AN ACT

TO ESTABLISH THE TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT OF OREGON.

August 14th, 1848.

Be it enacted by the senate and house of representatives of the United States of America in congress assembled, That from and after the passage of this act, all that part of the territory of the United States which lies west of the summit of the Rocky Mountains, north of the forty-second degree of north latitude, known as the territory of Oregon, shall be organized into, and constitute a temporary government, by the name of the territory of Oregon: Provided, That nothing in this act contained shall be construed to impair the rights of person or property now pertaining to the Indians in said territory, so long as such rights shall remain unextinguished by treaty between the United States and such Indians, or to affect the authority of the government of the United States, to make any regulation respecting such Indians, their lands, property, or other rights, by treaty, law, or otherwise, which it would have been competent to the government to make if this act had never passed: And provided further, That nothing in this act contained shall be construed to inhibit the government of the United States from dividing said territory into two or more territories, in such manner and at such times as Congress shall deem convenient and proper, or from attaching any portion of said territory to any other state or territory of the United States.

Sec. 2. And be it further enacted, That the executive and authority, in and over said territory of Oregon, shall be vested in a governor, who shall hold his office for four years, and until his successor shall be appointed and qualified, unless sooner removed by the president of the United States. The governor shall reside within said territory, shall be commander-in-chief of the militia thereof, shall perform the duties and receive the emoluments of superintendent of Indian affairs; he may grant pardons and reprieves for offences against the laws of said territory, and represses for offences against the laws of the United States, until the decision of the president can be made known thereon; he shall commission all officers who shall be appointed to office under the laws of the said territory, where, by law, such commissions shall be required, and shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed. Secretary; his duties and powers.

Sec. 3. And be it further enacted, That there shall be a secretary of said territory, who shall reside therein, and hold his office for five years, unless sooner removed by the president of the United States; he shall record and preserve all the laws and proceedings of the legislative assembly hereinafter constituted, and all the acts and proceedings of the governor in his executive department; he shall transmit one copy of the laws and journals of the legislative assembly, within thirty days after the end of each session, and one copy of the executive proceedings and official correspondence, semi-annually, on the first days of January and July, in each year, to the president of the United States, and two copies of the laws to the president of the senate, and to the speaker of the house of representatives, for the use of congress. And, in case of the death, removal, resignation, or absence of the governor of the territory, the secretary shall be, and is hereby, authorized and required to execute and perform all the powers and duties of the governor, during such vacancy or absence, or until another governor shall be duly appointed and qualified to fill such vacancy.

Sec. 4. And be it further enacted, That the legislative power and authority of said territory, shall be vested in a legislative assembly. Legislative assembly shall consist of a council and a house of representatives. The council shall consist of nine members, having the qualifications of voters as hereinafter prescribed, whose term of service shall continue three years. Immediately after they shall be assembled, in consequence of the first election, they shall be divided into three classes. The seats of the members of council of the first class, shall be vacated at the expiration of the first year; of the second class, at the expiration of the second year; and of the third class, at the expiration of the third year: so that one third may be chosen every year; and if vacancies happen by resignation or otherwise, the same shall be filled at the next ensuing election. The house of representatives shall, at its first session, consist of eighteen members, possessing the same qualifications as prescribed for members of the council, and whose term of service shall continue one year. The number of representatives may be increased, by the legislative assembly, from time to time, in proportion to the increase of qualified voters: Provided, That the whole number shall never exceed thirty. An apportionment shall be made, as nearly as practicable, among the several counties or districts, for the election of the council and representatives, giving to each section of the territory representation in the ratio of its qualified voters, as nearly as may be. And the members of the council and of the house of representatives, shall reside in and be inhabitants of the district, or counties, for which they may be elected respectively. Previous to the first election, the governor shall cause a census, or an enumeration of the inhabitants and qualified voters of the several counties and districts of the territory, to be taken, by such persons and in such mode as the governor shall designate and appoint; and the persons,...
Consistent with the constitution and laws of the United States; but no law shall be passed interfering with the primary disposal of the soil; no tax shall be imposed upon the property of the United States; nor shall the lands or other property of non-residents, be taxed higher than the lands or other property of residents. All laws passed by the legislative assembly, shall be submitted to the congress of the United States, and if disapproved, shall be null and of no effect. Provided, That nothing in this act shall be construed to give power to incorporate a bank, or any institution with banking powers, or to borrow money in the name of the territory, or to pledge the faith of the people of the same for any loan whatever, either directly or indirectly. No charter granting any privilege of making, issuing, or putting into circulation, any notes or bills in the likeness of bank notes, or any bonds, scrip, drafts, bills of exchange or obligations, or granting any other banking powers or privileges, shall be passed by the legislative assembly; nor shall the establishment of any branch or agency of any such corporation, derived from other authority, be allowed in said territory, nor shall said legislative assembly authorize the issue of any obligation, scrip, or evidence of debt by said territory, or any member of said territory, unless whatever except certificates for services to said territory, and all such laws, or any law or laws, inconsistent with the provisions of this act, shall be utterly null and void; and all taxes shall be equal and uniform, and no distinction shall be made in the assessments between different kinds of property, but the assessments shall be according to the value thereof. To avoid improper influences, which may result from intermixing in one and the same act, such things as have no proper relation to each other, every law shall embrace but one object, and that shall be expressed in the title.

SEC. 7. And be it further enacted, That all township, district, and county officers, not herein otherwise provided for, shall be appointed or elected in such manner as shall be provided by the legislative assembly of the territory of Oregon.

SEC. 8. And be it further enacted, That no member of the legislative assembly shall hold, or be appointed to, any office which shall have been created, or the salary or emoluments of which shall have been augmented, while he was a member, during the term for which he was elected, and for one year after the expiration of such term; but this restriction shall not be applicable to members of the first legislative assembly; and no person holding a commission or appointment under the United States, shall be a member of the legislative assembly, or shall hold any office under the government of said territory.

SEC. 9. And be it further enacted, That the judicial power of said territory shall be vested in a supreme court, district courts, probate courts, and in justices of the peace. The supreme court shall consist of a chief justice and two associate justices, any two of whom shall constitute a quorum, and who shall hold a term at the seat of government of said territory annually, and they shall hold their offices during the period of four years, and until their successors shall be appointed and qualified. The said territory shall be divided into three judicial districts, and a district court.
shall be held in each of said districts, by one of the justices of the supreme court, at such times and places as may be prescribed by law; and the said judges shall, after their appointments, respectively reside in the districts which shall be assigned to them.

The jurisdiction of the several courts herein provided for, both appellate and original, and that of the probate courts and of justices of the peace, shall be as limited by law: Provided, That justices of the peace shall not have jurisdiction of any case in which the title to, or the execution or any wise in question, on the land or damages claimed, shall exceed one hundred dollars; and the said supreme and district courts respectively, shall possess chancery as well as common law jurisdiction. Each district court or the judge thereof, shall appoint its clerk, who shall also be the register in chancery, and shall keep his office at the place where the court may be held. Writs of error, bills of exception, and appeals, shall be allowed in all cases from the final decisions of said district courts to the supreme court, under such regulations as may be prescribed by law; but in no case removed to the supreme court, shall trial by jury be allowed in said court. The supreme court, or the justices thereof, shall appoint its own clerk, and every clerk shall hold his office at the pleasure of the court for which he shall have been appointed. Writs of error and appeals from the final decisions of said supreme court shall be allowed, and may be taken to the supreme court of the United States, in the same manner, and under the same regulations as from the circuit courts of the United States, and shall be determined by the value of the property or the amount in controversy, to be ascertained by the oath or affirmation of either party, or other competent witness, shall exceed two thousand dollars, and in all cases where the constitution of the United States, or acts of congress, or a treaty of the United States, is brought in question; and each of the said district courts shall have and exercise the same jurisdiction in all cases arising under the constitution of the United States, and the laws of said territory, as is vested in the circuit and district courts of the United States; and all such cases shall be made to the supreme court of said territory, the same as in other cases. Writs of error and appeals from the final decisions of said supreme court shall be allowed, and may be taken to the supreme court of the United States, in the same manner, and under the same regulations as from the circuit courts of the United States, where the value of the property, or the amount in controversy, shall exceed two thousand dollars; and each of said district courts shall have and exercise the same jurisdiction in all cases arising under the constitution of the United States, and the laws of said territory, as is vested in the circuit and district courts of the United States, and also of all cases arising under the laws of the said territory, and otherwise. The said clerk shall receive, in all such cases, the same fees which the clerks of the district courts of the late territory received for similar services.

Attorney, his term of office, &c., and his fees and salary.

The compensation for extra services.

1. And be it further enacted, That the governor, secretary, chief justice, and associate justices, attorney, and marshal, shall be nominated, and by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, appointed by the president of the United States. The governor and secretary, to be appointed as aforesaid, shall, before they act as such, respectively take an oath or affirmation, before the district judge, or some justice of the peace in the limits of said territory, duly authorized to administer oaths and affirmations by the laws now in force therein, or before the chief justice or some associate justice of the supreme court of the United States, to support the constitution of the United States, and faithfully to discharge the duties of their respective offices; which said oaths, when so taken, shall be certified by the person by whom the same shall have been taken, and such certificates shall be received and recorded by the said secretary among the executive proceedings, and no challenge to the same presented to any of the said officers in said territory, before they act as such, shall take a like oath or affirmation, before the said governor or secretary, or some judge or justice of the peace of the territory, who may be duly commissioned and qualified; which said oath or affirmation shall be certified and transmitted by the person taking the same, to the secretary, to be by him recorded as aforesaid; and afterwards, the like oath or affirmation shall be taken, certified, and recorded, in such manner and form as may be prescribed by law. The said governor shall receive an annual salary of fifteen hundred dollars as governor, and fifteen hundred dollars as superintendent of Indian affairs. The chief justice and associate justices shall each receive an annual salary of two thousand dollars. The secretary shall receive an annual salary of fifteen hundred dollars. The said salaries shall be paid quarterly, from the dates of the respective appointments, at the treasury of the United States; but no such payment shall be made until such said officers shall have entered upon the duties of their respective appointments. The members of the legislative assembly shall be entitled to receive three dollars each per day during their attendance at the session thereof, and three dollars each for every twenty miles' travel in going to and returning from said sessions, estimated according to the nearest usually travelled route. And a chief clerk, one assistant clerk, a sergeant-at-arms, and doorkeeper, may be chosen for each house; and the chief clerk shall receive five dollars per day, and the said other officers three dollars per day, during the session of the legislative assembly; but...
no other officers shall be paid by the United States: Provided, That there shall be but one session of the legislature annually, unless, on an extraordinary occasion, the governor shall think proper to call the legislature together. There shall be appropriated annually the sum of fifteen hundred dollars, to be expended by the governor to defray the contingent expenses of the territory, including the salary of a clerk of the executive department; and there shall also be appropriated, annually, a sufficient sum to be expended by the secretary of the territory, and upon an estimate to be made by the secretary of the treasury of the United States, to defray the expenses of the legislative assembly, the printing of the laws, and other incidental expenses; and the governor and secretary of the territory shall, in the disbursement of all moneys in trust to them, be governed solely by the instructions of the secretary of the treasury of the United States, and shall semipermanently account to the said secretary for the manner in which the aforesaid [sum] moneys shall have been expended; and no expenditure, to be paid out of money appropriated by Congress, shall be made by said legislative assembly for objects not specially authorized by the acts of Congress making the appropriations, nor beyond the sums thus appropriated for such objects.

SEC. 10. And be it further enacted, That the rivers and streams of water in said territory of Oregon in which salmon are found, or to which they resort, shall not be obstructed by dams, or otherwise, unless such dams or obstructions are so constructed as to allow salmon to pass freely up and down such rivers and streams.

SEC. 11. And be it further enacted, That the sum of ten thousand dollars be, and is hereby appropriated, to be expended under the direction of the president of the United States, in payment for the salaries of the secretaries of the territories of the United States, in conveying communications and property to and from the United States, and the purchase of presents for such of the Indian tribes as the peace and quietude of the country requires.

SEC. 12. And be it further enacted, That the inhabitants of said territory shall be entitled to enjoy all and singular, the rights, privileges, and advantages granted and secured to the people of the territory of the United States northwest of the river Ohio, by the articles of compact contained in the ordinance for the government of said territory, on the thirteenth day of July, seventeen hundred and eighty-seven; and shall be subject to all the conditions, restrictions, and prohibitions in said articles of compact imposed upon the people of said territory; and the existing laws now in force in the territory of Oregon, under the authority of the provisional government established by the people thereof, shall continue to be valid and operative therein, so far as the same be not inconsistent with the constitution of the United States, and the principles and provisions of this act; subject, nevertheless, to be altered, modified, or repealed, by the legislative assembly of the said territory of Oregon; but all laws heretofore passed in said territory making grants of land, or otherwise affecting or incumbering the title to lands, shall be, and are hereby declared to be null and void; and the laws of the United States are hereby extended over, and declared to be in force in said territory, so far as the same, or any provision thereof, may be applicable.

SEC. 15. And be it further enacted, That the legislative assembly of the territory of Oregon, shall hold its first session at such time and place in said territory as the governor thereof shall appoint and direct; and at said first session, or as soon thereafter as they shall deem expedient, the legislative assembly shall proceed to locate and establish the seat of government for said territory, at such place as they may deem eligible; which place, however, shall thereafter be subject to be changed by said legislative assembly. And the sum of five thousand dollars, out of any money in the treasury not otherwise appropriated, is hereby appropriated and granted to said territory of Oregon, to there be applied, by the governor, to the erection of suitable buildings at the seat of government.

SEC. 16. And be it further enacted, That a delegate to the house of representatives of the United States, to serve for the term of two years, who shall be a citizen of the United States, may be elected by the voters qualified to elect members of the legislative assembly, who shall be entitled to the same rights and privileges as have been heretofore exercised and enjoyed by the delegates from the several other territories of the United States to the said house of representatives; but the delegate first elected shall hold his seat only one year, and a certificate thereof shall be given accordingly. The delegate from said territory shall not be entitled to receive more than twenty-five hundred dollars at any one session of Congress, as a compensation for his mileage, in going to and returning from the seat of government of the United States, any act of Congress to the contrary notwithstanding.

SEC. 17. And be it further enacted, That all suits, process, and proceedings in and about, the civil and criminal, at law and in chancery, and all indictments and informations, which shall be pending and undetermined in the courts established by authority of the provisional government of Oregon, within the limits of said territory, when this act shall take effect, shall be transferred to be heard, tried, and determined in the district courts hereby established, which may include the counties or districts where any such proceedings may be pending. All bonds and recognizances, and obligations of every kind, whatever, valid under the existing laws within the limits of said territory, shall be valid under this act; and all crimes and misdemeanors against the laws in force within the said limits, may be prosecuted, tried, and punished in the courts established by this act; and all penalties, forfeitures, actions, and causes of action, may be recovered under this act, in like manner as they would have been under the laws in force within the limits composing said territory at the time this act shall go into opera-
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Provided, That the laws, penalties, and forfeitures by this section required to be enforced by the courts provided for by this act, shall not be inconsistent with the constitution of the United States: And further provided, That no right of action whatever shall accrue against any person for any act done in pursuance of any law heretofore passed by the temporary government, and which may be declared contrary to the constitution of the United States.

SEC. 18. And be it further enacted, That all justices of the peace, constables, sheriffs, and all other judicial and ministerial officers, who shall be in office within the limits of said territory when this act shall take effect, shall be, and are hereby, authorized and required to continue to exercise and perform the duties of their respective offices as officers of the territory of Oregon, until they or others shall be duly elected or appointed, and qualified to fill their places in the manner herein directed, or until their offices shall be abolished.

SEC. 19. And be it further enacted, That the sum of five thousand dollars be, and the same is hereby, appropriated out of any moneys in the treasury not otherwise appropriated, to be expended, by and under the direction of the said governor of the territory of Oregon, in the purchase of a library, to be kept at the seat of government for the use of the governor, legislative assembly, judges of the supreme court, secretary, marshal, and attorney of said territory, and such other persons, and under such regulations as shall be prescribed by law.

SEC. 20. And be it further enacted, That when the lands in the said territory shall be surveyed under the direction of the government of the United States, preparatory to bringing the same into market, sections numbered sixteen and thirty-six in each township in said territory shall be, and the same is hereby, reserved for the purpose of being applied to schools in said territory, and in the states and territories hereafter to be erected out of the same.

SEC. 21. And be it further enacted, That, until otherwise provided for by law, the governor may define the judicial districts of said territory, and assign the judges who may be appointed for said territory, to the several districts, and also appoint the times and places for holding courts in the several counties or subdivisions in each of said judicial districts by proclamation to be issued by him; but the legislative assembly, at their first or any subsequent session, may organize, alter, or modify such judicial districts, and assign the judges, and alter the time and places of holding the courts, as to them shall seem proper and convenient.

SEC. 22. And be it further enacted, That all officers to be appointed by the president, by and with the advice and consent of the senate, for the territory of Oregon, who by virtue of the provisions of any law now existing, or which may be enacted during the present Congress, are required to give security for monies that may be intrusted with them for disbursement, shall give such security at such time and place, and in such manner, as the secretary of the treasury may prescribe.

SEC. 23. And be it further enacted, That all the ports, harbors, shores, and waters of the main land of the territory aforesaid, shall constitute a collection district, to be called the district of Oregon; and a port of entry shall be established at Astoria, near the mouth of the Columbia river, and a collector of customs shall be appointed by the president, by and with the advice and consent of the senate, to reside at such port of entry.

SEC. 24. And be it further enacted, That the president of the United States be, and he is hereby, authorized to establish such ports of delivery in the district created by this act, not exceeding two in number (one of which shall be located on Puget's sound), as he may deem expedient, and may appoint, by and with the advice and consent of the senate, surveyors to reside thereat.

SEC. 25. And be it further enacted, That the collector of said district shall be allowed a compensation of one thousand dollars per annum, and the fees allowed by law; and the compensation of any surveyor appointed in pursuance of this act, shall not exceed five hundred dollars per annum, including in said sum the fees allowed by law; and the amount collected by any of said surveyors, for fees in any one year, exceeding the sum of five hundred dollars, shall be accounted for and paid into the treasury of the United States.

SEC. 26. And be it further enacted, That the revenue laws of the United States be, and are hereby, extended over the territory of Oregon.

SEC. 27. And be it further enacted, That the sum of fifteen thousand dollars be, and the same is hereby, appropriated out of any moneys in the treasury not otherwise appropriated, to be expended, under the direction of the secretary of the treasury, for the construction of light-houses at Cape Disappointment and New Dungeness; and for the construction and anchoring of the requisite number of buoys, to indicate the channels at the mouth of the Columbia river, and for the approaches to the harbor of Astoria; the said buoys to be placed and anchored under the direction of such persons as the secretary of the treasury shall appoint.

Approved, August 14, 1846.