

Maryland empowering the wardens of the port of Baltimore to levy and collect the duty therein mentioned.

Part of the act declaring the assent of Congress to certain acts of the states of Maryland, Georgia, and Rhode Island and Providence Plantations continued in force. 1800, ch. 15.

sent of Congress be, and is hereby granted and declared to the operation of an act of the General Assembly of Maryland, made and passed at a session begun and held at the city of Annapolis, on the first Monday of November, in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-one, intituled "An act empowering the wardens of the port of Baltimore to levy and collect the duty therein mentioned."

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted*, That the act, intituled "An act declaring the assent of Congress to certain acts of the states of Maryland, Georgia and Rhode Island and Providence Plantations," shall be continued, and is hereby declared to be in full force, so far as the same respects the states of Georgia and Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.

SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted*, That this act shall be, and continue in force for the term of three years, and from thence to the end of the next session of Congress thereafter, and no longer.

APPROVED, May 12, 1796.

STATUTE I.

May 17, 1796.

CHAP. XXVII.—*An Act authorizing the erection of a Lighthouse on Cape Cod, in the State of Massachusetts.*

A lighthouse to be erected on Cape Cod.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That it shall be the duty of the Secretary of the Treasury, to provide, by contract, which shall be approved by the President of the United States, for building a lighthouse on Cape Cod, in the state of Massachusetts, (as soon as the necessary cession of land for the purpose shall be made by the said state to the United States;) and to furnish the same, with all necessary supplies: And also, to agree for the salaries, or wages of the person, or persons, who may be appointed by the President, for the superintendence and care of the same: And that the number or disposition of the light or lights in the said lighthouse, be such, as may tend to distinguish it from others, as far as is practicable; and that the light or lights on Gurnet head, at the entrance of Plymouth harbour, be altered or diminished, if necessary: And that eight thousand dollars be appropriated for the same, out of any monies not otherwise appropriated.

APPROVED, May 17, 1796.

STATUTE I.

May 18, 1796.

CHAP. XXIX.—*An Act providing for the Sale of the Lands of the United States, in the territory northwest of the river Ohio, and above the mouth of Kentucky river.* (a)

A surveyor general to be appointed; his power and duties.

SECTION 1. *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled*, That a Surveyor General shall be appointed, whose duty it shall be to engage a sufficient number of skilful surveyors, as his deputies; whom he shall

(a) The acts of Congress relating to the sale of the public lands northwest of the river Ohio, are: An act providing for the sale of the lands of the United States, in the territory northwest of the river Ohio, and above the mouth of the Kentucky river, May 18, 1796, chap. 29; an act for regulating grants of land appropriated for military services, and for the Society of the United Brethren, for propagating the gospel among the heathen, June 1, 1796, chap. 46; an act to amend the act entitled "An act for regulating grants of land appropriated for military services, and for the Society of United Brethren for propagating the gospel among the heathen," March 2, 1799, chap. 29; an act to authorize the sale of certain lands between the Great and Little Miami rivers, in the territory of the United States, northwest of the river Ohio; and for giving a pre-emption to certain purchasers, March 2, 1799, chap. 34; an act in addition to an act regulating the grants of land appropriated for military services, and for the Society of United Brethren for propagating the gospel among the heathen, and for other purposes, March 1, 1800; act of May 10, 1800; an act making provision for the disposal of the public lands in the Indiana territory, and for other purposes, March 26, 1804, chap. 35; an act to authorize the Secretary at War, to issue land warrants, and for other purposes, April 15, 1806, chap. 26; an act providing for the cases of lost military land warrants and discharges for faithful services, April 27, 1816, chap. 127, &c. &c.

cause, without delay, to survey and mark the unascertained outlines of the lands lying northwest of the river Ohio, and above the mouth of the river Kentucky, in which the titles of the Indian tribes have been extinguished, and to divide the same in the manner herein after directed; he shall have authority to frame regulations and instructions for the government of his deputies; to administer the necessary oaths, upon their appointments; and to remove them for negligence or misconduct in office.(a)

SEC. 2. *Be it further enacted*, That the part of the said lands,

(a) The decisions of the courts of the United States, as to the principles which regulate the titles to the public lands, in the states which form part of the territory northwest of the river Ohio, have been :

A title to lands under grants by Indian titles northwest of the river Ohio, to private individuals in the years 1773 and 1775, cannot be sustained in the courts of the United States. *Lessee of Johnson et al. v. McIntosh*, 8 Wheat. 543; 5 Cond. Rep. 515.

The title to land depends entirely on the laws of the nation in which they lie. *Ibid.*

Discovery constitutes the original title to lands on the American continent, as between the different European nations. The title thus derived was the exclusive right of acquiring the soil from the natives, and establishing settlements upon it. The title was to be consummated by possession. *Ibid.*

The right of the original inhabitants, was to a considerable extent impaired, but in no instance disregarded. The Europeans respected the right of the natives as occupants, but asserted the ultimate dominion to be in themselves; and claimed and exercised as a consequence of this ultimate dominion, a power to grant the soil while yet in the possession of the natives. *Ibid.*

By the treaty between Great Britain and the United States, which concluded the revolution, the powers of government and the right of soil, which had been previously in Great Britain, passed definitely to the United States. *Ibid.*

The United States, or the several states, have a clear title to all the lands within the boundary lines described in the treaty; subject only to the Indian right of occupancy: and the exclusive power to extinguish that right, was vested in the United States, which might constitutionally exercise it. *Ibid.*

It is a principle of universal law, that if an uninhabited country be discovered by a number of individuals, who acknowledge no connection with, and own no allegiance to any government whatever, the country becomes the property of the discoverers, so far as they can use it. *Ibid.*

If the discovery be made, and possession be taken under the authority of an existing government which is acknowledged by the emigrants, the discovery is made for the whole nation; and the country becomes a part of the nation, and the vacant soil is to be disposed of by that organ of the government which has the constitutional power to dispose of the national domain. *Ibid.*

The decision of the register and receiver of a land-office, in the absence of fraud, would be conclusive as to the facts that the applicant for the land was then in possession, and of his cultivating the land during the preceding year; because these questions are directly submitted to those officers. Yet if they undertake to grant pre-emptions to land, on which the law declares they shall not be granted, then they are acting on a subject matter clearly not within their jurisdiction; as much so, as if a court whose jurisdiction was declared not to extend beyond a given sum, should attempt cognizance of a case beyond that sum. *Wilcox v. Jackson*, 13 Peters, 498.

Appropriation of land by the government, is nothing more or less than setting it apart for some peculiar use. Whenever a tract of land has been once legally appropriated to any purpose, from that moment the land thus appropriated becomes severed from the mass of public lands: and no subsequent law or proclamation, or sale, would be construed to embrace it, or to operate upon it, although no other reservation were made of it. *Ibid.*

Nothing passes a perfect title to public lands, with the exception of a few cases, but a patent. The exceptions are where Congress grants lands in words of present grant. The general rule applies as well to pre-emptions, as to other purchases of public land. *Ibid.*

A state has a perfect right to legislate as she may please, in regard to the remedies to be prosecuted in her courts, and to regulate the disposition of the property of her citizens, by descent, devise or alienation. But Congress are invested by the constitution with the power of disposing of the public land, and making needful rules and regulations concerning it. *Ibid.*

Where a patent has not been issued for a part of the public land, a state has no power to declare any title less than a patent valid against the claim of the United States to the land; or against a title held under a patent from the United States. *Ibid.*

Whenever the question in any court, state or federal, is whether the title to property which had belonged to the United States, has passed, that question must be resolved by the laws of the United States. But whenever the property has passed, according to those laws, then the property, like all other in the state, is subject to state legislation; so far as that legislation is consistent with the admission that the title passed, and was vested according to the laws of the United States. *Ibid.*

Congress has the sole power to declare the dignity and effect of titles emanating from the United States; and the whole legislation of the government, in reference to public lands, declares the patent to be the superior and conclusive evidence of legal title. Until it issues, the fee is in the government, which by the patent passes to the grantee, and he is entitled to recover the possession by ejectment. *Bagnell v. Broderick*, 13 Peters, 436.

Where the title to the public land has passed out of the United States by conflicting patents, there can be no objection to the practice adopted by the courts of a state, to give effect to the better right in any form of remedy the legislature or courts of the state may prescribe.

No doubt is entertained, of the power of the states to pass laws authorizing purchasers of lands from the United States, to prosecute actions of ejectment upon certificates of purchase against trespassers on the lands purchased; but it is denied that the states have any power to declare certificates of purchase, of equal dignity with a patent. Congress alone can give them such effect. *Ibid.*

The lands how
to be surveyed,
laid out, &c.

which has not been already conveyed by letters patent, or divided, in pursuance of an ordinance in Congress, passed on the twentieth of May, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-five, or which has not been heretofore, and during the present session of Congress may not be appropriated for satisfying military land bounties, and for other purposes, shall be divided by north and south lines run according to the true meridian, and by others crossing them at right angles, so as to form townships of six miles square, unless where the line of the late Indian purchase, or of tracts of land heretofore surveyed or patented, or the course of navigable rivers may render it impracticable; and then this rule shall be departed from no further than such particular circumstances may require. The corners of the townships shall be marked with progressive numbers from the beginning; each distance of a mile between the said corners shall be also distinctly marked with marks different from those of the corners. One half of the said townships, taking them alternately, shall be subdivided into sections, containing, as nearly as may be, six hundred and forty acres each, by running through the same, each way, parallel lines, at the end of every two miles; and by marking a corner, on each of the said lines, at the end of every mile; the sections shall be numbered respectively, beginning with the number one, in the north-east section, and proceeding west and east alternately, through the township with progressive numbers, till the thirty-sixth be completed. And it shall be the duty of the deputy surveyors, respectively, to cause to be marked, on a tree near each corner made, as aforesaid, and within the section, the number of such section, and over it, the number of the township, within which such section may be; and the said deputies shall carefully note, in their respective field-books, the names of the corner trees marked, and the numbers so made: The fractional parts of townships shall be divided into sections, in manner aforesaid, and the fractions of sections shall be annexed to, and sold with, the adjacent entire sections. All lines shall be plainly marked upon trees, and measured with chains, containing two perches of sixteen feet and one half each, subdivided into twenty-five equal links, and the chain shall be adjusted to a standard to be kept for that purpose. Every surveyor shall note in his field-book the true situations of all mines, salt licks, salt springs and mill seats, which shall come to his knowledge; all water courses, over which the line he runs shall pass; and also the quality of the lands. These field-books shall be returned to the Surveyor General, who shall therefrom cause a description of the whole lands surveyed, to be made out and transmitted to the officers who may superintend the sales: He shall also cause a fair plat to be made of the townships, and fractional parts of townships, contained in the said lands, describing the subdivisions thereof, and the marks of the corners. This plat shall be recorded in books to be kept for that purpose; a copy thereof shall be kept open at the Surveyor General's office, for public information; and other copies sent to the places of the sale, and to the Secretary of the Treasury.

Plat of town-
ships and frac-
tional parts to
be made.

Reservations
for the future
disposal of the
United States.

SEC. 3. *Be it further enacted*, That a salt spring lying upon a creek which empties into the Sciota river, on the east side, together with as many contiguous sections as shall be equal to one township, and every other salt spring which may be discovered, together with the section of one mile square which includes it, and also four sections at the centre of every township, containing each one mile square, shall be reserved, for the future disposal of the United States; but there shall be no reservations, except for salt springs, in fractional townships, where the fraction is less than three fourths of a township.

SEC. 4. *Be it further enacted*, That whenever seven ranges of townships shall have been surveyed below the Great Miami, or between the Sciota river and the Ohio company's purchase, or between the southern boundary of the Connecticut claims and the ranges already laid off

Sections of 640
acres (except
reservations) to
be sold at ven-

beginning upon the Ohio river and extending westwardly, and the plats thereof made and transmitted, in conformity to the provisions of this act, the said sections of six hundred and forty acres (excluding those hereby reserved) shall be offered for sale, at public vendue, under the direction of the governor or secretary of the western territory, and the Surveyor General: such of them as lie below the Great Miami shall be sold at Cincinnati; those of them which lie between the Sciota and the Ohio company's purchase, at Pittsburg; and those between the Connecticut claim and the seven ranges, at Pittsburg. And the townships remaining undivided shall be offered for sale, in the same manner, at the seat of government of the United States, under the direction of the Secretary of the Treasury, in tracts of one quarter of a township lying at the corners thereof, excluding the four central sections, and the other reservations before mentioned: *Provided always*, that no part of the lands directed by this act to be offered for sale, shall be sold for less than two dollars per acre.

SEC. 5. *Be it further enacted*, That the Secretary of the Treasury, after receiving the aforesaid plats, shall forthwith give notice, in one newspaper in each of the United States, and of the territories north-west and south of the river Ohio, of the times of sale; which shall, in no case, be less than two months from the date of the notice; and the sales at the different places shall not commence, within less than one month of each other: And when the governor of the western territory, or Secretary of the Treasury, shall find it necessary to adjourn, or suspend the sales under their direction, respectively, for more than three days, at any one time, notice shall be given in the public newspapers, of such suspension, and at what time the sales will re-commence.

SEC. 6. *Be it further enacted*, That immediately after the passing of this act, the Secretary of the Treasury shall, in the manner herein before directed, advertise for sale, the lands remaining unsold in the seven ranges of townships, which were surveyed, in pursuance of an ordinance of Congress, passed the twentieth of May, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-five, including the lands drawn for the army, by the late Secretary of War, and also those heretofore sold, but not paid for; the townships which by the said ordinance, are directed to be sold entire, shall be offered for sale, at public vendue in Philadelphia, under the direction of the Secretary of the Treasury, in quarter townships, reserving the four centre sections, according to the directions of this act. The townships, which, by the said ordinance, are directed to be sold in sections, shall be offered for sale at public vendue, in Pittsburg, under the direction of the governor or secretary of the western territory, and such person as the President may specially appoint for that purpose, by sections of one mile square each, reserving the four centre sections, as aforesaid; and all fractional townships shall also be sold in sections, at Pittsburg, in the manner, and under the regulations provided by this act, for the sale of fractional townships: *Provided always*, That nothing in this act shall authorize the sale of those lots, which have been heretofore reserved in the townships already sold.

SEC. 7. *Be it further enacted*, That the highest bidder for any tract of land, sold by virtue of this act, shall deposit, at the time of sale, one twentieth part of the amount of the purchase money; to be forfeited, if a moiety of the sum bid, including the said twentieth part, is not paid within thirty days, to the treasurer of the United States, or to such person as shall be appointed by the President of the United States, to attend the places of sale for that purpose; and upon payment of a moiety of the purchase money, within thirty days, the purchaser shall have one year's credit for the residue; and shall receive from the Secretary of the Treasury, or the governor of the western territory, (as the case may be) a certificate describing the land sold, the sum paid on account, the balance

due, by the Governor or Secretary of the western territory, and the Surveyor General.

Undivided townships to be sold in like manner by the Secretary of the Treasury.

No part of the lands to be sold for less than two dollars per acre.

Secretary of Treasury to give notice of the times of sale, &c.

Certain other lands to be sold,

Mode of payment and of obtaining a patent, &c.

Mode of payment, and of obtaining a patent, &c.

1812, ch. 68,
sec. 8.
1836, ch. 352,
sec. 6.

Entries to be made of the date of sales &c.

Governor or Secretary to transmit copies at certain times.

Tracts sold to be noted on the general plat.

Navigable rivers to be public highways.

Streams not navigable, to be common property.

Compensation of Surveyor Gen.

President to fix compensation of assistant surveyors.

Expense not to exceed three dollars for every mile surveyed.

Regulation of fees to be paid.

Oath to be taken by the Surveyor General, &c.

The person to be appointed to receive the mo-

remaining due, the time when such balance becomes payable; and that the whole land sold will be forfeited, if the said balance is not then paid; but that if it shall be duly discharged, the purchaser, or his assignee, or other legal representative, shall be entitled to a patent for the said lands: And on payment of the said balance to the treasurer, within the specified time, and producing to the Secretary of State a receipt for the same, upon the aforesaid certificate, the President of the United States is hereby authorized to grant a patent for the lands to the said purchaser, his heirs or assigns: And all patents shall be countersigned by the Secretary of State, and recorded in his office. But if there should be a failure in any payment, the sale shall be void, all the money theretofore paid on account of the purchase shall be forfeited to the United States, and the lands thus sold shall be again disposed of, in the same manner as if a sale had never been made: *Provided nevertheless*, that should any purchaser make payment of the whole purchase money, at the time when the payment of the first moiety is directed to be made, he shall be entitled to a deduction of ten per centum on the part, for which a credit is hereby directed to be given; and his patent shall be immediately issued.

SEC. 8. *Be it further enacted*, That the Secretary of the Treasury, and the governor of the territory north west of the river Ohio, shall respectively, cause books to be kept, in which shall be regularly entered, an account of the dates of all the sales made, the situation and numbers of the lots sold, the price at which each was struck off, the money deposited at the time of sale, and the dates of the certificates granted to the different purchasers. The governor, or secretary of the said territory shall, at every suspension or adjournment, for more than three days, of the sales under their direction, transmit to the Secretary of the Treasury, a copy of the said books, certified to have been duly examined and compared with the original. And all tracts sold under this act, shall be noted upon the general plat, after the certificate has been granted to the purchaser.

SEC. 9. *And be it further enacted*, That all navigable rivers, within the territory to be disposed of by virtue of this act, shall be deemed to be, and remain public highways: And that in all cases, where the opposite banks of any stream, not navigable, shall belong to different persons, the stream and the bed thereof shall become common to both.

SEC. 10. *And be it further enacted*, That the surveyor general shall receive for his compensation, two thousand dollars per annum; and that the President of the United States may fix the compensation of the assistant surveyors, chain carriers and axe men: *Provided*, that the whole expense of surveying and marking the lines, shall not exceed three dollars per mile, for every mile that shall be actually run or surveyed.

SEC. 11. *And be it further enacted*, That the following fees shall be paid for the services to be done under this act, to the treasurer of the United States, or to the receiver in the western territory, as the case may be; for each certificate for a tract containing a quarter of a township, twenty dollars; for a certificate for a tract containing six hundred and forty acres, six dollars; and for each patent for a quarter of a township, twenty dollars; for a section of six hundred and forty acres, six dollars: And the said fees shall be accounted for by the receivers, respectively.

SEC. 12. *And be it further enacted*, That the surveyor general, assistant surveyors, and chain carriers, shall, before they enter on the several duties to be performed under this act, severally take an oath or affirmation, faithfully to perform the same; and the person, to be appointed to receive the money on sales in the western territory, before he shall receive any money under this act, shall give bond with sufficient security,

for the faithful discharge of his trust : That, for receiving, safe keeping, and conveying to the treasury the money he may receive, he shall be entitled to a compensation to be hereafter fixed.

APPROVED, May 18, 1796.

ney in the western territory to give bond, &c.

STATUTE I.

CHAP. XXX.—*An Act to regulate Trade and Intercourse with the Indian Tribes, and to preserve Peace on the Frontiers.*(a)

May 19, 1796.

[Expired.]

Act of March 30, 1802, Act of March 3, 1799.

A boundary line between the United States and various Indian tribes to be ascertained and marked.

SECTION 1. *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the following boundary line, established by treaty between the United States and various Indian tribes, shall be clearly ascertained, and distinctly marked, in all such places, as the President of the United States shall deem necessary, and in such manner as he shall direct, to wit : Beginning at the mouth of Cayahoga river on Lake Erie, and running thence up the same, to the portage between that and the Tuscaroras branch of the Muskingum; thence down that branch, to the crossing place above Fort Lawrence; thence westerly to a fork of that branch of the Great Miami river, running into the Ohio, at, or near which fork, stood Laramie's store, and where commences the portage, between the Miami of the Ohio, and Saint Mary's river, which is a branch of the Miami, which runs into Lake Erie; thence a westerly course to Fort Recovery, which stands on a branch of the Wabash; thence southwesterly, in a direct line to the Ohio, so as to intersect that river, opposite the mouth of Kentucky or Cuttawba river; thence down the said river Ohio, to the tract of one hundred and fifty thousand acres, near the rapids of the Ohio, which has been assigned to General Clark, for the use of himself and his warriors; thence around the said tract, on the line of the said tract, till it shall again intersect the said river Ohio; thence down the same, to a point opposite the high lands or ridge between the mouth of the Cumberland and Tennessee rivers; thence easterly on the said ridge, to a point, from whence, a southwest line will strike the mouth of Duck river; thence still easterly on the said ridge, to a point forty miles above Nashville; thence northeast, to Cumberland river; thence up the said river, to where the Kentucky road crosses the same; thence to the top of Cumberland mountain; thence along Campbell's line, to the river Clinch; thence down the said river, to a point from which a line shall pass the Holsten, at the ridge, which divides the waters running into Little River, from those running into the Tennessee; thence south, to the North Carolina boundary; thence along the South Carolina Indian boundary, to and over the Oconna mountain, in a southwest course, to Tugelo river; thence in a direct line, to the top of the Currahee mountain, where the Creek line passes it; thence to the head or source of the main south branch of the Oconee river, called the Appalachee; thence down the middle of the said main south branch and river Oconee, to its confluence with Oakmulgee, which forms the river Altamaha; thence down the middle of the said Altamaha, to the old line on the said river; and thence along the said old line to the river Saint Mary's; *Provided always,* that if the boundary line between the said Indian tribes and the United States, shall, at any time hereafter, be varied, by any treaty which shall be made between the said Indian tribes and the United States, then all the provisions contained in this act, shall be construed to apply to the said line so to be varied, in the same manner, as the said provisions now apply to the boundary line herein before recited.

Provision for alterations which may be made by treaty.

(a) The act of March 30, 1802, having described what should be the Indian country at that time, as well as at any future time, when purchases of territory should be made of the Indians, the carrying of spirituous liquors into a territory so purchased after March, 1802, although the same should be frequented and inhabited exclusively by Indians, would not be an offence within the meaning of the act of Congress, so as to subject the goods of the trader, found in company with those liquors, to seizure and forfeiture. *American Fur Company v. The United States*, 2 Peters, 358.