

SALLIE R. ALEXANDER.

MAY 14, 1888.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

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

REPORT:

[To accompany bill S. 1009.]

The Committee on Invalid Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (S. 1009) granting an increase of pension to Sallie R. Alexander, widow of Lieut. Col. Thomas L. Alexander, U. S. Army, have had the same under consideration and concur in the Senate amendment, which is as follows: Strike out in lines 7 and 8 the words "one hundred" and substitute therefor the word "fifty."

Your committee beg leave to submit the following statement of the military service of Col. Thomas L. Alexander, U. S. Army, husband of claimant:

WAR DEPARTMENT,
ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, February 14, 1888.

Statement of the military service of Thomas L. Alexander, late of the U. S. Army, compiled from the records of this office:

He was graduated at the United States Military Academy, and appointed brevet second lieutenant Sixth Infantry July 1, 1830; promoted second lieutenant July 1, 1830; first lieutenant April 18, 1837; captain July 7, 1838; major Eighth Infantry June 9, 1853, and lieutenant-colonel Fifth Infantry July 31, 1861.

He received the brevet of major, U. S. Army, August 20, 1847, "for gallant and meritorious conduct in the battles of Contreras and Churubusco."

He was on leave of absence to December 1, 1830; on duty with his regiment at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, to May, 1831; at Rock Island, Ill., to July, 1831; at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, to April, 1832; in the field in the Black Hawk war against the Sac Indians (being engaged in the battle of Bad Axe River August 2, 1832) to September, 1832, and at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, to March 17, 1834; acting assistant adjutant-general and aid-de-camp to Brevet Brigadier-General Atkinson, commanding right wing, Western Department, to September 22, 1834; on leave to May 1, 1835; acting assistant adjutant-general and aid-de-camp to Brevet Brigadier-General Atkinson, commanding right wing, Western Department, to December 19, 1838; with regiment at Fort Jackson, Louisiana, to January 23, 1839; witness before a court of inquiry at Saint Louis, Mo., to April 30, 1839; with regiment in the Florida war to July 12, 1839; witness before a general court-martial at Saint Louis, Mo., to December 9, 1839; with regiment in the Florida war to May 10, 1840; absent sick to January 25, 1841; with regiment in the Florida war to January 25, 1842; on detached service (emigrating Indians from Florida) to December 12, 1842; with regiment at Forts Washita and Towson, Indian Territory, to March 19, 1844; on leave to November 30, 1844, and absent sick to April 15, 1845; with regiment at Fort Towson, Indian Territory, to May, 1846, and en route to New Orleans, La., to June 8, 1846; on sick leave to January 29, 1847; with regiment in the war with Mexico (being engaged in the siege of Vera Cruz, March 9 to 29, 1847; battle of Cerro Gordo, April 17 and 18, 1847; skirmish of Amazoque, May 14, 1847; capture of San Antonio, August 20, 1847; battles of Contreras and Churubusco, August 20, 1847; Molino del Rey, September 8, 1847, and Chapultepec and City of Mexico, September 13 and 14,

1847) to August, 1848; en route to and at Fort Atkinson, Kansas, to February 14, 1849; on leave to May 3, 1849; on recruiting service to September 6, 1850; on leave to May 10, 1851; with regiment at Fort Snelling, Minnesota, to February 9, 1853; on sick leave to September 13, 1854; deputy governor of the military asylum at Harrodsburg, Ky., to May 14, 1858, and lieutenant-governor of the Soldiers' Home, near Washington, D. C., from May 16, 1858, to March 8, 1864. He was retired from active service October 16, 1863, for disability, resulting from sickness and exposure in the line of duty. On duty under orders of the commanding officer of Louisville, Ky., from March 9, 1864, to August 16, 1866; member of the examining board of applicants for promotion in the Army to December 31, 1867; unemployed to June 20, 1868; on court-martial duty in the Department of the Cumberland to January 22, 1869; unemployed to March 11, 1881, upon which date he died at Louisville, Ky.

THEO. SCHWAN,
Assistant Adjutant-General.

General S. B. Buckner, who is now governor of Kentucky, was an Army associate of Col. Thomas L. Alexander, and renders the following tribute to the memory of the deceased, which is made part of this report:

COL. THOMAS LUDWELL ALEXANDER.

The announcement of the death of this accomplished gentleman and distinguished soldier has filled with sorrow a large circle of friends. His genial qualities, his exemplary life, his Christian virtues endeared him to all with whom he was associated, and left upon all with whom he came in contact the impress of his generous nature. But though he has departed from this life he has left behind him the rich legacy of an example worthy of our imitation and a character calculated to excite our emulation and to command our esteem. His career has been an eventful one. Born in Prince William County, Va., of an illustrious parentage, he ranked amongst his ancestors the distinguished statesman, Richard Henry Lee, who was his great-grandfather; and emigrating to Kentucky at an early age, he entered the United States Military Academy in July, 1826. On graduating from that institution in 1830 he entered the Sixth Regiment of United States Infantry as brevet second lieutenant, and was successively promoted to the grades of second lieutenant, first lieutenant in 1837, and captain in 1838 in the same regiment, in which he continued to serve until promoted to the grade of major of the Eighth Infantry in 1853, and subsequently to the grade of lieutenant-colonel of the Fifth Infantry in 1861.

The earlier years of his military career were passed in what was then our extreme western frontier, in Missouri and Iowa, and his military qualities soon attracted the attention of his superiors. After only two years of active service he was selected by Brigadier-General Atkinson as aide-de-camp, and participated with that distinguished soldier in the battle of the Bad Ax, August 2, 1832, against the Sac and Fox Indians, who were under the leadership of the celebrated chief, Black Hawk, and after this decisive victory was selected by the commanding general to conduct the captive chief to Washington City.

After the conquest of these Western Indian tribes and his promotion to the grade of captain, he was ordered with his regiment against the Seminole Indians in Florida, and actively participated in the arduous campaigns against that tribe during the years 1839-'40-'41 and 1842. On the conclusion of the war, the difficult character of which can only be appreciated by those who have experienced like hardships and privations, he was selected to superintend the removal of the present Indian nation west of Arkansas of the Seminole chief Tiger Tail and his band; and was subsequently stationed in their midst at Fort Towson, to hold them in subjection. In this remote region, which was then so far beyond the limits of civilization, he remained until the outbreak of the war with Mexico and the concentration of the troops of the regular Army by General Scott for the first campaign against the city of Mexico. From the Lower Rio Grande he moved with his company, which was the color company of his regiment, to the rendezvous near Vera Cruz. The landing was effected by Worth's division on March 9, 1847.

This descent, which was made in the close view of an enemy superior in numbers, was no ordinary pageant. Three thousand veteran troops embarked in boats, each of which was manned by seamen and directed by an officer of the Navy, moved in a line parallel with the shore, and in perhaps less than three minutes from the landing of the first boat the entire line of three thousand men had formed upon the bank and were moving upon the heights beyond. Alexander's colors were the first displayed upon the beach, and it may be safely asserted that he was the first soldier of that veteran army whose feet touched this hostile shore.

In the siege of Vera Cruz which followed, and which terminated in its surrender on the 29th of March; in the battle of Cerro Gordo, on the 17th and 18th of April following; in the subsequent pursuit of the retreating enemy through Jalapa Perote and the city of Puebla; in the terrible day of Churubusco, and the operations resulting in the final capture of the city of Mexico and the dispersion of the armies of Santa Anna, Captain Alexander bore an active and a distinguished part, in recognition of which he received the rank of brevet major, August 20, 1847, "for gallant and meritorious conduct in the battles of Contreras and Churubusco."

That veteran army which planted its victorious standards on the national palace of Mexico and won an empire for its country contained many a knightly soldier, but it could boast of no truer gentleman or more chivalrous spirit than Thomas Ludwell Alexander.

At the close of the war with Mexico he was again assigned to duty on the frontier in Kansas and Minnesota, until selected to organize the Military Asylum at Harrodsburgh, Ky., in 1854, where he remained until appointed, in 1858, lieutenant-governor of the Soldiers' Home, near Washington City, in which position he continued until March 8, 1864.

The arduous duties of a military career, extending over a period of more than thirty years, and the deleterious influence of the varied climates to which he had been exposed, seriously injured a constitution which was never robust. He was compelled, therefore, after so many years of devotion to his country, to avail himself of the privileges accorded by its laws, and on October 16, 1863, was "retired from active service for disability resulting from long and faithful service, and from sickness and exposure contracted in the line of duty."

The remaining years of his life were passed chiefly at his beautiful home near Louisville, Ky., cheered by the presence and the affection of the cherished partner of his life, the devotion of his children, the admiration and love of numerous friends, and the sincere regard and esteem of the community of which he was an ornament.

In the fullness of years, at the age of seventy-three, he sank peacefully to rest on the 11th of March, 1881, the laurel wreath of the chivalrous soldier encircling his honored brow, and the confiding trust of Christian hope cheering and inspiring his heart.

Among the numerous friends who lament the loss of this accomplished gentleman none can more deeply grieve than the writer of this brief sketch of his military career. His subordinate for many years, and honored by his friendship, he early learned at the bivouac and around the camp-fire to appreciate the noble qualities of his commander, which attracted the love and commanded the esteem of all who approached him. His imposing presence, his kindly, loving nature, his generous impulses, his true dignity of character, his stainless honor and integrity, his knightly and chivalrous bearing, united to make "a combination and a form, indeed, which give the world assurance of a man."

S. B. B.

LOUISVILLE, March 14, 1881.

In view of the distinguished services rendered the country by the deceased, and the advanced age of claimant, your committee find that the case appeals strongly to the generosity of Congress, and therefore make this favorable report, and recommend the passage of the bill.