

March 8, 1918.
[H. R. 6361.]

[Public, No. 103.]

CHAP. 20.—An Act To extend protection to the civil rights of members of the Military and Naval Establishments of the United States engaged in the present war.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

Soldiers' and Sailors'
Civil Relief Act.

ARTICLE I.

General provisions.

GENERAL PROVISIONS.

Suspension of civil
legal proceedings, etc.,
against persons in mili-
tary service during the
war.

SEC. 100. That for the purpose of enabling the United States the more successfully to prosecute and carry on the war in which it is at present engaged, protection is hereby extended to persons in military service of the United States in order to prevent prejudice or injury to their civil rights during their term of service and to enable them to devote their entire energy to the military needs of the Nation, and to this end the following provisions are made for the temporary suspension of legal proceedings and transactions which may prejudice the civil rights of persons in such service during the continuance of the present war.

Definitions of terms.
"Persons in military
service."
Army organizations.

SEC. 101. (1) That the term "persons in military service," as used in this Act, shall include the following persons and no others: All officers and enlisted men of the Regular Army, the Regular Army Reserve, the Officers' Reserve Corps, and the Enlisted Reserve Corps; all officers and enlisted men of the National Guard and National Guard Reserve recognized by the Militia Bureau of the War Department; all forces raised under the Act entitled "An Act to authorize the President to increase temporarily the Military Establishment of the United States," approved May eighteenth, nineteen hundred and seventeen; all officers and enlisted men of the Navy, the Marine Corps, and the Coast Guard; all officers and enlisted men of the Naval Militia, Naval Reserve force, Marine Corps Reserve, and National Naval Volunteers recognized by the Navy Department; all officers of the Public Health Service detailed by the Secretary of the Treasury for duty either with the Army or the Navy; any of the personnel of the Lighthouse Service and of the Coast and Geodetic Survey transferred by the President to the service and jurisdiction of the War Department or of the Navy Department; members of the Nurse Corps; Army field clerks; field clerks, Quartermaster Corps; civilian clerks and employees on duty with the military forces detailed for service abroad in accordance with provisions of existing law; and members of any other body who have heretofore or may hereafter become a part of the military or naval forces of the United States. The term "military service," as used in this definition, shall signify active service in any branch of service heretofore mentioned or referred to, but reserves and persons on the retired list shall not be included in the term "persons in military service" until ordered to active service. The term "active service" shall include the period during which a person in military service is absent from duty on account of sickness, wounds, leave, or other lawful cause.

Ante, p. 76.

Navy organizations.

Public Health, Light-
house, and Coast Sur-
vey.

Nurse Corps, field
clerks, etc.

Restricted to active
service.

Extension during pe-
riod of specified ab-
sence.

"Period of military
service."

Dates included.

Termination.

"Person."

(2) The term "period of military service," as used in this Act, shall include the time between the following dates: For persons in active service at the date of the approval of this Act it shall begin with the date of approval of this Act; for persons entering active service after the date of this Act, with the date of entering active service. It shall terminate with the date of discharge from active service or death while in active service, but in no case later than the date when this Act ceases to be in force.

(3) The term "person," as used in this Act, with reference to the holder of any right alleged to exist against a person in military service or against a person secondarily liable under such right, shall include

individuals, partnerships, corporations, and any other forms of business association.

(4) The term "court" as used in this Act shall include any court of competent jurisdiction of the United States or of any State, whether or not a court of record.

(5) The term "termination of the war" as used in this Act shall mean the termination of the present war by the treaty of peace as proclaimed by the President.

SEC. 102. (1) That the provisions of this Act shall apply to the United States, the several States and Territories, the District of Columbia, and all territory subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, and to proceedings commenced in any court therein, and shall be enforced through the usual forms of procedure obtaining in such courts or under such regulations as may be by them prescribed.

(2) When under this Act any application is required to be made to a court in which no proceeding has already been commenced with respect to the matter, such application may be made to any court.

SEC. 103. Whenever pursuant to any of the provisions of this Act the enforcement of any obligation or liability, the prosecution of any suit or proceeding, the entry or enforcement of any order, writ, judgment, or decree, or the performance of any other act, may be stayed, postponed, or suspended, such stay, postponement, or suspension may, in the discretion of the court, likewise be granted to sureties, guarantors, indorsers, and others subject to the obligation or liability, the performance or enforcement of which is stayed, postponed, or suspended.

When a judgment or decree is vacated or set aside in whole or in part, as provided in this Act, the same may, in the discretion of the court, likewise be set aside and vacated as to any surety, guarantor, indorser, or other person liable upon the contract or liability for the enforcement of which the judgment or decree was entered.

ARTICLE II.

GENERAL RELIEF.

SEC. 200. That in any action or proceeding commenced in any court if there shall be a default of an appearance by the defendant the plaintiff before entering judgment shall file in the court an affidavit setting forth facts showing that the defendant is not in military service. If unable to file such affidavit plaintiff shall in lieu thereof file an affidavit setting forth either that the defendant is in the military service or that plaintiff is not able to determine whether or not defendant is in such service. If an affidavit is not filed showing that the defendant is not in the military service, no judgment shall be entered without first securing an order of court directing such entry, and no such order shall be made if the defendant is in such service until after the court shall have appointed an attorney to represent defendant and protect his interest and the court shall on application make such appointment. Unless it appears that the defendant is not in such service the court may require as a condition before judgment is entered that the plaintiff file a bond approved by the court conditioned to indemnify the defendant, if in military service, against any loss or damage that he may suffer by reason of any judgment should the judgment be thereafter set aside in whole or in part. And the court may make such other and further order or enter such judgment as in its opinion may be necessary to protect the rights of the defendant under this Act.

(2) Any person who shall make or use an affidavit required under this section knowing it to be false shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be punishable by imprisonment not to exceed one year or by fine not to exceed \$1,000, or both.

"Court."

"Termination of the war."

Territory in which Act enforceable.

Jurisdiction of courts.

Stay, etc., extended to persons secondarily liable.

Vacating judgment, etc., allowed as to sureties, etc.

General relief.

Protection of persons in military service against judgment in default, etc.

Affidavit as to status of defendant required.

Bond before judgment unless defendant not in service.

Other relief.

Punishment for false affidavit, etc.

Attorney to represent person in service if not present, etc.

(3) In any action or proceeding in which a person in military service is a party if such party does not personally appear therein or is not represented by an authorized attorney, the court may appoint an attorney to represent him; and in such case a like bond may be required and an order made to protect the rights of such person. But no attorney appointed under this Act to protect a person in military service shall have power to waive any right of the person for whom he is appointed or bind him by his acts.

Judgment against person in service may be reopened after termination thereof if prejudiced thereby.

(4) If any judgment shall be rendered in any action or proceeding governed by this section against any person in military service during the period of such service or within thirty days thereafter, and it appears that such person was prejudiced by reason of his military service in making his defense thereto, such judgment may, upon application, made by such person or his legal representative, not later than ninety days after the termination of such service, be opened by the court rendering the same and such defendant or his legal representative let in to defend; provided it is made to appear that the defendant has a meritorious or legal defense to the action or some part thereof. Vacating, setting aside, or reversing any judgment because of any of the provisions of this Act shall not impair any right or title acquired by any bona fide purchaser for value under such judgment.

Condition.

Bona fide rights preserved.

Stay of proceedings allowed unless interests not affected by service of party.

SEC. 201. That at any stage thereof any action or proceeding commenced in any court by or against a person in military service during the period of such service or within sixty days thereafter may, in the discretion of the court in which it is pending, on its own motion, and shall, on application to it by such person or some person on his behalf, be stayed as provided in this Act, unless, in the opinion of the court, the ability of plaintiff to prosecute the action or the defendant to conduct his defense is not materially affected by reason of his military service.

Relief against fines and penalties on contracts, etc., while in service.

SEC. 202. That when an action for compliance with the terms of any contract is stayed pursuant to this Act no fine or penalty shall accrue by reason of failure to comply with the terms of such contract during the period of such stay, and in any case where a person fails to perform any obligation and a fine or penalty for such nonperformance is incurred a court may, on such terms as may be just, relieve against the enforcement of such fine or penalty if it shall appear that the person who would suffer by such fine or penalty was in the military service when the penalty was incurred and that by reason of such service the ability of such person to pay or perform was thereby materially impaired.

Actions against persons in service. Authority of court.

SEC. 203. That in any action or proceeding commenced in any court against a person in military service, before or during the period of such service, or within sixty days thereafter, the court may, in its discretion, on its own motion, or on application to it by such person or some person on his behalf shall, unless in the opinion of the court the ability of the defendant to comply with the judgment or order entered or sought is not materially affected by reason of his military service:

May stay execution of judgment.

(1) Stay the execution of any judgment or order entered against such person, as provided in this Act, and

Vacate attachment, etc.

(2) Vacate or stay any attachment or garnishment of property, money, or debts in the hands of another, whether before or after judgment, as provided in this Act.

Continuance of stay, etc., may be for period of service.

SEC. 204. That any stay of any action, proceeding, attachment, or execution, ordered by any court under the provisions of this Act may, except as otherwise provided, be ordered for the period of military service and three months thereafter or any part of such period, and subject to such terms as may be just, whether as to payment in installments of such amounts and at such times as the court may fix

or otherwise. Where the person in military service is a codefendant with others the plaintiff may nevertheless by leave of court proceed against the others.

Codefendants not in service.

SEC. 205. That the period of military service shall not be included in computing any period now or hereafter to be limited by any law for the bringing of any action by or against any person in military service or by or against his heirs, executors, administrators, or assigns, whether such cause of action shall have accrued prior to or during the period of such service.

Military service not included in time of statutes of limitations.

ARTICLE III.

RENT, INSTALLMENT CONTRACTS, MORTGAGES.

Real property.

SEC. 300. (1) That no eviction or distress shall be made during the period of military service in respect of any premises for which the agreed rent does not exceed \$50 per month, occupied chiefly for dwelling purposes by the wife, children, or other dependents of a person in military service, except upon leave of court granted upon application therefor or granted in an action or proceeding affecting the right of possession.

Eviction from dwellings of persons in service restrained.

(2) On any such application or in any such action the court may, in its discretion, on its own motion, and shall, on application, unless in the opinion of the court the ability of the tenant to pay the agreed rent is not materially affected by reason of such military service, stay the proceedings for not longer than three months, as provided in this Act, or it may make such other order as may be just.

Stay of proceedings, etc., by court.

(3) Any person who shall knowingly take part in any eviction or distress otherwise than as provided in subsection (1) hereof shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall be punishable by imprisonment not to exceed one year or by fine not to exceed \$1,000, or both.

Punishment for unlawful eviction.

(4) The Secretary of War or the Secretary of the Navy, as the case may be, is hereby empowered, subject to such regulations as he may prescribe, to order an allotment of the pay of a person in military service in reasonable proportion to discharge the rent of premises occupied for dwelling purposes by the wife, children, or other dependents of such person.

Allotments for rent from Army or Navy pay of persons in service.

SEC. 301. (1) That no person who has received, or whose assignor has received, under a contract for the purchase of real or personal property, or of lease or bailment with a view to purchase of such property, a deposit or installment of the purchase price from a person or from the assignor of a person who, after the date of payment of such deposit or installment, has entered military service, shall exercise any right or option under such contract to rescind or terminate the contract or resume possession of the property for non-payment of any installment falling due during the period of such military service, except by action in a court of competent jurisdiction.

Purchases by installments.

Restriction on rescinding contracts by persons in service on failing to make payment.

(1a) Any person who shall knowingly resume possession of property which is the subject of this section otherwise than as provided in subsection (1) hereof shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be punished by imprisonment not to exceed one year or by fine not to exceed \$1,000, or both.

Punishment for retaking property except under court action.

(2) Upon the hearing of such action the court may order the repayment of prior installments or deposits or any part thereof, as a condition of terminating the contract and resuming possession of the property, or may, in its discretion, on its own motion, and shall, on application to it by such person in military service or some person on his behalf, order a stay of proceedings as provided in this Act unless, in the opinion of the court, the ability of the defendant to comply with

Judicial proceedings for termination of contract, etc.

the terms of the contract is not materially affected by reason of such service; or it may make such other disposition of the case as may be equitable to conserve the interests of all parties.

Mortgages, etc.
Security of property
owned by persons in
service.

SEC. 302. (1) That the provisions of this section shall apply only to obligations originating prior to the date of approval of this Act and secured by mortgage, trust deed, or other security in the nature of a mortgage upon real or personal property owned by a person in military service at the commencement of the period of the military service and still so owned by him.

Action of court in
cases of nonpayment,
etc.

(2) In any proceeding commenced in any court during the period of military service to enforce such obligation arising out of nonpayment of any sum thereunder due or out of any other breach of the terms thereof occurring prior to or during the period of such service, the court may, after hearing, in its discretion, on its own motion, and shall, on application to it by such person in military service or some person on his behalf, unless in the opinion of the court the ability of the defendant to comply with the terms of the obligation is not materially affected by reason of his military service—

Stay of proceedings.

Other equitable dis-
position.

(a) Stay the proceedings as provided in this Act; or
(b) Make such other disposition of the case as may be equitable to conserve the interests of all parties.

Restrictions of sales
under warrant to con-
fess judgment, etc.

(3) No sale under a power of sale or under a judgment entered upon warrant of attorney to confess judgment contained in any such obligation shall be valid if made during the period of military service or within three months thereafter, unless upon an order of sale previously granted by the court and a return thereto made and approved by the court.

ARTICLE IV.

INSURANCE.

Insurance.

Classes of life insur-
ance contracts included
in "policy."

SEC. 400. That in this Article the term "policy" shall include any contract of life insurance on the level premium or legal reserve plan. It shall also include any benefit in the nature of life insurance arising out of membership in any fraternal or beneficial association; the term "premium" shall include membership dues or assessments in such association, and the date of issuance of policy as herein limited shall refer to the date of admission to membership in such association; the term "insured" shall include any person who is the holder of a policy as defined in this Article; the term "insurer" shall include any corporation, partnership, or other form of association which secures or provides insurance under any policy as defined in this Article.

Dues, etc., included
as "premium."

Definition of "insur-
ed" and "insurer."

Persons in service
entitled to benefits
hereof.

SEC. 401. That the benefits of this Article shall apply to any person in military service who is the holder of a policy of life insurance, when such holder shall apply for such benefits on a form prepared in accordance with regulations which shall be prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury. Such form shall set forth particularly that the application therein made is a consent to such modification of the terms of the original contract of insurance as are made necessary by the provisions of this Article and by receiving and filing the same the insurer shall be deemed to have assented thereto, to the extent, if any, to which the policy on which the application is made is within the provisions of this Article. The original of such application shall be sent by the insured to the insurer, and a copy thereof to the Bureau of War Risk Insurance.

Application, etc.,
conditions.

Disposition of.

Issue of forms, etc.

The Bureau of War Risk Insurance shall issue through suitable military and naval channels a notice explaining the provisions of this Article and shall furnish forms to be distributed to those desiring to make application for its benefits.

Maximum amount of
policies allowed bene-
fits of Act.

SEC. 402. That the benefits of this Act shall be available to any person in military service in respect of contracts of insurance in force under their terms up to but not exceeding a face value of

\$5,000, irrespective of the number of policies held by such person whether in one or more companies, when such contracts were made and a premium was paid thereon before September first, nineteen hundred and seventeen; but in no event shall the provisions of this Article apply to any policy on which premiums are due and unpaid for a period of more than one year at the time when application for the benefits of this Article is made or in respect of any policy on which there is outstanding a policy loan or other indebtedness equal to or greater than fifty per centum of the cash surrender value of the policy.

Restriction as to unpaid premiums.

Outstanding loans, etc.

SEC. 403. That the Bureau of War Risk Insurance shall, subject to regulations, which shall be prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury, compile and maintain a list of such persons in military service as have made application for the benefits of this Article, and shall (1) reject any applications for such benefits made by persons who are not persons in military service; (2) reject any applications for such benefits in excess of the amount permitted by section four hundred and two; and (3) reject any applications in respect of contracts of insurance otherwise not entitled to the benefits of this Article. Said bureau shall immediately notify the insurer and the insured in writing of every rejection or approval.

Action by War Risk Insurance Bureau.

Applications to be rejected.

Notice of rejection or approval.

SEC. 404. That when one or more applications are made under this Article by any one person in military service in respect of insurance exceeding a total face value of \$5,000, whether on one or more policies or in one or more companies, and the insured shall not in his application indicate an order of preference, the Bureau of War Risk Insurance shall reject such policies as have the inferior cash surrender value, so as to reduce the total benefits conferred within the face value of \$5,000, and where necessary for this purpose shall direct the insurer to divide any policy into two separate policies. The said bureau shall immediately notify the insurer and the insured in writing of such selection.

Reduction of policies exceeding \$5,000, etc.

SEC. 405. That no policy which has not lapsed for the nonpayment of premium before the commencement of the period of military service of the insured, and which has been brought within the benefits of this Article, shall lapse or be forfeited for the nonpayment of premium during the period of such service or during one year after the expiration of such period: *Provided*, That in no case shall this prohibition extend for more than one year after the termination of the war.

Policies accepted not to lapse for nonpayment during service period, etc.

Proviso.
Limitation.

SEC. 406. That within the first fifteen days of each calendar month after the date of approval of this Act until the expiration of one year after the termination of the war, every insurance corporation or association to which application has been made as herein provided, for the benefits of this Article, shall render to the Bureau of War Risk Insurance a report, duly verified, setting forth the following facts:

Monthly reports from insurance companies as to policies subject to benefits.

First. The names of the persons who have applied for such benefits, and the face value of the policies in respect of which such benefits have been applied for by such persons, during the preceding calendar month;

Applicants and amounts applied for.

Second. A list as far as practicable of the premiums in respect of policies entitled to the benefits of this Article which remain unpaid on the last day of the preceding calendar month, which day is at least thirty-one days after the due date of the premiums, provided such premiums have not previously been so reported as in default;

List of unpaid premiums.

Third. A list of premiums which, having been previously reported as in default, have been paid by the policyholder or some one on his behalf in whole or in part during the preceding calendar month;

Defaulted premiums paid.

Fourth. A computation of the difference between the total amount of defaulted premiums therein reported and the total amount of premiums paid as therein reported, after having been previously reported

Computation of monthly difference between defaults and repayments.

as in default. From this sum shall be deducted the total sum of any premiums previously reported as in default, upon policies in respect of which the Bureau of War Risk Insurance has, since the date of such report, rejected an application for the benefits of this Article. The final sum so arrived at shall be denominated the monthly difference.

Verification of statement, etc.

SEC. 407. That the Bureau of War Risk Insurance shall verify the computation of monthly difference reported by each insurer, and shall certify it, as corrected, to the Secretary of the Treasury and the insurer.

United States bonds to insurer for monthly difference.

SEC. 408. That the Secretary of the Treasury shall, within ten days thereafter, deliver each month to the proper officer of each insurer, bonds of the United States to the amount of that multiple of \$100 nearest to the monthly difference certified in respect of each insurer. Such bonds shall be registered in the names of the respective insurers, who shall be entitled to receive the interest accruing thereon, and such bonds shall not be transferred, or again registered, except upon the approval of the Director of the Bureau of War Risk Insurance, and shall remain in the possession of the insurer until settlement is made in accordance with this Article: *Provided*, That whenever the fact of insolvency shall be ascertained by the Director of the Bureau of War Risk Insurance all obligation on the part of the United States, under this Article, for future premiums on policies of such insurer shall thereupon terminate. An insurer shall furnish semiannual statements to the Bureau of War Risk Insurance.

Limitation on use of bond, etc.

Proviso.
Termination of obligations to insolvent insurers.

Bonds as security for unpaid premiums.

Lien on policy, etc.

SEC. 409. That the bonds so delivered shall be held by the respective insurers as security for the payment of the defaulted premiums with interest. To indemnify it against loss the United States shall have a first lien upon any policy receiving the benefits of this Article, subject only to any lien existing at the time the policy became subject to this Act, and no loan or settlement or payment of dividend shall be made by the insurer on such policy which may prejudice the security of such lien. Before any dividend is paid or any loan or settlement is made the written consent of the Bureau of War Risk Insurance must be obtained.

Deductions from proceeds of policy in case of death during service.

SEC. 410. That in the event that the military service of any person being the holder of a policy receiving the benefits of this Article shall be terminated by death, the amount of any unpaid premiums, with interest at the rate provided for in the policy for policy loans, shall be deducted from the proceeds of the policy and shall be included in the next monthly report of the insurer as premiums paid.

Policies to lapse if past due premiums unpaid one year after end of military service.

SEC. 411. That if the insured does not within one year after the termination of his period of military service pay to the insurer all past due premiums with interest thereon from their several due dates at the rate provided in the policy for policy loans, the policy shall at the end of such year immediately lapse and become void, and the insurer shall thereupon become liable to pay the cash surrender value thereof, if any: *Provided*, That if the insured is in the military service at the termination of the war such lapse shall occur and surrender value be payable at the expiration of one year after the termination of the war.

Proviso.
If insured in service at end of war.

Final statement of account.

Credits to insurers.

Monthly differences.

Interest differences.

SEC. 412. That at the expiration of one year after the termination of the war there shall be an account stated between each insurer and the United States, in which the following items shall be credited to the insurer:

(1) The total amount of the monthly differences reported under this Article;

(2) The difference between the total interest received by the insurer upon the bonds held by it as security and the total interest upon such monthly differences at the rate of five per centum per annum; and in

which there shall be credited to the United States the amount of the cash surrender value of each policy lapsed or forfeited as provided in section four hundred and eleven, but not in any case a greater amount on any policy than the total of the unpaid premiums with interest thereon at the rate provided for in the policy for policy loans.

Credit to United States.

SEC. 413. That the balance in favor of the insurer shall, in each case, be paid to it by the United States upon the surrender by the insurer of the bonds delivered to it from time to time by the Secretary of the Treasury under the provisions of this Article.

Balance to be paid on surrender of bonds.

SEC. 414. That this Article shall not apply to any policy which is void or which may at the option of the insurer be voidable, if the insured is in military service, either in this country or abroad, nor to any policy which as a result of being in military service, either in this country or abroad, provides for the payment of any sum less than the face thereof or for the payment of an additional amount as premium.

Policies not subject to benefits.

SEC. 415. That this Article shall apply only to insurance companies or associations which are required by the law under which they are organized or doing business to maintain a reserve, or, which if not so required, have made or shall make provision for the collection from all those insured in such insurer of a premium to cover the special war risk of those insured persons who are in military service.

Companies with reserves, etc., only allowed benefits of Act.

ARTICLE V.

TAXES AND PUBLIC LANDS.

SEC. 500. (1) That the provisions of this section shall apply when any taxes or assessments, whether general or special, falling due during the period of military service in respect of real property owned and occupied for dwelling or business purposes by a person in military service or his dependents at the commencement of his period of military service and still so occupied by his dependents or employees are not paid.

Taxes and public lands.

Real property of persons in service.

(2) When any person in military service, or any person in his behalf, shall file with the collector of taxes, or other officer whose duty it is to enforce the collection of taxes or assessments, an affidavit showing (a) that a tax or assessment has been assessed upon property which is the subject of this section, (b) that such tax or assessment is unpaid, and (c) that by reason of such military service the ability of such person to pay such tax or assessment is materially affected, no sale of such property shall be made to enforce the collection of such tax or assessment, or any proceeding or action for such purpose commenced, except upon leave of court granted upon an application made therefor by such collector or other officer. The court thereupon may stay such proceedings or such sale, as provided in this Act, for a period extending not more than six months after the termination of the war.

Affidavit to be filed to restrict sale, etc., for unpaid taxes.

Action of court.

(3) When by law such property may be sold or forfeited to enforce the collection of such tax or assessment, such person in military service shall have the right to redeem or commence an action to redeem such property, at any time not later than six months after the termination of such service, but in no case later than six months after the termination of the war; but this shall not be taken to shorten any period, now or hereafter provided by the laws of any State or Territory for such redemption.

Redemption after termination of service if property sold.

(4) Whenever any tax or assessment shall not be paid when due, such tax or assessment due and unpaid shall bear interest until paid at the rate of six per centum per annum, and no other penalty or interest shall be incurred by reason of such nonpayment. Any lien for such unpaid taxes or assessment shall also include such interest thereon.

Interest for unpaid taxes, etc., restricted.

Public lands. No rights forfeited, etc., by reason of service, etc.

Former relief acts not impaired.

Homesteads. Ante, p. 248.

Desert lands. Ante, p. 250.

Irrigation. Ante, p. 276.

Mining. Ante, pp. 243, 343.

Ante, p. 430.

Proviso. Perfection of rights while in service.

Affidavits, etc., may be made before officer abroad.

SEC. 501. That no right to any public lands initiated or acquired prior to entering military service by any person under the homestead laws, the desert-land laws, the mining-land laws, or any other laws of the United States, shall be forfeited or prejudiced by reason of his absence from such land, or of his failure to perform any work or make any improvements thereon, or to do any other act required by any such law during the period of such service. Nothing in this section contained shall be construed to deprive a person in military service or his heirs or devisees of any benefits to which he or they may be entitled under the Act entitled "An Act for the relief of homestead entrymen or settlers who enter the military or naval service of the United States in time of war," approved July twenty-eighth, nineteen hundred and seventeen; the Act entitled "An Act for the protection of desert-land entrymen who enter the military or naval service of the United States in time of war," approved August seventh, nineteen hundred and seventeen; the Act entitled "An Act to provide further for the national security and defense by stimulating agriculture and facilitating the distribution of agricultural products," approved August tenth, nineteen hundred and seventeen; the joint resolution "To relieve the owners of mining claims who have been mustered into the military or naval service of the United States as officers or enlisted men from performing assessment work during the term of such service," approved July seventeenth, nineteen hundred and seventeen; or any other Act or resolution of Congress: *Provided*, That nothing in this section contained shall be construed to limit or affect the right of a person in the military service to take any action during his term of service that may be authorized by law, or the regulations of the Interior Department thereunder, for the perfection, defense, or further assertion of rights initiated prior to the date of entering military service, and it shall be lawful for any person while in military service to make any affidavit or submit any proof that may be required by law, or the practice of the General Land Office in connection with the entry, perfection, defense, or further assertion of any rights initiated prior to entering military service, before the officer in immediate command and holding a commission in the branch of the service in which the party is engaged, which affidavits shall be as binding in law and with like penalties as if taken before the Register of the United States Land Office.

ARTICLE VI.

Administrative remedies.

ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES.

Evasive transfers of interests not recognized.

SEC. 600. That where in any proceeding to enforce a civil right in any court it is made to appear to the satisfaction of the court that any interest, property, or contract has since the date of the approval of this Act been transferred or acquired with intent to delay the just enforcement of such right by taking advantage of this Act, the court shall enter such judgment or make such order as might lawfully be entered or made the provisions of this Act to the contrary notwithstanding.

Certificates as to service. Army.

Navy and Marine Corps.

SEC. 601. (1) That in any proceeding under this Act a certificate signed by The Adjutant General of the Army as to persons in the Army or in any branch of the United States service while serving pursuant to law with the Army, signed by the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation of the Navy Department as to persons in the Navy or in any other branch of the United States service while serving pursuant to law with the Navy, and signed by the Major General, Commandant, United States Marine Corps, as to persons in the Marine Corps, or in any other branch of the United States service while serving pursuant

to law with the Marine Corps, or signed by an officer designated by any of them, respectively, for the purpose, shall when produced be prima facie evidence as to any of the following facts stated in such certificate:

That a person named has not been, or is, or has been in military service; the time when and the place where such person entered military service, his residence at that time, and the rank, branch, and unit of such service that he entered, the dates within which he was in military service, the monthly pay received by such person at the date of issuing the certificate, the time when and place where such person died in or was discharged from such service.

Prima facie evidence of specified facts.

It shall be the duty of the foregoing officers to furnish such certificate on application, and any such certificate when purporting to be signed by any one of such officers or by any person purporting upon the face of the certificate to have been so authorized shall be prima facie evidence of its contents and of the authority of the signer to issue the same.

Certificates on application.

(2) Where a person in military service has been reported missing he shall be presumed to continue in the service until accounted for, and no period herein limited which begins or ends with the death of such person shall begin or end until the death of such person is in fact reported to or found by the Department of War or Navy, or any court or board thereof, or until such death is found by a court of competent jurisdiction: *Provided*, That no period herein limited which begins or ends with the death of such person shall be extended hereby beyond a period of six months after the termination of the war.

Presumption as to persons reported missing.

Proof of death.

Proviso.
Limitation.

SEC. 602. That any interlocutory order made by any court under the provisions of this Act may, upon the court's own motion or otherwise, be revoked, modified, or extended by it upon such notice to the parties affected as it may require.

Action of court on interlocutory orders.

SEC. 603. That this Act shall remain in force until the termination of the war, and for six months thereafter: *Provided*, That wherever under any section or provision of this Act a proceeding, remedy, privilege, stay, limitation, accounting, or other transaction has been authorized or provided, the due exercise or enjoyment of which may extend beyond the period herein fixed for the termination of this Act, such section or provision shall be deemed to continue in full force and effect so long as may be necessary to the exercise or enjoyment of the proceeding, remedy, privilege, stay, limitation, accounting, or transaction aforesaid.

Termination of Act.
Proviso.
Continuance of authorized transactions, etc.

SEC. 604. That this Act may be cited as the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act.

Title.

Approved, March 8, 1918.

CHAP. 21.—Joint Resolution Providing additional time for the payment of purchase money under homestead entries within the former Colville Indian Reservation, Washington.

March 11, 1918.
[S. J. Res. 92.]

[Pub. Res., No. 23.]

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of the Interior is hereby authorized to extend for a period of not longer than one year the time for the payment of any annual installment due, or hereafter to become due, on the purchase price for lands sold under the Act of Congress approved March twenty-second, nineteen hundred and six (Thirty-fourth Statutes, page eighty), entitled "An Act to authorize the sale and disposition of surplus or unallotted lands of the diminished Colville Indian Reservation, in the State of Washington, and for other purposes": *Provided*, That the last payment

Colville Indian Reservation, Wash.

Extension of time for annual installments for ceded lands on.

Vol. 34, p. 80.

Proviso.
Final payment.