

except as herein otherwise provided: *Provided*, That no letter or letters or other mailable [matter] shall be delivered by any postmaster to said carriers, unless requested in writing by the person or persons to whom said letters or other mailable matter may be directed.

Proviso.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted*, That each and every letter-carrier route which may be established under the provisions of this act, shall be deemed a post-route during its continuance; and the provisions contained in the ninth, tenth, eleventh, twelfth, and fifteenth sections of an act entitled "An act to reduce the rates of postage, to limit the use and correct the abuse of the franking privilege, and for the prevention of frauds on the revenues of the Post-Office Department," approved March third, eighteen hundred and forty-five, and the fifth and eighth sections of an act entitled "An act to establish certain post-roads, and for other purposes," approved August thirty-first, eighteen hundred and fifty-two, are hereby made applicable to said letter-carrier routes.

Letter-carrier routes deemed post-routes.

Part of the acts of 1845, ch. 43, and 1852, ch. 113, applied to said letter-carrier routes.

SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted*, That the Postmaster-General be, and he is hereby, authorized to cause the dead letters which may accumulate in the post-offices in said State and Territories after the thirtieth day of June, in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty-four, to be returned in periods not less than quarter-yearly to the post-office at San Francisco, to be there opened and examined under the direction of the postmaster of that office, who shall, according to such regulations as the Postmaster-General may prescribe, return to the Post-Office Department such of said letters as shall be found to contain money, valuable papers, or matters of consequence, to be disposed of according to law, and destroy such letters as shall be found to contain nothing of value: *Provided, however*, That no dead letter shall be opened which the postal arrangements of the United States with foreign countries require to be returned unopened to such countries respectively.

Dead letters to be returned to post-office in San Francisco—their disposal.

Proviso.

SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted*, That the Postmaster-General may allow to the postmasters in said State and Territories from the first day of July, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-three, such sums out of the postages collected at their respective offices as will, in addition to the commissions, allowances, and emoluments, be sufficient to defray the actual and necessary expenses of their offices.

Compensation of postmasters after July 1, 1853.

SEC. 5. *And be it further enacted*, That the Postmaster-General be, and he is hereby, authorized and directed, in the settlement of the accounts of postmasters in the State of California and Territory of Oregon, serving as such previous to the thirtieth of June, Anno Domini eighteen hundred and fifty-three, to allow to such postmasters all just and reasonable expenses incurred by them in and about the business of their respective offices and the discharge of their official duties: *Provided*, That no allowance shall be made whereby the United States shall be charged with any indebtedness whatsoever.

Compensation of postmasters serving before July 1, 1853.

Proviso.

APPROVED, July 27, 1854.

CHAP. CX. — *An Act to ascertain and adjust the Titles to certain Lands in the State of Indiana.*

July 27, 1854.

1855, ch. 97.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled*, That the register and receiver of the land-office at Vincennes, together with a fit and proper person, learned in the law, and a citizen of Indiana, to be appointed by the President of the United States, are hereby constituted commissioners to ascertain and adjust the title of any claimant to any tract of land, or any part or subdivision thereof, granted by the resolve of Congress of the twenty-ninth of August, seventeen hundred and eighty-eight, and the act of the third of March, seventeen hundred and ninety-one, entitled "An act for granting lands to the inhabitants and settlers at Vincennes, and

Commission constituted: commissioners.

Extent of the claims to be examined.  
1791, ch. 27.  
1804, ch. 33, 35.  
1806, ch. 40.  
1807, ch. 34.

the Illinois country in the territory northwest of the Ohio, and for confirming them in their possessions," and the several acts in aid of, and supplementary thereto.

Claimants to present their claims — when, to whom.  
Specification.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted*, That every such claimant to any tract of land so granted, or any part or subdivision thereof, shall, within six months after the publication of the notice hereinafter provided for, file his claim in writing, with the said register, in which he shall specifically set forth such facts as shall be required in the instructions of the Commissioner of the General Land-Office.

Notice of readiness to receive claims to be published in newspaper.

SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted*, That such register, upon the receipt of such instructions, shall give notice by publication in some newspaper of general circulation in the vicinity of the said lands of his readiness to receive applications of claimants, to which notice shall be attached the instructions of the said commissioner.

Proceedings of the commissioners.  
Powers and duties.

SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted*, That such commissioners shall meet immediately after the time allowed for filing such claims, and shall hold their sessions at the town of Vincennes. They shall have power to compel the attendance of witnesses, administer all necessary oaths, and to hear and decide in a summary manner all matters respecting such claims. Minutes of the proceedings, decisions, meetings, and adjournments of the said board, shall be regularly entered by the register in a book kept for that purpose, together with the evidence adduced in each particular case, upon which their decisions have been made.

What titles to be confirmed.

SEC. 5. *And be it further enacted*, That every claimant to any tract of land so granted, or any part, or subdivision thereof, who can produce to such commissioners a regular chain of title from the original confirmer to himself, or who can show to their satisfaction a continuous and connected possession in himself and those under whom he claims, for a period of twenty years or more, next preceding the filing of his claim, or can show such a claim or title as would, in the courts of Indiana, bar an action of ejectment, such claimant shall be confirmed in his title.

Transcript of the decisions to be reported to Commissioner of General Land-Office.

SEC. 6. *And be it further enacted*, That said commissioners shall, on or before the first day of September eighteen hundred and fifty-five, transmit to the Commissioner of the General Land-Office a transcript of their decisions in favor of claimants, which shall contain a fair statement of the evidence on which each respective claim is founded; and also a transcript of their decisions against claimants, with a like statement of the evidence and the reason of such rejection.

When patent to issue.

SEC. 7. *And be it further enacted*, That the Commissioner of the General Land-Office, upon the receipt of such transcript, shall issue a patent to each claimant so confirmed in his title by the said commissioners; and where any such claims have been rejected the said commissioner, upon application of the proper person, shall have power to revise such decision of the said board, and may, if in his opinion the evidence warrants it, reverse such decision, and issue a patent therefor to such claimant: *Provided*, That this right to revise shall not extend to those claims rejected, where the same lands have been confirmed by the said board to some other claimant: *And provided further*, That the patents so issued shall only be a relinquishment of the title of the United States, and shall not be construed into an abridgment of the rights of third persons.

Proviso.

Further proviso.

Effect of the patent.

Compensation of the commissioners.

SEC. 8. *And be it further enacted*, That the commissioner appointed by the President, shall receive a compensation of eight dollars per day, for each and every day he may be engaged in the discharge of the duties imposed by this act, and the register and receiver shall receive such compensation for their services, as may be just and proper in the discretion of the Commissioner of the General Land-Office.

Who prescribes rules to enforce this act.

SEC. 9. *And be it further enacted*, That it shall be the duty of the Commissioner of the General Land-Office to prescribe such rules and

regulations as may be necessary to give full effect to the provisions of this act.

APPROVED, July 27, 1854.

CHAP. CLIX.—*An Act supplementary to an Act entitled "An Act to authorize Notaries Public to take and certify Oaths, Affirmations and Acknowledgments in certain cases."* July 29, 1854.  
1850, ch. 52.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That all the powers and authority conferred in and by the above recited act, approved September sixteenth, eighteen hundred and fifty, upon notaries public in the States and Territories be and the same are hereby vested in notaries public within the District of Columbia. Provisions of act of 1850, ch. 52, extended to notaries public in District of Columbia.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That notaries public be and they are hereby authorized to take depositions and do such other acts in relation to evidence to be used in the courts of the United States, in the same manner and with the same effect, as commissioners to take acknowledgments of bail and affidavits may now lawfully take or do. Depositions taken before notaries to have same force in courts as those taken before certain commissioners.

APPROVED, July 29, 1854.

CHAP. CLXVII.—*An Act making Appropriations for the current and contingent Expenses of the Indian Department, and for fulfilling Treaty Stipulations with various Indian Tribes, for the year ending June thirtieth, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-five, and for other purposes.* July 31, 1854.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the following sums be, and they are hereby, appropriated, out of any money in the treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the purpose of paying the current and contingent expenses of the Indian Department, and fulfilling treaty stipulations with the various Indian tribes. Current and contingent expenses.

For the current and contingent expenses of the Indian Department, viz.:

For the pay of Superintendents of Indian Affairs, per acts of fifth June, eighteen hundred and fifty, twenty-seventh February, eighteen hundred and fifty-one, and third March, eighteen hundred and fifty-two, twelve thousand five hundred dollars: *Provided,* That the President may, from time to time, in his discretion, remove or change the location of any of the superintendencies now or hereafter to be established by law; Superintendents. 1850, ch. 16. 1851, ch. 14. 1852, ch. 11.

Changes of location.

For the pay of the several Indian Agents, per acts of fifth June, eighteen hundred and fifty, and twenty-seventh February, eighteen hundred and fifty-one, thirty-four thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars; Agents. 1850, ch. 16. 1851, ch. 14.

For pay of three Indian Sub-Agents for California, at an annual salary of fifteen hundred dollars each, four thousand five hundred dollars;

For pay of four Indian Sub-Agents in Oregon Territory, at an annual salary of one thousand dollars each, four thousand dollars;

For pay of two Indian Sub-Agents in Washington Territory, at an annual salary of one thousand dollars each, two thousand dollars;

For pay of three Indian Agents in Washington Territory, for six months, ending June thirtieth, eighteen hundred and fifty-four, two thousand two hundred and fifty dollars;

For pay of two Indian Sub-Agents in Washington Territory, for six months, ending June thirtieth, eighteen hundred and fifty-four, one thousand dollars;