

GOLD MEDAL IN RECOGNITION OF SERVICES RENDERED BY HAYM SALOMON DURING THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

FEBRUARY 24, 1893.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. CUMMINGS, from the Committee on the Library, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany H. R. 7896.]

The Committee on the Library, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 7896), having for its object the striking of a gold medal in recognition of services rendered by Haym Salomon for advances of money made during the Revolutionary War, have had the same under consideration and respectfully report the bill back, as amended.

In the Thirtieth, Thirty-first, Thirty-seventh, and Thirty-eighth Congresses reports were made on this claim by various committees, and always in favor of paying what the United States undoubtedly justly owes, but it never passed both Houses. Consequently the heirs of Haym Salomon have finally abandoned the idea of ever expecting to receive the money that their ancestor so generously and kindly advanced, and in lieu thereof now ask that Congress should have a gold medal struck as an heirloom for the family, and in consideration of what the ancestor of the memorialist did at a time when it was all important to have such services for the benefit of the United States.

Your committee respectfully report that their request be granted; that a gold medal to the value of \$250 be struck by the United States Mint at Philadelphia, and that the same be presented by the Secretary of the Treasury to the lineal descendant and heir of the late Hoym Salomon.

To verify our recommendation and prove how just this claim is, we attach hereto copy of the reports made by various committees of the Senate of the United States. There can be no question that the heirs should be reimbursed; but as they seem to have caught the spirit of their ancestor and very generously waive their rights in the premises, it is the least that the Congress of the United States can do to testify in a public manner their high appreciation for the valuable and important services rendered by their ancestor.

On the 2d of July, 1862, Mr. Wilkinson, in the Senate, made the following report:

The claim of the memorialist is one of undeniable merit. It is for money advanced to the revolutionary Government when the public treasury was exhausted, its treasury bankrupt, and specie almost impossible to be obtained. It has been repeatedly examined by some of the ablest committees of the two Houses of Congress, and always reported upon favorably, with a bill for the relief of the memorialist; but the great magnitude of the papers and vouchers required so protracted an examination as to place it last on the calendar at each session as never to come within the reach of final action.

The facts show that Haym Salomon, the father of the memorialist, a native of Poland, settled in this country as a merchant and banker before the revolution, and was a zealous supporter of the war for independence; that he was a man of unquestioned integrity, great financial resources and ability, and enjoyed the highest confidence of our public men of the time, as is shown by the most abundant proof, as stated in the reports of the various committees; that his large private fortune and the proceeds of his extensive commercial earnings were freely applied to the use of the revolutionary Government and its various public men, and the agents of foreign governments friendly to our cause, whose supplies were for the time cut off; that during the war he was imprisoned, with Stockton and others, as early as the year 1775, at New York, in the loathsome prison called the "Provost," where he contracted a disease, which ended in his death just at the close of the war, and before any steps had been taken to secure the same, or by the Government to reimburse him for the large amount he had advanced for its use.

When he died he left a young wife not familiar with our language, and four infant children, the youngest, the present memorialist, being only some three weeks old, at a time when all matters, both public and private, were in a state of the greatest depression and confusion, and necessarily exposed to corresponding hazard and neglect. The inventory of his private estate, as filed in the probate court in Philadelphia, on the 15th day of February, 1785, exhibited, among other things, the following public securities as forming part of its assets, viz:

Loan office certificates.....	\$110, 233. 63
Treasury certificates.....	18, 244. 88
Continental liquidated dollars.....	199, 214. 45
Commissioners' certificates.....	17, 870. 37
Virginia State certificates.....	8, 166. 00
Total.....	353, 729. 43

After a careful inspection of the disbursements and payments by the Government, from 1781 to the formation of the present Government in 1789, it appears that no part of this indebtedness was ever paid to Haym Salomon or his heirs, or that any payments whatever were made to him or his representatives, and in an official statement from the first auditor of the Treasury, in answer to questions propounded by the committee of the House of Representatives when examining the same subject, with a certified copy of these evidences of debt before him, that officer stated that no part of the sum had ever been paid or funded by any one since the formation of the present Government. It is, therefore, conclusive to the mind of your committee that no such payment ever has been made, and that the same is still a valid claim for proper indemnity in favor of the memorialist.

It is also proven by the original checks and vouchers before your committee that Haym Salomon advanced in specie to the "superintendent of finance" of the revolutionary Government (Robert Morris), at various times and in various sums, to the amount of some \$211,678, for which amount the original checks are before your committee, excepting two or three which are mislaid, but are well vouched for and referred to in former reports.

The evidence before your committee also proves that Haym Salomon advanced to the Government six promissory notes amounting to £34,758 18s. 2d. Pennsylvania currency, or in federal currency, about \$92,600, for which the original receipt of M. Hillegos, continental treasurer, is presented, showing that it was for the use of the United States.

There is also before your committee the promissory note of Haym Salomon for \$20,000, payable in thirty days to the order of Robert Morris, which shows by the bank marks upon it that it was discounted by the bank and paid by Mr. Salomon at maturity, whose name is erased, and Robert Morris is still on it. There is no doubt that this note was loaned to Mr. Morris, for the reason that a receipt was given bearing even date with the note, "July 25, 1783," and there is a memorandum indorsed on the note to that effect, so specifying. And considering that Mr. Morris was at that time exclusively engaged in financing for the Government, which was greatly in need of means, it is most likely the proceeds of this note were so applied, though the memorialist does not claim it as a part of his demand against the Government.

It is also proven by the vouchers before your committee, that Haym Solomon provided the means to support the ambassador of the King of Spain, Don Francisco Rendon, who was in secret alliance with the revolutionary Government, and whose supplies were cut off by the British cruisers. This fact was acknowledged in an official letter from that minister to the governor-general of Cuba, and the original orders uncancelled, to the amount of 10,000 Spanish dollars, are before your committee, showing that the amount was never paid. But the memorialist does not, nor never has, asked this Government to pay that sum.

All the former reports from the committees of both houses show that Haym Salomon supported from his private means many of the principal men of the Revolution, who otherwise, as stated by themselves, could not have attended to their public duties, among whom are mentioned Jefferson, Madison, Lee, Steuben, Mifflin, St. Clair, Blond, Mercer, Jones, Monroe, Wilson, and others; but the package of vouchers containing the original letters and orders from these parties to Mr. Salomon, with the important confidential statements of these parties, together with many other important as well as interesting matters of fact, have all disappeared from the proper files in the case since the adjournment of last Congress, and no search has been able to find or discover them. It is supposed they have all been abstracted for the sake of the original autograph letters and signatures they embraced. But sufficient of their contents has been preserved in the former reports to show their accuracy and the importance of the relief granted to those who devoted their whole time to the public service, and wherein the patriot Madison says, in 1783:

"The expediency of drawing bills on Virginia, even the most unquestionable, has been tried by us in vain.

"I am fast relapsing into pecuniary distress. The case of my brethren is equally alarming.

"I have been a pensioner for some time on the favor of Haym Salomon.

"I am almost ashamed to reiterate my wants so incessantly to you. The kindness of our friend near the coffee-house (Haym Salomon) is a fund that will preserve me from extremities, but I never resort to it without great mortification, as he obstinately rejects all recompense. To necessitous delegates he always spares them supplies," etc.

This distressed condition of the public men of the time is corroborated by Mr. Morris, superintendent of finance, who, in 1781, wrote the President of Congress that "The Treasury was so much in arrears to the servants in the public offices that many of them could not, without payment, perform their duties, *but must have gone to jail* for debts they have contracted to enable them to live, etc., had they not been favored with assistance."

It was in a crisis like this that Mr. Salomon not only aided the Government directly, as we have seen, but sustained its public men, without reservation or security, trusting in the honor and gratitude of the American people when independence should have been secured.

As evidence of the ability of Haym Salomon to make the advances before stated, your committee have before them the sworn statement of the cashier of the Bank of North America, taken from its books, showing that, after making all these payments and loans, his bank account, at the end of each consecutive quarter during the time referred to, averaged a surplus of from \$11,000 to \$46,000; and the same sworn statement also proves, from the same books, the advance of the large sums stated to Robert Morris; and, indeed, in all respects, corroborates the financial character and respectability of the father of the memorialist. This sworn statement also proves the advances made to the various public men of the Revolution before mentioned, showing the orders or checks upon which the money was paid.

The committees of the last Congress state that—

"In order to be satisfied how far payments of the whole or any part of these advances or Government obligations have been made, [they] have had brought before them a full exemplification of all the revolutionary expenditures and payments anterior to the formation of the present Government, but do not find that there is any evidence of such payments having been made to the father of the memorialist or to his heirs or legal representatives after his death. That the accounts rendered by the Superintendent of Finance have been carefully examined, and no discharge of any of these obligations can be found. That a like search has been made in the private accounts of Robert Morris, as stated upon his oath while incarcerated for debt in the year 1805, and no payments to, or charges against Haym Salomon appear in any shape."

And the First Auditor of the Treasury states officially that no such payments have been made since the formation of the present Government, which is conclusive evidence that there is justly due the memorialist a large sum.

The evidence before your committee shows that the memorialist has been diligent in pursuing his claim. At the death of his father, in 1784, his brother, the eldest of the family, was but about 7 years old. When he arrived at maturity he found the large real estate owned by his father all sold and no account rendered of anything. Steps were taken to pursue such rights as were visible, and, among others, this demand; but, as the evidence was scattered and they were compelled to earn a livelihood by their industry, things moved slowly. Early in this century, his elder brother dying in the discharge of public duties, far from home, the memorialist took charge of it and has pursued it by every proper means in his power.

Many of the survivors of the Revolution, who were the compeers and knew the value of the sacrifices made by Haym Salomon, wrote encouraging letters to the

memorialist on the subject. Among these may be mentioned one from James Madison, in 1827, who, among other things, stated:

"The transactions shown by the papers you inclose were for the support of the delegates to Congress, and the agency of your father therein was solicited on account of the respect and confidence he enjoyed among those best acquainted with him," etc., and concludes with the wish that the memorialist might be properly indemnified.

But, without amplifying, there is sufficient to show that the memorialist has been vigilant in the pursuit of his rights, and though he has had numerous reports made in his favor he never could get his case finally acted upon.

The aggregate of the indebtedness or demand of the memorialist against the Government and of the moneys advanced to the public men of the Revolution, as shown by the papers and recognized by all the committees of both Houses which have examined the same, may be stated thus:

Government obligations of the various species before stated.....	\$353,729.43
Specie advanced at various times to Superintendent of Finance.....	211,678.00
Haym Salomon's six promissory notes, £34,758, 18s. 2d., or in Federal currency, say.....	92,600.00
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Making a total of.....	658,000.43

Besides the note of \$20,000, evidently loaned to Robert Morris, and the \$10,000 and upwards advanced to Don Francisco Rendon, the ambassador of Spain, and an indefinite amount advanced to many of the most devoted men of the Revolution, which is not enumerated or claimed by the memorialist.

In former reports in favor of the memorialist it has been recommended that a bill be passed appropriating to him the amount of Government obligations held by his father at the time of his death, viz: \$353,729.43, except the report of this committee made at the last session.