

HOUSE No. 2039

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

COMMISSION ON ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY,
ROOM 110, STATE HOUSE, BOSTON, Mar. 1, 1913.

*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives in General
Court assembled:—*

GENTLEMEN:—The Commission on Economy and Efficiency, under chapter 719 of the Acts of the year 1912, section 8, respectfully submits the following report and accompanying bill:—

Mr. John Baker, charged with the care of the military archives, has been in the State's service for some twenty-nine years. He is now about sixty-nine years of age, and will be obliged, under the Retirement Act, to leave the State's service in March, 1914.

We respectfully submit that it is our belief that there is no one in the Commonwealth who has such complete knowledge of our naval and military records as Mr. Baker, and beg to state that he is also an expert in military affairs, having rendered valuable service in the United States army, during which service, in the performance of his duty, he met with the serious misfortune of losing his arm.

Besides the fact that the War Records Department of the Commonwealth and the United States Government both continually make demands upon Mr. Baker for information, it is well to observe that the Massachusetts Commission on Gratuities to Civil War Veterans is largely dependent upon

his final information and report to carry out the provisions of the Gratuity Act passed by the Legislature in the year 1912. This Act alone involves the expenditure of about one million dollars from the State Treasury; and a specific and accurate knowledge of enlistments, discharges, musters, etc., of the military and naval veterans is not only essential, but vital.

Mr. Baker is active and efficient, and of great use in the service of the Commonwealth in these and other matters of a similar nature, and if his retirement takes place, as required by law in March, 1914, the Commonwealth will suffer a severe loss of facts and general information, and it will be, in our opinion, impossible to obtain the services of any other person who has made such a careful study of our war records and who can speedily give information which has only been obtained after years of careful investigation.

It is our belief that Mr. Baker can complete the indexing of the war records, now containing some eleven million names and about a million and a half loose documents, within the next four or five years.

Mr. Baker receives a salary of fifteen hundred dollars per annum, and it would be impossible to fill his place by any person with his knowledge at the same price. We therefore deem it essential that he be retained in the State's service until the gratuity matters have been settled and the indexing of the war records completed.

Mr. Baker has been receiving his present salary of fifteen hundred dollars only for the last three months. His pension upon retirement would be approximately six hundred and fifty dollars, which is entirely inadequate for the service which he rendered.

For these and similar reasons we respectfully recommend the accompanying Act to cover this particular case, and submit that, while we do not wish in any way to create a precedent interfering with the general intent of the Retirement Act, it is our duty to report that in this instance we believe it wise, efficient and justifiable to suspend its provisions.

It may be of interest to note that the Department of Mili-

tary Archives contains names, enlistments, musters, rolls, etc., covering the entire period from 1780 to the present time.

Respectfully submitted with bill appended hereto,

COMMISSION ON ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY,

NORMAN H. WHITE, *Chairman.*

FRANCIS X. TYRRELL.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Thirteen.

AN ACT

Relative to John Baker.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. John Baker, employed as custodian of
2 the military archives in the department of the adjutant
3 general, and engaged in the important work of indexing
4 the archives, who, under chapter five hundred and thirty-
5 two of the acts of the year nineteen hundred and eleven
6 and amendments thereto, is to be retired on March fif-
7 teenth, nineteen hundred and fourteen, after twenty-nine
8 years of continuous service in the employ of the com-
9 monwealth, may be retained in the service of the com-
10 monwealth by the adjutant general not later than March
11 fifteenth, nineteen hundred and eighteen, and then upon
12 retirement shall be subject to the provisions and benefits
13 of said chapter five hundred and thirty-two of the acts
14 of the year nineteen hundred and eleven, and amendments
15 thereto, as though his time of service had not been hereby
16 extended.

1 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon its passage.