Mr. Fisher, from the Committee on Military Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 7874]

The Committee on Military Affairs, to which was referred the bill (H. R. 7874) for relief of John Ralston, having considered the same, report it back to the House with the recommendation that it do pass.

John Ralston was a member of Company B, Ninety-eighth Regiment, Ohio Volunteer Infantry, enrolled on August 5, 1862, and mustered into the service on August 20, 1862. He was in active service until February 28, 1865.

The medical records show that this soldier was admitted to United States Army, General Hospital No. 7, December 28, 1862, at Lebanon, Ky., with camp fever and diarrhea; that he was admitted January 7, 1863, to General Hospital No. 3, at the same place with typhoid fever; that he was sent to United States Army General Hospital, February 13, 1863, and admitted on same day to United States Army General Hospital No. 12, Louisville, Ky., with anemia, and that he was returned to duty February 17, 1863.

On February 28, 1865, at Chattanooga, Tenn., he was charged with taking papers from a trunk and there was a court-martial which found him guilty on May 27, 1865. He was sentenced to work six months on fortifications and forfeit $10 per month of his monthly pay for that period. Upon his release on December 11, 1865, he was directed to report to the adjutant general of the State of Ohio, where he was given a discharge certificate dated June 1, 1865, the date of the muster out of his company. The adjutant general reports that in view of his status on the date his company was mustered out his discharge was not honorable.

The committee has carefully considered the evidence of the soldier and other evidence in the file. It is believed that the soldier’s affidavit relative to the opening of the trunk, which was unclaimed, and
as the papers taken were found to be of no value and were returned; that the punishment and work would have given him a right to an honorable discharge, but for the fact that his company had been mustered out because the war was over, but he was held for many months thereafter.

John Ralston, the soldier, is now very old and feeble and is in need. One of his comrades states of him that he was a brave and popular soldier in war and that he has known him ever since 1865 as a good citizen, honorable in his dealings, and popular with the people in general.

In view of his several years of service, his medical record of diseases contracted in the service, and his many years as a good citizen, considered truthful and honorable by the people who know him, your committee recommends that this measure be enacted into law.