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REAL ARCHIVAL FILE — This report reads the genuine Indian Wars pension file of John R. Baty of Fort Bidwell, California, a public record of the United States National Archives (Record Group 15), photographed at the Archives by A Soldier's Life Reports. His claim under the Act of March 4, 1917 was rejected for want of any record of his company's service, and the report reads that outcome as what it was. It is published as a demonstration of the report itself.

AN INDIAN WARS PENSION FILE REPORT

John R. Baty

Rank not stated · Captain McGregor's Company, California Minute Men · Major Smith's and Major Mellon's California Volunteers

Indian Wars Survivor's Pension (Act of March 4, 1917) — twice rejected for want of any record of service

Family Keepsake Edition · Researcher-Reviewed

Prepared September 29, 2026

Every fact in this report is traced to the page that states it.

Prepared from the original records of the United States National Archives (Record Group 15).

John R. Baty

Rank not stated, Captain McGregor's Company, California Minute Men, Major Smith's and Major Mellon's California Volunteers

Short Biography

John R. Baty was a farmer at Fort Bidwell, in the far northeastern corner of California, who was already in his late seventies when he applied in 1917 for an Indian Wars pension. He told the government that as a young man in the mid-1860s he and about thirty other local citizens organized themselves into a company to fight Indians — Piutes, he called them — across northern California and Nevada, serving under a Captain McGregor and later under Majors Smith and Mellon, and that he still carried a scar on his breastbone from an Indian's scalping knife. But there had never been any enlistment paper or discharge, and no office of the government — the War Department, the Treasury Auditor, or the State of California — could find any record of his company or of his name on a roll. The Bureau rejected the claim in 1918, reopened it in 1923 on the sworn word of his brother David, and rejected it again in December 1923. He never received a pension. (His own papers give his birth year as either 1839 or 1840, and a bank officer once made him 85 — the file does not perfectly agree with itself on his age.)

The Story of John R. Baty and His Indian-Fighting Company

A citizen soldier without a paper trail

John R. Baty was born on the 3rd of September — in 1839 by his own sworn declaration, in 1840 by the questionnaires he filled out a few months later — in Brown County, Ohio. He was raised in Illinois and came to California in 1863, settling at Fort Bidwell in Surprise Valley, in what became Modoc County, where he farmed and worked for the rest of his long life.

What Baty claimed, and what the whole file turns on, is this: in the mid-1860s, with the country's soldiers scarce, about thirty of the local citizens **organized themselves into a company, elected A. S. Ross their captain, and went out to fight Indians.** In his own words on the questionnaires, "we citizens fought Indians from 1864 till 1866"; the regular soldiers "came in 1865 and we then joined them in fighting." He said he served under "Minute Captain, Captain MacGregor, stationed at Ft. Bidwell, California, fighting Piutes, in Northern California and Nevada, 1866," and "also under Major Smith and Major Mellon." He was, he said plainly, **"not enlisted or discharged."** He described himself in 1917 as five feet six, 145 pounds, grey eyes, hair "black now grey," medium complexion — and he carried, in the clerk's transcription of his own report, a *"Two in scar on breast bone done by Indian with scalping knife."*

The government looks, and finds nothing

The application went in on 30 April 1917, forwarded by Congressman John E. Raker of California. Over that summer the Bureau of Pensions did exactly what the Indian Wars pension law required: it went to the record-keepers.

- The **Auditor for the War Department** reported on 9 August 1917 that in the case of John R. Baty, "alleged of Capt. MacGregor's Minute Men, Cal. Vols. of 1866, no record of the soldier's service has been found."
- The **Adjutant General** reported on 9 August 1917 that there were no records on file of MacGregor's California Minute Men, and that Baty's name was not found on the rolls of the California infantry regiments carrying a Major Smith, nor the cavalry carrying a Major Mellon and Major Smith (those being Civil War organizations).
- The **Adjutant General of California** had no records of state organizations covering the year 1866 at all.

Internal abstracts in March 1918 spelled out the double bind: the War Department did have a record of *Major Smith's* organization (identified as the 2d California Cavalry), "but soldier's name is not found by the A.G. on any of the rolls"; and of MacGregor's Minute Men there was simply "None." The claim was rejected on 30 March 1918, and both Baty and Congressman Raker were notified. There was no question here of loyalty or of the character of the service — the Indian Wars acts carry no loyalty bar — only that no record of a pensionable service could be produced.

A confusion over which war, and which McGregor

Two tangles run through the paperwork. First, the *when*: Baty's own account is consistently 1864–1866, chasing Piutes on the northern frontier — a period and place that the 1917 act's own list of campaigns actually reaches (northern California and Nevada, 1865–1868). Yet the Bureau's inquiries also asked about the **Modoc War of 1872–1873**, and one abstract runs the service dates as 1872 to 1873. The Modoc War, too, is a covered campaign, but it is not the service Baty described.

Second, the *who*: when the Bureau tried to trace Captain McGregor, it turned up **Brigadier General Thomas McGregor**, who had served as first lieutenant and captain of the 1st United States Cavalry from 1864 to 1866 and who had died on 4 February 1921. The Commissioner suggested in October 1923 that if the general — or Baty's brother — could supply an affidavit of the period and character of service, it would be considered. But McGregor was already two years dead, and, as Baty's own family admitted, the man he served under was a local *minute* captain, not necessarily this Regular Army officer.

The old man, his brother, and the bank

What gives this file its human warmth is the effort mounted to help Baty in his last years. R. R. Baker, vice-president and cashier of the **Bank of Fort Bidwell**, wrote to Washington on his behalf. In June 1923 Baker laid out the problem candidly: "the volunteers did their fighting here in 1864-66, and... Mr. Baty, himself, is now 85 years old, it is almost impossible to get corroborating witnesses." He asked whether a pension might be allowed on Baty's own sworn word plus "an affidavit of one of his brothers who is still alive and who was with him in some of their battles," and closed by asking how they might "further assist the old gentleman."

So in November 1923 **David Baty** — more than eighty years old himself, and John's brother, a resident of Surprise Valley since 1864 — swore that of his own personal knowledge, from 1864 to 1867 John "fought in a number of skirmishes with the indians in this section as a volunteer," part of the time under Captain McGregor, "most of the time... serving with me and several other citizens," and served more than thirty days as an Indian fighter. The bank forwarded it. It was the best evidence obtainable, and everyone said so.

It was not enough. The claim, reopened for further consideration under section 6 of the act of 1 September 1922, was rejected a final time on 17 December 1923: the official records of the United States afforded no evidence of the service, there was no muster or pay roll of the companies in the archives of the state, and "the evidence furnished, apparently the best obtainable, fails to establish a pensionable service."

There is one intriguing loose thread. A fragment of an abstract in the file bears the recommendation "*Admit, Service of Co. pensionable. See list approved by acting Comr. July 19, 1918*" — suggesting a company of that kind had been recognized as pensionable — yet Baty's individual name was never found on any roll to connect him to it. The tension between that note and the repeated rejections is worth a researcher's attention (see the notes).

The family the file preserves

Whatever the pension office concluded about his service, the file preserves Baty's family in careful detail. He married **Laura Mason** on 30 October 1870 in Goose Lake Valley, California, before Judge Bomer, a justice of the peace; the record was lost, but, he said, there were "plenty of witnesses." Neither had been married before, and they were "never separated." Together they had twelve children, listed in his own hand — a genealogical gift regardless of the pension's fate.

Timeline of the Claim

- **3 Sept 1839 or 1840** — John R. Baty born, Brown County, Ohio (his own accounts differ by one year).
- **1863** — Came to California (per anti-fraud questionnaire, p. 17).
- **1864–1866** — Alleged Indian-fighting service under Capt. McGregor and Maj. Smith and Mellon (his statements); brother David places it 1864–1867.
- **30 Oct 1870** — Married Laura Mason, Goose Lake Valley, California.
- **25 Apr 1917** — Rep. John E. Raker forwards the application to the Commissioner.
- **17 Apr 1917** — Declaration sworn at Modoc County; **30 Apr 1917** — application filed.
- **13 Jul 1917** — Bureau writes the Adjutant General and the War Department Auditor and sends Baty two questionnaires; **20 Jul 1917** — Baty completes them.
- **9 Aug 1917** — Auditor and Adjutant General both report no record of the service.
- **7 Jan – 15 Mar 1918** — Examiner and Board of Review process; abstracts prepared 6 Mar 1918.
- **30 Mar 1918** — Claim rejected; Baty and Congressman Raker notified.
- **2 May 1923** — Bureau confirms with the postmaster that Baty is living at Fort Bidwell.
- **18 Jun 1923** — Bank of Fort Bidwell (R. R. Baker) writes on Baty's behalf.
- **18 Oct 1923** — Commissioner Gardner reports Brig. Gen. Thomas McGregor died 4 Feb 1921 and invites the brother's affidavit.
- **7 Nov 1923** — David Baty swears his affidavit; **1 Nov 1923** — bank forwards it.
- **14 Nov 1923** — Brief for reopening under sec. 6, act of 1 Sept 1922; submitted again for rejection.
- **17 Dec 1923** — Final rejection: best evidence obtainable fails to establish a pensionable service.

Marriage and Children

Marriage. John R. Baty married **Laura Mason** on **30 October 1870** in **Goose Lake Valley, California**, before **Judge Bomer, Justice of the Peace**. He reported the official/church record

"lost" but said there were "plenty of witnesses." Both stated they had never previously married and had never separated (questionnaire, p. 16).

Children (all surnamed Baty, listed by the father, p. 16):

- **Tom** — Born: 19 Nov 1871
- **Ella** — Born: 8 Apr 1873; Note: "lived 4 hrs"
- **Lillie** — Born: 4 Feb 1875
- **Nellie** — Born: 13 Nov 1876
- **Maude** — Born: 30 Apr 1878
- **Susie** — Born: 28 Nov 1879
- **Virginia** — Born: 29 Nov 1880; Note: died 29 Nov 1910
- **Georgia** — Born: 13 Jan 1883
- **Ethel** — Born: 31 Oct 1885
- **Florence** — Born: 3 Dec 1886
- **Carroll** — Born: 4 Jul 1888
- **Elfreda** — Born: 3 Mar 1894

The Pension History — No Award

This claim **never paid**. There is therefore no pension arithmetic to total: the rate line on every form is blank, and the outcome at each stage was rejection.

- **Original claim** filed 30 Apr 1917 under the Act of March 4, 1917 (Indian Wars survivor's pension) — **rejected 30 Mar 1918** on the ground that neither federal nor California state records showed the alleged service.
- **Reopened** under section 6 of the Act of September 1, 1922 (Jan 1923) on new affidavit evidence — **rejected again 17 Dec 1923**.

The rejection was purely evidentiary — a failure of the statutory **proof of service**, not a question of the man's age (he was well over 62 and the birth date was not the obstacle), his loyalty (no bar applies to Indian Wars claims), or his character. The government itself repeatedly acknowledged the evidence submitted was "apparently the best obtainable."

Statutory Basis of the Claim

Act of March 4, 1917 (39 Stat. 1199). The governing act, extending the Indian Wars survivor-pension line (Acts of July 27, 1892; June 27, 1902; May 30, 1908) to the later campaigns of 1859–1891 for men aged 62 who served at least 30 days in a named campaign, and to their widows. Baty's declaration (p. 15) was expressly "accepted as a claim under acts July 27, 1892, June 27, 1902, May 30, 1908 & March 4, 1917." His alleged service against the Piutes in northern California and Nevada, 1865–1866, falls within a period and region the 1917 act's campaign list reaches, and the Bureau also tested the Modoc War of 1872–1873 (likewise a covered campaign).

The service-proof cascade. Under the Indian Wars line the required proof of service runs: first, War Department records; then Treasury/GAO records of payment; then muster rolls in the state or territorial archives; and only where none of these exists, evidence satisfactory to the Commissioner. This file is a textbook exhaustion of that cascade — the War Department, the War Department Auditor, and

the Adjutant General of California were each canvassed and each reported nothing — after which the sworn statements of the claimant and his brother were weighed as the last resort and found insufficient.

Section 6 of the Act of September 1, 1922 furnished the authority under which the rejected claim was reopened for further consideration in 1923 (Brief for Reopening, p. 9).

The §4716 loyalty bar has no application here: §6 of the Act of July 27, 1892 and §3 of the Act of March 4, 1917 make it inapplicable to this line, and nothing in the file raises it.

Named People in the File

- **John R. Baty** — claimant, the alleged survivor.
- **Laura Mason Baty** — his wife (married 1870).
- **David Baty** — his brother, of Surprise Valley, Modoc County; affiant (7 Nov 1923); also a witness on the 1917 declaration and questionnaire.
- **A. S. Ross** — named by Baty as the captain elected by the citizen company (p. 16); also written "Ross McGregor's" on one form (p. 11).
- **Captain McGregor / MacGregor** — the "minute captain" Baty said he served under.
- **Brig. Gen. Thomas McGregor** — Regular Army officer (1st U.S. Cavalry, 1864–1866); died 4 Feb 1921; identified by the Bureau while tracing the captain.
- **Major Smith** and **Major Mellon** — officers of the California Volunteers under whom service was also alleged.
- **Judge Bomer** — Justice of the Peace who married the Batys (1870).
- **R. R. Baker** — Vice-President and Cashier, Bank of Fort Bidwell; notary; wrote to the Bureau on Baty's behalf and notarized David Baty's affidavit.
- **Hon. John E. Raker** — U.S. Representative, 2nd District of California; forwarded the application.
- **C. H. Fee (?)** — first attesting witness on the 1917 declaration (signature uncertain).
- **Marguerite J. Deiu (?)** — postmaster of Fort Bidwell (signature uncertain).
- Pension officials named: Commissioners **G. M. Saltzgaber** and **Washington Gardner**; Acting Commissioners **E. C. Tieman** and one other (signature uncertain); Examiners **J. T. Curry** and **A. M. Meacham**; reviewers **Geo. P. Meyer**, **J. W. Cuddy**, **R. E. Sours (?)**, **J. F. Emile (?)**; Army & Navy Division chief **E. B. Rogers**; abstractor **R. B. Morehouse**, verifier **E. Quackenbush**; **H. P. McCain**, The Adjutant General; **J. L. Baity**, War Department Auditor.

Research Gaps and the Identity Boundary

What the file does not establish.

- **Whether the alleged company existed as a recognized organization.** No muster or pay roll of "MacGregor's California Minute Men" was found by the War Department, the War Department Auditor, or the Adjutant General of California, who had no state-organization records covering 1866. The one fragment recommending "Admit, Service of Co. pensionable. See list approved by acting Comr. July 19, 1918" (p. 25) hints that some company was placed on an approved list — reconciling that note with the repeated rejections is the single most promising research lead. The **California State Archives** (state militia and volunteer records) and the **Adjutant General of California's** records for the 1860s frontier companies are where any surviving trace would lie.
- **The identity of "Captain McGregor."** The Bureau equated the name with Brig. Gen. Thomas McGregor of the 1st U.S. Cavalry, but Baty described a locally elected minute captain (and named A.

S. Ross as captain elsewhere). The 1st U.S. Cavalry returns (NARA RG 94) and any Fort Bidwell post records could test the connection.

- **The scar / any medical record.** Baty reported a breastbone scar from a scalping knife; there is no service or hospital record to corroborate a wounding, and none would be expected for an unenlisted volunteer.

The identity boundary. This file establishes a real man — **John R. Baty, born 3 Sept 1839/1840 in Brown County, Ohio, raised in Illinois, in California from 1863, farmer at Fort Bidwell in Modoc County, husband of Laura Mason, father of the twelve children named above, brother of David Baty of Surprise Valley, about 5'6" with grey eyes and a breastbone scar.** Those are the anchors a family will use. But the file does **not** prove that he rendered pensionable military service, and it cannot, by itself, prove that this John R. Baty is any particular family's ancestor. Tying him to a specific line requires correlation with records **outside this file** — federal and California censuses, Modoc County marriage and probate records, land and church records. Same-named men of the same era are common; the report reads the file, and the family connection is a correlation task the file cannot perform.

Artifacts in the File

The file holds more than paperwork. These pages are reproduced here exactly as they were filed — a caption beneath each tells you what the record itself says about it, and nothing more.

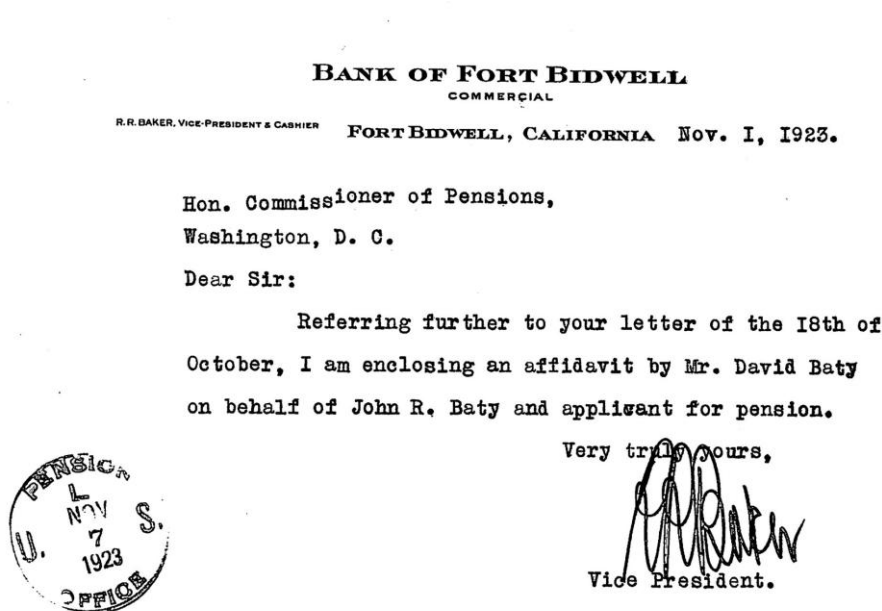


Plate 1 — Letter (Bank of Fort Bidwell letterhead) (page 6). inscribed/captioned: "Referring further to your letter of the 18th of October, I am enclosing an affidavit by Mr. David Baty on behalf of John R. Baty and applicant for pension.". Official/personal letter, R. R. Baker, Vice-President, 1 Nov 1923, forwarding the brother's affidavit.

Ind. No. 11771
John R. Baty
DIAN WARR

8-389

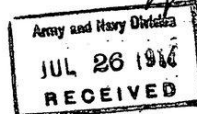
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF PENSIONS

WASHINGTON, D. C., JUL 18 1917, 191

SIR: Please answer, at your earliest convenience, the questions enumerated below. The information is requested for future use, and it may be of great value to your widow or children. Use the inclosed envelope, which requires no stamp.

Very respectfully,

G. M. Sargent



Commissioner.

FOLD HERE.

- No. 1. Date and place of birth? Answer. Born in Brown Co., Ohio. Sept. 3, 1840
The name of organizations in which you served? Answer. Secrecy of Soldiers, 3d of us citizens organized a co., elected A. S. Ross capt., joined Maj. Smith & Maj. Mullin hunted Indians 2 wks. on hand battle Feb. 14, 1871
No. 2. What was your post office at enlistment? Answer. Ft. Bidwell, Modoc Co., Cal.
No. 3. State your wife's full name and her maiden name. Answer. Laura Mason Baty
No. 4. When, where, and by whom were you married? Answer. Married Oct. 30, 1870 in Goose Lake Valley, Cal. by Judge Bomer, Justice of the Peace
No. 5. Is there any official or church record of your marriage? Answer. Record lost. Plenty of witnesses.
If so, where? Answer.

FOLD HERE.

- No. 6. Were you previously married? If so, state the name of your former wife, the date of the marriage, and the date and place of her death or divorce. If there was more than one previous marriage, let your answer include all former wives. Answer. Was never previously married.

- No. 7. If your present wife was married before her marriage to you, state the name of her former husband, the date of such marriage, and the date and place of his death or divorce, and state whether he ever rendered any military or naval service, and, if so, give name of the organization in which he served. If she was married more than once before her marriage to you, let your answer include all former husbands. Answer. Was never previously married.

FOLD HERE.

- No. 8. Are you living with your wife? Answer. Yes. If there has been a separation give date of same. Answer. Never separated.

- No. 9. State the names and dates of birth of all your children, living or dead. Answer.
Tom Baty born Nov. 19, 1871
Ella Baty Apr. 8, 1873 lived 4 hrs.
Sillie Baty Feb. 4, 1875 Florence Baty born Dec. 3, 1886
Mellie Baty Nov. 13, 1876 Carroll Baty born July 4, 1888
Maud Baty Apr. 30, 1878 Alfreda Baty born Mar. 3, 1894
Susie Baty Nov. 28, 1879
Virginia Baty Nov. 29, 1880 died Nov. 29, 1910
Georgia Baty Jan. 13, 1883
Ethel Baty Oct. 31, 1885

Date July 20, 1917
JUL 26 1917
RECEIVED

(Signature) John R. Baty

Plate 2 — Family record (Bureau questionnaire) (page 16). inscribed/captioned: "No. 9. State the names and dates of birth of all your children, living or dead.". Claimant's own hand: marriage to Laura Mason (1870) and the birth dates of all twelve children — the file's richest genealogical page.

INVALID DIVISION
John R. Baty
Captain McGregor's
California Militia
I. S. O. 11471

5

STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
COUNTY OF MODOC) SS

I, David Baty, being duly sworn according to law, depose and say; that I am more than eighty years of age; that I have resided in Surprise Valley, Modoc County, California since 1864; that John R. Baty is my brother and that I know of my own personal knowledge that during the time from 1864 to 1867 the said John R. Baty fought in a number of skirmishes with the Indians in this section as a volunteer and that part of the time he so served was under Captain McGregor; that most of the time he was serving with me and several other citizens as volunteers and that I know of my own personal knowledge that he served more than thirty days as an Indian fighter.

I hereby certify that I have no interest, direct or indirect in the application of the said John R. Baty to receive pension.

David Baty

I, R. R. Baker, a Notary Public in and for the County of Modoc, hereby certify that the contents of the foregoing affidavit were read by or to the affiant and that he knew of the contents of same and furthermore that I have no interest, direct or indirect in the claim for pension of the said John R. Baty.

R. R. Baker
Notary Public in and for the
County of Modoc, State of California.



Plate 3 — Affidavit (sworn family testimony) (page 24). inscribed/captioned: "I, David Baty, being duly sworn according to law, depose and say; that I am more than eighty years off age; ... that John R. Baty is my brother ...". Brother's sworn statement of 7 Nov 1923, the evidence on which the claim was reopened; notarized by R. R. Baker.

BANK OF FORT BIDWELL
COMMERCIAL

R. R. BAKER, VICE-PRESIDENT & CASHIER
FORT BIDWELL, CALIFORNIA

June 18, 1923.

Hom. Commissioner of Pensions,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir: I.S.O.--II47I- John R. Baty

Referring to the above and circular letter sent Mr. Baty on the 8th instant, in which he is listed as being a part of, or having served in Capt. McGregor's Company, California Minute Men, Mr. Baty seems to think that this company was in existence some years later than the Indian Fighting that he did as a volunteer in this section in the early days. He knew the Captain well, however, and would like to know if McGregor is still alive, and where he could reach him with a letter, and would also like to know if the Captain had him listed as a part of the organization of which he was the head, as Mr. Baty has no evidence of any sort that he was so listed.

In the second paragraph of the above circular it is stated that papers or documents based on service should be submitted to your office, and we would say that in talking with Mr. Baty's daughter that they are unable to find any document of any sort showing such service. Inasmuch as the volunteers did their fighting here in 1864-66, and as Mr. Baty, himself, is now 85 years old, it is almost impossible to get corroborating witnesses to statements that he might make, and we would like to know if there is a possibility of a pension being allowed on sworn statement of him alone with an affidavit of one of his brothers who is still alive and who was with him in some of their battles. All of this of course, in event, Captain McGregor is dead, and cannot remember of the service of Mr. Baty.

Any information that you may be able to give us in the matter would be appreciated, as well as any assistance or suggestions as to how we might proceed to further assist the old gentleman.

Very truly yours,
R. R. Baker
VICE PRESIDENT AND CASHIER.

PENSION
JUN 27 1923
OFFICE

Arranged
Oct 13/23
M.B.B.

9

Plate 4 — Letter (Bank of Fort Bidwell letterhead) (page 26). inscribed/captioned: "Any information that you may be able to give us in the matter would be appreciated, as well as any assistance or suggestions as to how we might proceed to further assist the old gentleman." R. R. Baker's candid appeal of 18 Jun 1923 describing Baty's plight — 85 years old, no documents, witnesses gone.

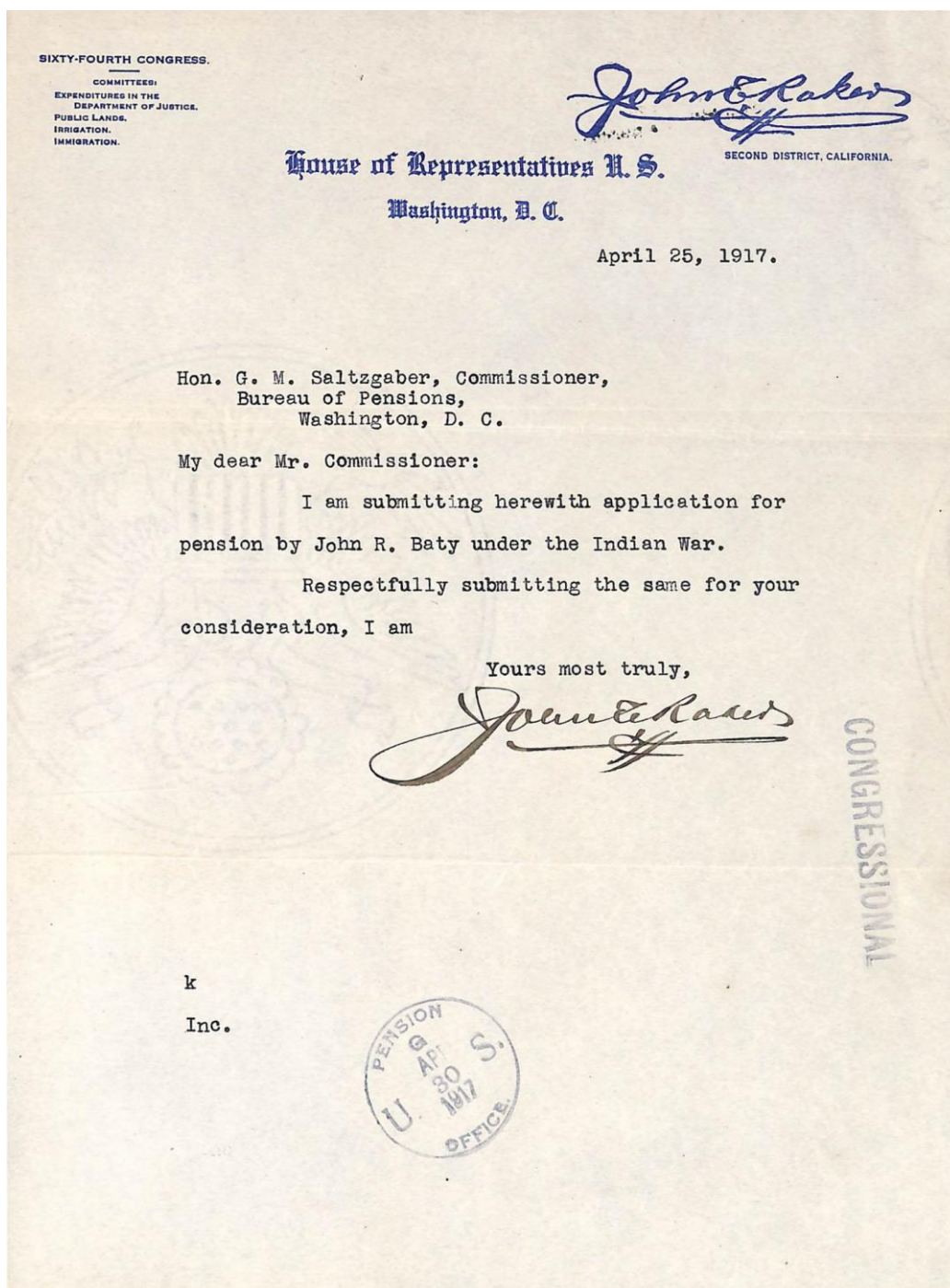


Plate 5 — Letter (U.S. House of Representatives letterhead) (page 27). inscribed/captioned: "I am submitting herewith application for pension by John R. Baty under the Indian War.". Congressman John E. Raker's transmittal of the application, 25 Apr 1917.

Document Inventory

Page	Document Type	Summary
1	Pension jacket / cover (Indian Wars, No. 11471)	Cover for John R. Baty, Fort Bidwell, Calif., Act of March 4, 1917; service Capt. MacGregor's

		Calif. Minute Men, Maj. Smith & Maj. Mellon's Calif. Vols. Application filed Apr 30, 1917; no other claim; attorney none. Stamped REJECTED, RE-OPENED, REJECTED. Marginal action notes 1917–1923, including note that Brig. Gen. Thos. McGregor died Feb 4/21 and Dec 17 1923 letter of rejection.
2	Bureau of Pensions rejection letter (17 Dec 1923)	To John R. Baty: rejected claim under act of March 4, 1917, reopened under sec. 6 of act of Sept 1, 1922, again rejected — no evidence of service in Capt. McGregor's Co. Calif. Minute Men, or Major Smith's or Major Mellon's Companies, Calif. Vols., 1864–1866; no state muster/pay roll; best obtainable evidence fails to establish pensionable service. Signed Acting Commissioner (signature uncertain).
3	Bureau of Pensions letter to R. R. Baker (18 Oct 1923)	Commissioner Washington Gardner advises that Brig. Gen. Thomas McGregor, who served as 1st Lt. and Captain, 1st U.S. Cavalry, 1864–1866, died February 4, 1921; if the claimant files his brother's affidavit as to period and character of service it will be considered.
4	Bureau of Pensions letter to Rep. John E. Raker (30 Mar 1918)	Acting Commissioner E. C. Tieman informs Congressman Raker that Baty's claim under the act of March 4, 1917 is rejected — neither U.S. nor California records show the alleged service in Capt. McGregor's Co., California Militia. Baty fully advised.
5	Bureau of Pensions rejection letter to claimant (30 Mar 1918)	To John R. Baty, Fort Bidwell; Ind. Sur. 11,471: claim under act of March 4, 1917 rejected — no U.S. or California record of service or payment in Capt. McGregor's Co., California Militia. Signed E. C. Tieman, Acting Commissioner.
6	Letter, Bank of Fort Bidwell (1 Nov 1923)	R. R. Baker, Vice-President, encloses an affidavit by David Baty on behalf of John R. Baty;

		refers to Bureau letter of Oct 18. Pension Office stamp Nov 7 1923.
7	Congressional Section notation card (pink, scanned inverted)	Handwritten note (upside down, partly illegible): Brig. Gen. Thomas McGregor died Feb 4, 1921; 1st Lieut. & Capt., 1st U.S. Cav. 1864–1865–1866/1867; 1868. A working notation, not evidence.
8	Indian Wars Survivor's Pension summary form 3-498, No. 11471	Claimant John R. Baty, Fort Bidwell, Modoc, California; rank/company Capt. McGregor's Co., Cal. minute men; regiment Maj. Smith & Maj. Mellon's Cal. REJECTED Dec 17 1923; submitted for rejection Nov 14 1923 by A. M. Meacham; 'No record of alleged service obtainable.' Enlisted 1864, discharged 1866 (alleged); declaration filed Apr 30 1917; date of birth alleged Sept 3, 1839; age shown by evidence over 62 years; no prior claim.
9	Brief for Reopening, form 3-368, No. 11471	Claim under act March 4, 1917 filed Apr 30, 1917; rejected [30 Mar] 1917 (clerical — 1918) on legal ground per approval dated Feb 14, 1918. 'Reopened for further consideration under section six of act of Sept 1, 1922.' Nov 14, 1923; testimony 'instructions of acting Commr.' Jan 4, 1923.
10	Postmaster inquiry, form M 23 (2 May 1923)	Bureau asks the postmaster of Fort Bidwell whether John R. Baty, residing there in 1918, is living and his address. Postmaster (signature uncertain, 'Marguerite J. Deiu?') confirms Fort Bidwell, Modoc Co., California. Commissioner Washington Gardner.
11	Indian Wars Survivor's Pension summary form 3-498, No. 11471 (1918)	Claimant John R. Baty, Fort Bidwell, Modoc, California; company 'Ross McGregor's'; regiment California Militia. Stamped REJECTED Mar 30 1918. Submitted for rejection Jan 7, 1918 by J. T. Curry — 'No state or Federal records

		showing service as alleged.' Declaration filed Apr 30 1917; date of birth alleged Sept 3, 1839. Reviewer Geo P. Meyer (Feb 7 & Mar 14 1918), re-reviewer J. W. Cuddy (Mch 15 1918).
12	Board of Review slip, form 3-202 (11 Feb 1918)	No. Claim 11471, John R. Baty, Calif. Returned to Mr. Meyer, Reviewer: 'We should have the usual abstract showing service... signed by Chief of Army or Navy Division.' Signed (Cuddy), Reviewer.
13	Board of Review slip, form 3-202 (11 Feb 1918)	No. Claim 11471, John R. Baty, Reg't Cal. Mil. Returned to the Chief of Army & Navy Division, directing attention to the re-reviewer's slip. Geo. P. Meyer, Reviewer.
14	Declaration/Congressional wrapper with printed Synopsis of Acts (scanned partly inverted)	Wrapper of the Declaration for Survivor's Pension — Indian Wars (soldier/service entries inverted at top), Congressional receipt, Law Division received May 1 1917; below, the printed 'Synopsis of Acts Granting Pension to Survivors of Certain Wars and Disturbances with and Campaigns against Indians from 1817 to January, 1891' summarizing the 1892/1902/1908/1913/1917 acts and rates.
15	Declaration for Survivor's Pension — Indian Wars, form 3-027 (sworn 17 Apr 1917)	John R. Baty, 77, born Sept 3, 1839, Brown County, Ohio; resident of Fort Bidwell, Modoc Co., Calif. Served under 'Minute Captain, Captain MacGregor, stationed at Ft. Bidwell,' fighting Piutes in northern California and Nevada, 1866; also under Major Smith and Major Mellon; 'was not enlisted or discharged.' Since service resided at Fort Bidwell; occupation farmer and laborer. Witnesses C. H. Fee (?) and David Baty; accepted as a claim under acts July 27 1892, June 27 1902, May 30 1908 & March 4 1917 (M. Whitehead, Chief Law Division).
16	Bureau questionnaire (family	Born Brown Co., Ohio, Sept 3,

	record), form 3-389 (completed 20 Jul 1917)	1840. Company organized by ~30 citizens, A. S. Ross elected captain, joined Maj. Smith & Mellon, hunted Indians, 2 weeks in hard battle Feb 14. Wife Laura Mason Baty; married Oct 30, 1870, Goose Lake Valley, Cal., by Judge Bomer, J.P.; record lost, plenty of witnesses; never previously married; never separated. Twelve children listed with birth dates (Tom 1871 through Elfreda 1894); Ella lived 4 hrs; Virginia d. 1910. Signed John Baty.
17	Anti-fraud identity circular, form 3-447 (completed 20 Jul 1917)	Born Sept 3, 1840, Brown Co., Ohio; 'we citizens fought Indians from 1864 till 1866'; soldiers came in 1865 and he then joined them; raised in Illinois, came to California 1863; P.O. Ft. Bidwell; farming; discharged 'at end of Indian war in 1866' at Ft. Bidwell; always lived at Ft. Bidwell. Height 5 ft 6 in, weight 145 lbs, eyes grey, hair 'black now grey,' complexion medium; scar on breastbone 'done by Indian with scalping knife.' Signed before two witnesses.
18	Bureau inquiry to War Department Auditor + Treasury return slip (Aug 1917)	Page 805: Army & Navy Division inquiry re John R. Baty, Capt. MacGregor's Cal. Minute Men, Maj. Smith and Maj. Mellon. Treasury Auditor's return slip (8/9/17): in the case of John R. Baty, alleged of Capt. MacGregor's Minute Men, Cal. Vols. of 1866, 'no record of the soldier's service has been found.' J. L. Baity, Auditor.
19	Bureau inquiry to the Adjutant General (13 Jul 1917)	Alleges John R. Baty served in MacGregor's Calif. Minute Men and that during the years 1872 & 1873 he served in the Modoc War; service also alleged under Major Smith & Maj. Mellon in Calif. Vols. Requests full military history, description, age, birthplace, occupation, stations. Commissioner Saltzgaber.
20	War Department Adjutant	No records on file of

	General's Office reply (9 Aug 1917)	MacGregor's Calif. Minute Men, Modoc War 1872 & 1873. Name John R. Baty not found on rolls of any Co. of 1st or 5th Cal. Inf. (in which there was a Maj. Smith), nor any Co. of 2d Cal. Cav. (in which there was a Maj. Mellon & Maj. Smith, Civil War). H. P. McCain, The Adjutant General.
21	Abstract, Report and Recommendation, page 809 (6 Mar 1918)	Maj. Smith's organization identified as the 2d Cal. Cav.; officers Major Smith, Maj. Mellon; period 'to Civil War.' 'A.G.O. has a record of these organizations,' but 'soldier's name is not found by the A.G. on any of the rolls.' Recommendation: Reject. Abstracted R. B. Morehouse; verified E. Quackenbush; E. B. Rogers, Chief, Army & Navy Division.
22	Abstract, Report and Recommendation, page 809 (6 Mar 1918)	Capt. MacGregor's Cal. Min. Men; period '?1866 to ?1866'; evidence of service None; organization not shown; Adjutant General reports No record; Auditor the same; A.G. California has no records of state organizations covering 1866. Recommendation: Reject.
23	Abstract, Report and Recommendation, form M 16, Invalid Division	Capt. McGregor's Co., Cal. minute men; period 1872 to 1873; Adjutant General no record; Auditor no record; A.G. of State no record. Recommendation: 'No record of alleged service obtainable.' Abstracted A. M. Meacham; verified R. E. Sours (?); J. F. Emile (?), Chief, Invalid Division.
24	Affidavit of David Baty (sworn 7 Nov 1923)	David Baty, over 80, resident of Surprise Valley, Modoc Co., since 1864, swears John R. Baty is his brother; of personal knowledge, from 1864 to 1867 John fought in a number of skirmishes with the Indians as a volunteer, part of the time under Capt. McGregor, most of the time serving with the affiant and other citizens; served more than thirty days as an Indian

		fighter. No interest. Notary R. R. Baker.
25	Abstract fragment — recommendation and signature block	Recommendation: 'Admit, Service of Co. pensionable. See list approved by acting Comr. July 19, 1918.' Abstracted by A. M. Meacham. Chief, Invalid Division. A fragment that appears to conflict with the file's rejections.
26	Letter, Bank of Fort Bidwell (18 Jun 1923)	R. R. Baker writes for Baty: Baty thinks the company existed some years after his early Indian fighting; knew the Captain well and wishes to know if McGregor is alive; has no evidence he was listed; daughter can find no document. Notes volunteers fought here 1864–66; Baty now 85; asks whether a pension can be allowed on Baty's sworn statement plus a brother's affidavit, and how to 'further assist the old gentleman.'
27	Letter, Rep. John E. Raker (25 Apr 1917)	Congressman John E. Raker (2nd District, California) submits John R. Baty's application for pension under the Indian War to Commissioner G. M. Saltzgaber. Pension Office stamp Apr 30 1917.

Every Fact and Its Source

Each substantive fact in this report, with the document that states it. Tier 1 = sworn or own-hand documents; Tier 2 = official contemporaneous records; Tier 3 = claim-process paperwork; Tier 4 = administrative material. Notes mark facts a witness learned second-hand, values worked out by calculation, uncertain readings, and postings whose movement is documented but whose claimed activity is not independently confirmed.

Fact	Source document (page)	Tier	Notes
The claimant was John R. Baty of Fort Bidwell, Modoc County, California.	Declaration for Survivor's Pension — Indian Wars, sworn 17 Apr 1917 (p. 15)	1	—
Baty stated he was born September 3, 1839, in Brown County, Ohio, and was 77 years old.	Declaration for Survivor's Pension — Indian Wars, sworn 17 Apr 1917 (p. 15)	1	source conflict
On his questionnaires Baty	Bureau questionnaire (family record), form	1	source conflict

gave his birth as September 3, 1840, in Brown County, Ohio.	3-389, 20 Jul 1917 (p. 16)		
Baty said he was raised in Illinois and came to California in 1863.	Anti-fraud identity circular, form 3-447, 20 Jul 1917 (p. 17)	1	—
Baty's personal description in 1917: about 5 ft 6 in, 145 lbs, grey eyes, hair 'black now grey,' medium complexion, with a scar on the breastbone he attributed to an Indian's scalping knife.	Anti-fraud identity circular, form 3-447, 20 Jul 1917 (p. 17)	1	—
A bank officer described Baty as 'now 85 years old' in June 1923, implying birth about 1837/1838.	Letter, Bank of Fort Bidwell (R. R. Baker), 18 Jun 1923 (p. 26)	3	source conflict
David Baty of Surprise Valley, Modoc County (resident since 1864), was John R. Baty's brother.	Affidavit of David Baty, sworn 7 Nov 1923 (p. 24)	1	—
Baty claimed service under 'Minute Captain, Captain MacGregor,' stationed at Fort Bidwell, fighting Piutes in northern California and Nevada, about 1866, and also under Major Smith and Major Mellon.	Declaration for Survivor's Pension — Indian Wars, sworn 17 Apr 1917 (p. 15)	1	—
Baty stated he was not enlisted and not discharged — he served as a citizen volunteer.	Declaration for Survivor's Pension — Indian Wars, sworn 17 Apr 1917 (p. 15)	1	—
Baty said about thirty citizens organized a company and	Bureau questionnaire (family record), form 3-389, 20 Jul 1917 (p. 16)	1	—

elected A. S. Ross captain, joined Majors Smith and Mellon, and were two weeks in a hard battle.			
Baty said citizens fought Indians from 1864 till 1866 and that he was 'discharged at end of Indian war in 1866' at Fort Bidwell.	Anti-fraud identity circular, form 3-447, 20 Jul 1917 (p. 17)	1	—
David Baty swore that from 1864 to 1867 John R. Baty fought in a number of skirmishes with Indians as a volunteer, part of the time under Captain McGregor, and served more than thirty days.	Affidavit of David Baty, sworn 7 Nov 1923 (p. 24)	1	—
The Treasury Auditor for the War Department reported that no record of the soldier's service had been found for John R. Baty of Capt. MacGregor's Minute Men, Cal. Vols. of 1866.	Treasury Department Auditor return slip, 9 Aug 1917 (p. 18)	2	—
The Adjutant General reported no records of MacGregor's California Minute Men or the Modoc War 1872–1873, and that Baty's name was not found on the rolls of the California infantry (Maj. Smith) or 2d Cal. Cavalry (Maj. Mellon & Maj. Smith, Civil War).	War Department Adjutant General's Office reply, 9 Aug 1917 (p. 20)	2	—
An internal abstract identified Major Smith's	Abstract, Report and Recommendation, page 809, 6 Mar 1918 (p. 21)	2	—

organization as the 2d California Cavalry and noted the A.G.O. had a record of these organizations 'but soldier's name is not found by the A.G. on any of the rolls.'			
An abstract recorded that the Adjutant General of California had no records of state organizations covering the year 1866.	Abstract, Report and Recommendation, page 809, 6 Mar 1918 (p. 22)	2	—
The Bureau identified Brig. Gen. Thomas McGregor, who served as 1st Lieutenant and Captain of the 1st U.S. Cavalry 1864–1866 and died February 4, 1921.	Bureau of Pensions letter to R. R. Baker, 18 Oct 1923 (p. 3)	2	—
An abstract fragment recommended 'Admit, Service of Co. pensionable. See list approved by acting Comr. July 19, 1918' — conflicting with the case's rejection.	Abstract fragment (recommendation), Invalid Division (p. 25)	4	—
John R. Baty married Laura Mason on October 30, 1870, in Goose Lake Valley, California, before Judge Bomer, Justice of the Peace; the official/church record was lost.	Bureau questionnaire (family record), form 3-389, 20 Jul 1917 (p. 16)	1	—
Both John and Laura Baty stated they had never previously married and had never separated.	Bureau questionnaire (family record), form 3-389, 20 Jul 1917 (p. 16)	1	—
The Batys' children	Bureau questionnaire	1	—

were Tom (b. 19 Nov 1871), Ella (b. 8 Apr 1873, lived 4 hrs), Lillie (b. 4 Feb 1875), Nellie (b. 13 Nov 1876), Maude (b. 30 Apr 1878), Susie (b. 28 Nov 1879), Virginia (b. 29 Nov 1880, d. 29 Nov 1910), Georgia (b. 13 Jan 1883), Ethel (b. 31 Oct 1885), Florence (b. 3 Dec 1886), Carroll (b. 4 Jul 1888), and Elfreda (b. 3 Mar 1894).	(family record), form 3-389, 20 Jul 1917 (p. 16)		
The application was filed April 30, 1917, under the Act of March 4, 1917 (Indian Wars survivor's pension), with no attorney and no prior claim.	Indian Wars Survivor's Pension summary form 3-498, No. 11471 (p. 8)	2	—
Congressman John E. Raker submitted Baty's application to the Commissioner of Pensions on April 25, 1917.	Letter, Rep. John E. Raker, 25 Apr 1917 (p. 27)	3	—
The claim was rejected March 30, 1918, on the ground that neither U.S. nor California records showed the alleged service.	Bureau of Pensions rejection letter to claimant, 30 Mar 1918 (p. 5)	2	—
The rejected claim was reopened for further consideration under section 6 of the Act of September 1, 1922 (instructions of the acting Commissioner, Jan 1923).	Brief for Reopening, form 3-368, No. 11471 (p. 9)	3	—
The claim was rejected a final time on December 17, 1923, on the ground	Bureau of Pensions rejection letter, 17 Dec 1923 (p. 2)	2	—

that the evidence furnished, apparently the best obtainable, failed to establish a pensionable service.			
The Bureau confirmed through the Fort Bidwell postmaster in May 1923 that Baty was living at Fort Bidwell, Modoc Co., California.	Postmaster inquiry, form M 23, 2 May 1923 (p. 10)	2	—

Hard-to-Read Entries

These are original handwritten records, in places faded or damaged with age. Where a word could not be read with confidence, it is flagged here rather than guessed at - nothing in this report is invented. A researcher reviewed each entry below against the original scans; some were made out on a closer look, and the rest remain genuinely unclear.

- **Page 7** - flagged as hard to read (The pink Congressional Section card was scanned upside down and is faint; the note about Brig. Gen. Thomas McGregor's death and cavalry service years (1864–1868) can only be read in part). A researcher re-checked it against the original scan; it remains genuinely unclear, which we note honestly.
- **Page 2** - flagged as hard to read (The typed title reads 'Acting Commissioner' but the manuscript signature on the 17 Dec 1923 rejection cannot be read with confidence). A researcher re-checked it against the original scan; it remains genuinely unclear, which we note honestly.
- **Page 15** - flagged as hard to read (The first witness's surname on the 1917 declaration is written in a cramped hand and is not certain). A researcher re-checked it against the original scan; it remains genuinely unclear, which we note honestly.
- **Page 10** - flagged as hard to read (The Fort Bidwell postmaster who endorsed the M 23 inquiry signed in a flourish that cannot be transcribed with confidence). A researcher re-checked it against the original scan; it remains genuinely unclear, which we note honestly.

Where the Documents Disagree

Here two or more perfectly legible documents say different things. That is a finding about the record, not a reading problem - both versions are shown, and neither was silently preferred. Where the evidence clearly favored one reading, the story above follows it, and the note here says why - a visible weighing, never a silent one.

- **Page 16** - the documents disagree here (The sworn declaration (p. 15) gives born Sept 3, 1839, and the summary forms (pp. 8, 11) carry 1839; but the two questionnaires the claimant completed (pp. 16, 17) both give Sept 3, 1840. Same day and month, one year apart, all from the claimant). Both readings appear in the report; review confirmed the disagreement is in the record itself. The evidence is evenly balanced; we do not choose between them.
- **Page 26** - the documents disagree here (Baty swore he was 77 on 17 Apr 1917, implying birth in 1839/1840; the Bank of Fort Bidwell letter of 18 Jun 1923 states he is 'now 85 years old,' implying

birth about 1837/1838 — inconsistent with his own accounts). Both readings appear in the report; review confirmed the disagreement is in the record itself. Our read: Adopt ~1839/1840. The claimant's own sworn declaration outranks a bank officer's round-figure secondhand statement of his age.

- **Page 19** - the documents disagree here (Baty's declaration and questionnaires (pp. 15–17) consistently place his service in 1864–1866 fighting Piutes in northern California and Nevada, and his brother says 1864–1867; yet the Bureau's inquiry to the Adjutant General (p. 19) and one abstract (p. 23) frame the service as the Modoc War of 1872–1873). Both readings appear in the report; review confirmed the disagreement is in the record itself. Our read: Adopt 1864–1866 per the claimant's and brother's first-hand statements; the 1872–1873 Modoc-War framing appears to be a Bureau/clerk conflation, since no source ties Baty personally to that campaign.
- **Page 25** - the documents disagree here (This abstract fragment recommends admitting that the company's service was pensionable, referring to an approved list of July 19, 1918, whereas the case as a whole was rejected because Baty's individual name was never found on any roll). Both readings appear in the report; review confirmed the disagreement is in the record itself. Our read: Not adjudicated on the face of the file; pursue the July 19, 1918 list of approved Indian-War organizations to see whether it names the company Baty claimed, and whether the fragment belongs to this file or a companion case (Sur. 11470 appears adjacent, p. 18).

What the File Does Not Establish

The file is silent on these points. No document states them, so the report says so rather than filling them in.

- **Page 3** - the file does not answer this (The Bureau equated Baty's minute-company captain with Brig. Gen. Thomas McGregor of the 1st U.S. Cavalry, but Baty described a locally elected minute captain and also named A. S. Ross as captain — the two may not be the same man). The Research Gaps section points to the records that might.
- **Page 22** - the file does not answer this (The War Department, its Auditor, and the Adjutant General of California all reported no record of MacGregor's Minute Men and no state records covering 1866, so the existence of the organization is unestablished). The Research Gaps section points to the records that might.

About this report: it was produced from the file provided, read page by page. It does not search records beyond that file - the Research Gaps section points to the outside records that could carry the story further.