

Baltimore, Md.,

July 20, 1910.

The Commissioner of Pensions,

Sir:

The contesting claims, W.O. No. 925,932 and W.O. No. 936,042 of Alice E. Chambers and Margaret (thru Ada Chambers as Committee) Chambers respectively as widows of George Chambers, late of Co. G, 19th U.S.C.Vol.Inf., were referred for special examination to determine which, if either, of the contesting claimants is entitled to recognition as soldier's lawful widow, and whether there has been any law violated in connection with the prosecution of either claim.

I called upon the claimant Alice E. Chambers, gave her the usual formal notice of special examination, explained to her her rights in the premises, and took her statement.

I also endeavored to locate Ada Chambers, Committee for the claimant Margaret, who is said to be insane, but Ada was not to be found. Letters addressed to her at her two last known addresses were returned unclaimed. Careful search and inquiry in the vicinity of her residence on Argyle avenue revealed no information as to her whereabouts, except that she told some of her friends two months ago that she was "going away," but did not say where. At her last place of employment in Baltimore, No. 2213 Druid Hill ave., the opinion was expressed that Ada may have gone to Atlantic City, N.J., but that clue was too indefinite to follow up, so I proceeded with the other end of the case, as stated.

Alice E. Chambers is an unusually intelligent and reputable negress, well educated and of considerable refinement, and was, I believe, perfectly honest in filing her claim as the widow of Chambers. She handed me a bill or decree of divorce which she said had been in her husband's possession for many years. After his death she gave it to her attorney, David L. Stanton, of this city, to file with the case. He had not done so, and she recovered it from him and brought it to me. I append it as an exhibit hereto. An examination of the paper will probably show why the attorney did not file it as evidence. A clumsy attempt has been made by some one to change the document from a decree of divorce a mensa et thoro to one of a vinculo matrimonii. It is believed by the claimant Alice that this tampering was done by her husband's attorney, Brooks, who has since died. She says Chambers exhibited this paper to her as proof of his divorce from Margaret, and that without some such proof, she would not have received his attentions. I secured a certified copy of the divorce record as it stands upon the books of the Baltimore Circuit Court No. 1. No other action was

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