

When she came into our camp her condition was most deplorable; her clothes had been nearly all torn off her body; her arms and limbs were lacerated from making her way through the thorns, bushes, and cactus, on her way after her escape, and she and her little child were nearly famished. As soon as she could be resuscitated by nourishment, which was only a very short time, she gave me a detailed account of the position of the Indians, their plans and movements, and designs against my command, and also their numbers and the position they occupied, and the ambuscades they had prepared. So that by taking proper precaution my command was enabled in a short time to move forward and thwart their designs, not only against the pursuing troops, but against other exposed points and trains that were on the emigrant road.

And I do most positively and solemnly swear that if it had not been for the information received from the said Mrs. Larimer that the command with which I was about to start out at that hour would have been massacred and destroyed; but by acting under her information, dismounting and arming the teamsters, and gathering in all the available and additional forces within immediate reach, and by following the directions given by the said Mrs. Larimer to avoid an ambuscade, I was enabled to obtain the advantage of the Indians and drive them north, not only saving part of my command from being massacred, and saving the lives and property of others who would certainly have been captured and murdered if it had not been for the valuable information given to me by the said Mrs. Larimer.

I found the information that she gave as to the position and movements of the Indians exactly as she had given it.

And further from my own scout's personal observation, and from the further fact that when Lieutenant Brown disobeyed orders a few men fell into an ambuscade, described by Mrs. Larimer, and was killed by the Indians. I also learned at that time that the property taken from Mrs. Larimer consisted of a fine collection of pictures, photograph apparatuses, and stock for that kind of business, and wagons and mules, all of which, as near as I can now recollect and estimate, was of the value of over \$10,000. I further learned at the time and afterwards, also, that Mrs. Larimer was a photographer and artist herself, and that the property was hers; and I learned the fact that her husband was with her and was wounded and left for dead by the Indians, but afterwards partially recovered; and that he had been a commissioned officer honorably discharged from the Eighth Kansas Volunteers, which I learned from Mr. Larimer himself, whom I saw, and I saw arrow wounds upon his person. And this affiant further says that the above and main facts that I have stated herein as to the information received from the said Mrs. Sarah L. Larimer as to the position, location, and designs of the Indians came under my direct and personal observation; and that I have not the slightest interest in any claim she may have; but that if she has a claim for property lost and for the information furnished me, I can and do say that it is just and deserving.

Owing to the fact that I am suffering from a severe nervous ailment, I am unable to write this affidavit myself and am compelled to dictate it to a stenographer and have it printed on a type-writer for me.

And this affiant further states that I have read this affidavit over carefully, and had the same read over to me, and that it, the same, is true in substance and in fact. So help me God.

JACOB S. ^{his} + SHUMAN,
mark. *Affiant.*

Attest:

J. G. LINDSAY,
JOHNSON ORR.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this the 15th day of March, 1886, and I further certify that I have been personally acquainted with the above-named affiant for about fifteen years last past and know from such acquaintance that he is the identical person he represents himself to be, and I further certify that for several years he has been afflicted with some nervous disease or trouble, thereby incapacitating him of writing his name. I also certify that I am in no way interested in this claim.

[SEAL.]

B. H. INGRAM,

Clerk of the Circuit Court of Pettis County, Missouri.

VIEWS OF THE MINORITY.

The undersigned cannot concur in the report of the majority on this bill. There is no principle of law calling for this appropriation, and in his judgment the facts, so far as developed, do not warrant it. Even if it be said to be compensation for property destroyed by Indians, the question yet remains whether the Government is called upon to make compensation in cases where recoupment cannot be had from the annuities fund. No such recoupment seems to be contemplated in this case, and the bare question of such compensation without recoupment is presented.

It is true that heretofore bills making such compensation have occasionally become laws, but their number is not sufficient to indicate a settled policy. If it shall become the settled policy of the Government to pay for all losses by Indian depredations, then this bill would seem to be one of merit. That this matter may receive consideration, and some policy be fixed upon in cases of this character would seem to be desirable.

It is not the purpose here to discuss the justness and propriety of adopting such a policy, but certainly that question should first be settled.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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