

## WILLIAM L. NELSON VETERANS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

MARCH 11 (legislative day, FEBRUARY 21), 1949.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. WILLIAMS, from the Committee on Finance, submitted the following

### REPORT

[To accompany S. 928]

The Committee on Finance, to whom was referred the bill (S. 928) to provide for designation of the United States Veterans' Administration hospital now being constructed at Wilmington, Del., as the William L. Nelson Veterans Memorial Hospital, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment, and recommend that the bill do pass.

The letter from the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs interposes no objection to a favorable report of the bill. The letter is as follows:

MARCH 7, 1949.

HON. WALTER F. GEORGE,  
*Chairman, Committee on Finance,  
United States Senate, Washington 25, D. C.*

DEAR SENATOR GEORGE: Further reference is made to your letter of February 15, 1949, requesting a report by the Veterans' Administration on S. 928, Eighty-first Congress, a bill to provide for designation of the United States Veterans' Administration hospital now being constructed at Wilmington, Del., as the William L. Nelson Veterans Memorial Hospital.

S. 928, Eighty-first Congress, has for its purpose naming the Veterans' Administration hospital now being built at Wilmington, Del., the William L. Nelson Veterans Memorial Hospital, in honor of Sgt. William L. Nelson who was killed in action on April 25, 1943, in the north African area.

According to the records of the Department of the Army, William L. Nelson was born on February 22, 1918, at Dover, Del. He entered into active service on January 9, 1941, and at the time of his death on April 25, 1943, was sergeant, Company H, Sixtieth Infantry.

By direction of the President, a Medal of Honor was posthumously awarded by the War Department, in the name of Congress, to Sergeant Nelson. War Department General Orders No. 85, December 17, 1943, contains the following:

"Sgt. William L. Nelson (Army serial No. 32065506), Infantry, United States Army: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at risk of life, above and beyond the call of duty in action involving actual conflict at Djebel Dardys, northwest of Sedjenane, Tunisia. On the morning of April 24, 1943, Sergeant Nelson led his section of heavy mortars to a forward position where he placed his guns and men. Under intense enemy artillery, mortar, and small-arms fire, he advanced alone to a chosen observation position from which he directed

the laying of a concentrated mortar barrage which successfully halted an initial enemy counterattack. Although mortally wounded in the accomplishment of his mission, and with his duty clearly completed, Sergeant Nelson crawled to a still more advanced observation point and continued to direct the fire of his section. Dying of hand-grenade wounds and only 50 yards from the enemy, Sergeant Nelson encouraged his section to continue their fire and by doing so they took a heavy toll of enemy lives. The skill which Sergeant Nelson displayed in this engagement, his courage, and self-sacrificing devotion to duty and heroism resulting in the loss of his life were a priceless inspiration to our armed forces and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the Army of the United States."

In addition to the Medal of Honor, the records of the Department of the Army indicate that Sergeant Nelson was awarded the Purple Heart (posthumous) for having made the supreme sacrifice in defense of his country, World War II Victory Medal, American Defense Service Medal, European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with bronze arrowhead for the invasion of north Africa and two bronze service stars for the Algeria-French Morocco and Tunisia campaigns, Good Conduct Medal, Combat Infantryman Badge, and the Distinguished Unit Emblem.

It is the practice of the Veterans' Administration to name its hospitals after the locality in which each is located and not for individuals. No objection, however, would be interposed should the Congress see fit to apply some other name. Two Veterans' Administration hospitals have been named by legislative directive. They are the Royal C. Johnson Veterans Memorial Hospital (Public Law 93; 79th Cong., June 29, 1945), and the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Hospital (Public Law 189, 79th Cong., September 26, 1945).

Advice has been received from the Bureau of the Budget that there would be no objection by that office to the submission of this report to your committee.

Sincerely yours,

CARL R. GRAY, Jr., *Administrator.*

