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Harriet Tubman. Volume 1627, Report no. 787 1874

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HARRIET TUBMAN.

JUNE 22, 1874.—Read twice, committed to a Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

Mr. GERRY W. HAZELTON, from the Committee on War-Claims, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill H. R. 3786.]

The Committee on War-Claims, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 2711) for the relief of Harriet Tubman, having had the same under consideration, ask leave to report:

That Harriet Tubman, a colored woman, and formerly a slave, was, in the month of May, 1862, sent to Hilton Head, South Carolina, at the suggestion of Governor Andrew, of Massachusetts, upon the theory that she would be a valuable person to operate within the enemy's lines as a scout and spy.

It appears from testimony submitted to the committee that she served in that capacity during most of the war and rendered valuable service, obtaining information which was of great value in military operations.

The following order from Major-General Hunter, commanding Department of the South, exhibits the estimation in which she was held by that officer:

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE SOUTH,
HILTON HEAD, PORT ROYAL, S. C., February 19, 1863.

Pass bearer, Harriet Tubman, to Beaufort and back to this place, and wherever she wishes to go, and give her free passes at all times on all Government transports. Harriet was sent to me from Boston by Governor Andrew, of Massachusetts, and is a valuable woman. She has permission as a servant of the Government to purchase such provisions from the commissary as she may need.

D. HUNTER,
Major-General, Commanding.

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE SOUTH,
July 1, 1863.

Continued in force.

Q. A. GILMORE,
Brigadier-General, Commanding.

Among other letters attesting as to the character of Harriet Tubman and attesting as to her services, is the following:

GENERAL: I wish to commend to your attention Mrs. Harriet Tubman, a most remarkable colored woman and valuable as a scout. I am well acquainted with her character and actions for several years past.

* * * * *

I am, general, your most obedient servant,

JAMES MONTGOMERY,
Colonel, Commanding Beaufort.

On the back of this letter is indorsed :

I approve fully Colonel Montgomery's estimate of the value of Harriet Tubman's services.

RUFUS SAXTON,
Brigadier-General.

It appears, also, from the evidence submitted, that she remained in the military service until February, 1865, when she went North on leave of absence to see her aged parents residing in Washington. She was soon after taken sick, and on that account was unable to return within the time specified in her leave, and for that reason was refused return transportation to Hilton Head. This was remedied by order of Secretary Stanton, who gave her a pass and transportation to that point. On her way to New York she was detained in Philadelphia by members of the Sanitary Committee, who, aware of her character, desired and persuaded her to go to James River Hospital, where there was a pressing need of such services as she could render.

She there remained until July, 1865, when she was sent to Washington in connection with hospital service, at which time Surgeon-General Barnes appointed her matron at the colored hospital, Fort Monroe, Virginia.

It further appears that she remained at that point and rendered excellent service in teaching freed women, and in various ways was of service to the Bureau of Freedmen and Refugees.

The whole history of the case establishes conclusively the fact that her services in the various capacities of nurse, scout, and spy were of great service and value to the Government, for which no compensation was paid her beside the support she was furnished.

Your committee are of opinion that she should be paid for these services, and to that end report back the accompanying bill as a substitute for H. R. 2711, appropriating the sum of \$2,000 for services rendered by her to the Union Army as scout, nurse, and spy, and recommend its passage.