

**CHAP. 456.**—An Act To provide an American register for the steamer Arkadia.

June 16, 1898.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the Secretary of the Treasury is hereby authorized and directed to cause the foreign-built steamer Arkadia, owned by the New York and Porto Rico Steamship Company, incorporated under the laws of the State of New York, to be registered as a vessel of the United States: *Provided,* That the said steamship shall not engage in the coastwise trade of the United States, but shall not be excluded from that between this country and Porto Rico.

Steamer "Arkadia."  
Granted American register.

*Proviso.*  
Coastwise trade.

Approved, June 16, 1898.

**CHAP. 457.**—An Act To provide American registers for the steamers Victoria, Olympia, Arizona, Columbia, Argyle, and Tacoma.

June 16, 1898.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the Secretary of the Treasury is hereby authorized and directed to cause the foreign-built steamers Victoria, Olympia, Arizona, Columbia, Argyle, and Tacoma, owned by the Northern Pacific Steamship Company, to be registered as vessels of the United States.

Steamers "Victoria," "Olympia," "Arizona," "Columbia," "Argyle," and "Tacoma."  
Granted American registers.

Approved, June 16, 1898.

**CHAP. 458.**—An Act For the protection of homestead settlers who enter the military or naval service of the United States in time of war.

June 16, 1898.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That in every case in which a settler on the public land of the United States under the homestead laws enlists or is actually engaged in the Army, Navy, or Marine Corps of the United States as private soldier, officer, seaman, or marine, during the existing war with Spain, or during any other war in which the United States may be engaged, his services therein shall, in the administration of the homestead laws, be construed to be equivalent to all intents and purposes to residence and cultivation for the same length of time upon the tract entered or settled upon; and hereafter no contest shall be initiated on the ground of abandonment, nor allegation of abandonment sustained against any such settler, unless it shall be alleged in the preliminary affidavit or affidavits of contest, and proved at the hearing in cases hereafter initiated, that the settler's alleged absence from the land was not due to his employment in such service: *Provided,* That if such settler shall be discharged on account of wounds received or disability incurred in the line of duty, then the term of his enlistment shall be deducted from the required length of residence without reference to the time of actual service: *Provided further,* That no patent shall issue to any homestead settler who has not resided upon, improved, and cultivated his homestead for a period of at least one year after he shall have commenced his improvements.

Public lands.  
Absence of settler enlisted as soldier, etc., to be equivalent to residence, etc.

*Proviso.*  
Discharge for disability.

One year's residence necessary.

Approved, June 16, 1898.

**CHAP. 459.**—An Act For a survey for a channel leading from Ship Island Harbor, Mississippi, to the railroad pier at Gulf Port, Mississippi, and to Biloxi, Mississippi, and for a survey of Ship Island Pass.

June 16, 1898.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the Secretary of War be, and he is hereby, authorized and directed to cause to be made a survey for a channel leading from Ship Island Harbor, Mississippi, to the rail-

Survey of channel from Ship Island Harbor, Mississippi, to Gulf Port, etc.

road pier at Gulf Port, Mississippi, and from Ship Island Harbor to Biloxi, Mississippi, and also for an anchorage basin at both places, with a view to ascertaining the cost of same and its advisability.

He shall also report a place for making and maintaining said channels and basins by necessary dredging and improvements, together with an estimate of the cost of same. He shall further cause to be made a survey for a channel twenty-six feet deep at mean low water through Ship Island Pass, Mississippi, and report the cost and advisability of making same by dredging.

Approved, June 16, 1898.

June 16, 1898.

**CHAP. 460.**—An Act To authorize the construction of a bridge across Saint Francis Lake, at or near Lake City, State of Arkansas.

Jonesboro, Lake City and Eastern Railroad may bridge Lake Saint Francis, Arkansas.

*Provisos.*  
Secretary of War to prove plans, etc.

Aids to navigation.

Position of piers, etc.  
Lights.

Railroads.  
—right to use bridge.

—disagreement with owner.

Commencement and completion.

Amendment.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the Jonesboro, Lake City and Eastern Railroad Company, a corporation incorporated under the laws of the State of Arkansas, its successors or assigns, are hereby authorized to construct, operate, and maintain a drawbridge across Lake Saint Francis, at or near Lake City, in the State of Arkansas. Said bridge shall be constructed in accordance with such plans as the Secretary of War may decide to be necessary, and approved by him: *Provided*, That before the construction of any bridge herein authorized is commenced the said company shall submit to the Secretary of War, for his examination and approval, a design and drawing of such bridge, and map of the location, giving sufficient information to enable the Secretary of War to fully and satisfactorily understand the subject; and unless the plan and location of such bridge are approved by the Secretary of War the structure shall not be built: *Provided further*, That any bridge constructed under authority of this Act shall at all times be so kept and managed as to offer proper and reasonable means for the passage of vessels and other water craft through or under said structure; and the piers of said bridge shall be parallel with, and the bridge itself at right angles to, the current of the lake; and for the safety of vessels passing at night there shall be displayed on said bridge, from sunset to sunrise, such lights or other signals as may be prescribed by the Light-House Board.

SEC. 2. That all railroad companies desiring the use of said bridge shall have equal rights and privileges relative to the passage of railway trains over the same and over the approaches thereto, upon payment of a reasonable compensation for such use; and in case the owner of said bridge and any railroad company desiring such use shall fail to agree upon the sums to be paid or upon the conditions to be observed, all matters at issue shall be decided by the Secretary of War upon hearing the allegations and proof of the parties.

SEC. 3. That this Act shall be null and void if actual construction of the bridge herein authorized be not commenced within one year and completed within two years from the approval of this Act.

SEC. 4. That the right to alter, amend, or repeal this Act is hereby expressly reserved.

Approved, June 16, 1898.

June 17, 1898.

**CHAP. 463.**—An Act To organize a hospital corps of the Navy of the United States; to define its duties and regulate its pay.

Navy.  
Organization of hospital corps.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That a hospital corps of the United States Navy is hereby established, and shall consist of pharmacists hospital stewards, hospital apprentices (first class), and hospital