

MRS. LUCY ALEXANDER PAYNE.

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JANUARY 7, 1897.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

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Mr. COFFIN, from the Committee on Pensions, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany S. 1501.]

The Committee on Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (S. 1501) granting an increase of pension to Mrs. Lucy Alexander Payne, have considered the same and report:

The claimant in this case, Mrs. Lucy Alexander Payne, is the widow of Capt. J. Scott Payne, Fifth United States Cavalry, who graduated from the United States Military Academy and was appointed second lieutenant, Fifth Cavalry, June 18, 1866; promoted first lieutenant May 23, 1867; resigned September 12, 1868. Appointed second lieutenant, Sixth Cavalry, February 3, 1873, and first lieutenant September 8, 1874. Promoted to captain June 4, 1875, and retired as of that rank April 24, 1886, on account of disability originating in the line of his duty.

Captain Payne's record is a very honorable one, and he rendered very brilliant and gallant service in the campaign against the Utes, especially in what is known as the Milk River fight, wherein the gallant Major Thornburgh lost his life. After the fall of Major Thornburgh the command devolved upon Captain Payne, who made a gallant and successful resistance against overwhelming numbers of Indians, bringing his command out of the dangerous position with great credit. He was particularly mentioned by his commanding officer for his conduct in this affair, and was recommended for promotion, which, for some reason, never came to him.

He was twice wounded during the fight referred to, and was a great sufferer before his death. His widow is now in feeble health, suffering from the strain brought on by her faithful attendance on her husband during his last illness. She is without means and dependent upon her pension for the support of herself and two minor children.

Captain Payne died December 19, 1895, from disease originating in the service, and his widow is now receiving the pension of \$20 per month provided by the general law.

In view of the conspicuous and valuable service rendered to his country by the deceased officer, and in the light of the widow's invalid condition and pressing necessities, your committee recommend the passage of the bill, amended, however, by fixing the rate of pension at \$30 per month.