

The case was finally referred to the Court of Claims, which first decided in favor of the claimants, then, on a rehearing, it reversed its decision, but admitted the equity of the case. It was again submitted to Congress in 1858; unanimous reports were made in its favor, but, as usual, it failed for want of action.

Twenty years had elapsed. All the original claimants had died. They had sunk into unrequited graves, with the ingratitude of a government oblivious to their heroism and the great benefits they had rendered to their country, for their only requiem.

Their claims on the government had become forgotten in the dark labyrinths of the past, and the waves of time had washed over them as a long-abandoned wreck.

During the forty-fifth Congress, Mr. Reid under these hopeless circumstances, renewed this claim for the benefit of the heirs. At the session of the forty-sixth Congress, unanimous reports were made in favor of the bill, which had passed the Senate and lay on the speaker's table. On the last day of the session, Hon. Proctor Knott, of Kentucky, stood on the floor of the House from noon until midnight in vain endeavoring to get the recognition of the Speaker, and the bill, with its usual fatality, again failed to pass.

At the first session of the forty-seventh Congress, 1882, unanimous reports were again made in favor of the bill. The Honorable W. W. Rice, of Massachusetts, that able and distinguished jurist and statesman, from the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House, in his report said:

"Senate committees and House committees have many times reported in its favor, and never against it, and yet it is an unquestionable fact that the owners of the privateer General Armstrong, burnt by a British squadron in the neutral waters of Fayal, in September, 1814, after a defence by her crew which won the admiration of the world and the gratitude of