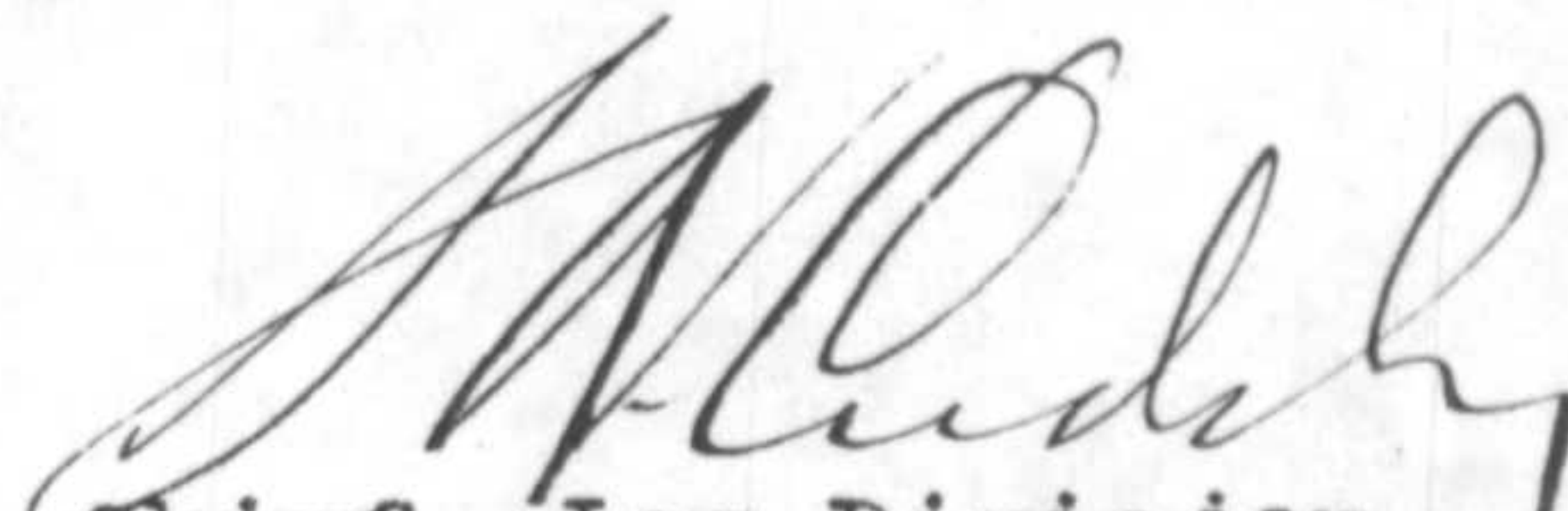


-3-

of the marriage. The soldier in his old age may well have been confused or mistaken, as stated by the claimant, and while the special examiner unfortunately made no report as to the condition of the marriage records in the jurisdiction where the marriage is alleged to have taken place, experience has shown the laxity with which the records of marriage of colored persons were kept during the period immediately following the close of the war. This case is quite similar to that of Amelia K. Shanaman, 14 P. D., 530, where, as also in the case above cited, the absence of a record was not deemed sufficient to bar the acceptance of the marriage as alleged, based upon cohabitation and repute.

I am therefore of the opinion that the evidence should be accepted as sufficient to establish the claimant's alleged marriage to the soldier and that she is in consequence entitled to recognition as his lawful widow.

Very respectfully,

  
Chief, Law Division.