

ment, in the same manner as if the original record remained in said court. And in all cases where any of the files, papers, or records of any court of the United States have been or shall be lost or destroyed, the files, records, and papers which, pursuant to law, may have been or may be restored or supplied in place of such records, files, and papers, shall have the same force and effect, to all intents and purposes, as the originals thereof would have been entitled to.

R. S. 904.

SEC. 3. That section nine hundred and four of said Revised Statutes be amended so as to read as follows:

Same subject.

That whenever any of the records or files in which the United States are interested of any court of the United States have been or may be lost or destroyed, it shall be the duty of the attorney of the United States for the district or court to which such files and records belong, so far as the judges of such courts respectively shall deem it essential to the interests of the United States that such records and files to be restored or supplied, to take such steps, under the direction of said judges, as may be necessary to effect such restoration or substitution, including such dockets, indices, and other books and papers as said judges shall think proper. Said judges may direct the performance, by the clerks of said courts respectively and by the United States attorneys, of any duties incident thereto; and said clerks and attorneys shall be allowed such compensation for services in the matter and for lawful disbursements as may be approved by the Attorney-General of the United States, upon a certificate by the judges of said courts stating that such claim for services and disbursements is just and reasonable; and the sum so allowed shall be paid out of the judiciary fund.

Approved, January 31, 1879.

Feb. 3, 1879.

CHAP. 40.—An act to provide for taking testimony, to be used before Congress, in cases of private claims against the United States.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That any committee of either house of Congress before which any private claim against the United States may at any time be pending, being first thereto authorized by the House appointing them, may order testimony to be taken, and books and papers to be examined, and copies thereof, proved, before any standing master in chancery of the circuit of the United States within the judicial district where such testimony or evidence is to be taken. Such master in chancery, upon receiving a copy of the order of such committee, signed by its chairman, setting forth the time and place when and where such examination is to be had, the questions to be investigated, and, so far as may be known to the committee, the names of the witnesses to be examined on the part of the United States, and the general nature of the books, papers, and documents to be proved, if known, shall proceed to give to such private parties reasonable notice of the time and place of such examination, unless such notice shall have been or shall be given by such committee or its chairman, or by the attorney or agent of the United States, or waived by such private party. And such master shall issue subpoenas for such witnesses as may have been named in the order of such committee, and such others as the agent or other representative of the United States hereinafter mentioned shall request. And he shall also issue subpoenas at the request of such private party, or parties, for such witnesses within such judicial district as they may desire: *Provided*, That the United States shall not be liable for the fees of any officer for serving any subpoena for any private party, nor for the fees of any witness on behalf of such party. Said committee may inform the district attorney of the United States for the district where the testimony is to be taken of the time,

Testimony in private claims before Congress.

How taken.

Form of order.

Notice to private parties.

Subpoenas.

Proviso.

Notice to district attorney.

place, and object of such examination, and request his attendance in behalf of the government in conducting such examination, in which case it shall be his duty to attend in person, or by an assistant employed by him, to conduct such examination on the part of the United States, or such committee may, at its option, appoint an agent or attorney, or one of its own members, for that purpose, as they may deem best; and in that event, if the committee shall not be unanimous, the minority of the committee may also appoint such agent or attorney or member of such committee to attend and take part in such examination.

SEC. 2. It shall be the duty of the marshal of the United States for the district in which the testimony is to be taken to serve, or cause to be served, all subpoenas issued in behalf of the United States under this act, in the same manner as if issued by the circuit court for his district; and he shall, upon being first paid his fees therefor, serve any subpoenas that may be issued at the instance of such private party or parties. And the said master may, in his discretion, appoint any other person to serve any subpoena. Such master shall have full power to administer oaths to witnesses, and the same power to issue attachments to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of books, papers and documents, as the circuit or district court of his district would have in a case pending before it; and it shall be his duty to report the conduct of contumacious witnesses before him to the house of Congress appointing such committee. The compensation of such master in chancery, and of marshals and deputy marshals, and of any person appointed to serve papers, shall be the same as for like services in equity cases in the circuit court of the United States; and the compensation of witnesses shall be the same as for like attendance and travel of witnesses before such circuit courts; and all such fees and compensation of officers and witnesses on behalf of the United States, and other expenses of all investigations which may be had under the provisions of this act on the part of the United States, shall be paid out of the contingent fund of the branch of Congress appointing such committee. Said master, when the examination is concluded, shall attach together all the depositions and exhibits, and attach thereto his certificate setting forth or referring to the authority by which they were taken, any notices he may have given, the names of the witnesses for whom subpoenas or attachments were issued, the names of witnesses who attended, with the time of attendance and mileage and fees of each witness on behalf of the United States, which he may require to be shown by affidavit, his own fees, the fees of the marshal, his deputies or other persons serving papers, giving the items, and such other facts in relation to the circumstances connected with the taking of the depositions as he may deem material. He shall then seal up such depositions and papers securely, direct them to the chairman of such committee at Washington, stating briefly on the outside the nature of the contents, and place the same in the post-office, paying the postage thereon; and said package shall be opened only in the presence of such committee. The chairman of any committee ordering testimony to be taken under this act shall, at least ten days before the time fixed for such examination, and within two days after the adoption of such order, cause a copy thereof to be directed and delivered to the Attorney-General of the United States, or sent to him by mail at the Department of Justice, to enable him to give such instructions as he may deem best to the district attorney of the district where such testimony is to be taken, who may, and, if required by the Attorney-General, shall, though not requested by the committee, appear for the United States in person or by assistant, and take such part in such examination as the Attorney-General shall direct.

Duty of marshal.

Powers, etc., of master.

Notice to Attorney-General.

Approved, February 3, 1879.