

# RESTORATION

OF

## LOST AND OBLITERATED CORNERS.

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U S. GENERAL LAND OFFICE.

MARCH 13, 1883.

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## RESTORATION OF LOST AND OBLITERATED CORNERS.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
GENERAL LAND OFFICE,  
Washington, D. C., March 13, 1883.

The increasing number of letters from county and local surveyors received at this office, making inquiry as to the proper method of restoring to their original position lost or obliterated corners marking the survey of the public lands of the United States, or such as have been willfully or accidentally moved from their original position, have rendered the preparation of the following general rules necessary, particularly as in a very large number of cases the immediate facts necessary to a thorough and intelligent understanding are omitted. Moreover, surveys having been made under the authority of different acts of Congress, different results have been obtained, and no special law has been enacted by that authority covering and regulating the subject of the above-named inquiries. Hence the general rules here given must be considered merely as an expression of the opinion of this office on the subject, based, however, upon the spirit of the several acts of Congress authorizing the surveys, as construed by this office. When cases arise which are not covered by these rules, and the advice of this office is desired, the letter of inquiry should always contain a description of the particular corner with reference to the township, range, and section of the public surveys, to enable this office to consult the record.

To restore extinct boundaries of the public lands correctly, the surveyor must have some knowledge of the manner in which townships were subdivided by the several methods authorized by Congress. Without this knowledge he may be greatly embarrassed in the field, and is liable to make mistakes invalidating his work, and leading eventually to serious litigation. It is believed that the following synopsis of the several acts of Congress regulating the surveys of the public lands will be of service to county surveyors and others, and will help to explain many of the difficulties encountered by them in the settlement of such questions.

The differences resulting from Congressional legislation at different periods resulted in *two* sets of corners being established on *township lines* at one time; at another time *three* sets of corners were established on *range lines*, while the system now in operation makes but *one* set of corners on *township boundaries*, except on standard lines, *i. e.*, base and correction lines, and in some exceptional cases.

The following brief explanation of the modes which have been practiced will be of service to all who may be called upon to restore obliterated boundaries of the public land surveys:

Where two sets of corners were established on township boundaries one set was planted at the time the exteriors were run, those on the north boundary belonging to the sections and quarter sections north of said line, and those on the west boundary belonging to the sections and

quarter sections west of that line. The other set of corners was established when the township was subdivided. This method, as stated, resulted in the establishment of two sets of corners on all four sides of the townships.

Where three sets of corners were established on the range lines, the subdivisive surveys were made in the above manner, except that the east and west section lines, instead of being closed upon the corners previously established on the east boundary of the township, were run due east from the last interior section corner, and new corners were erected at the points of intersection with the range line.

The method now in practice requires section lines to be initiated from the corners on the south boundary of the township, and to close on existing corners on the east, north, and west boundaries of the township, except when the north boundary is a base line or standard parallel.

#### SYNOPSIS OF ACTS OF CONGRESS.

The first enactment in regard to the surveying of the public lands was an ordinance passed by the Congress of the Confederation, May 20, 1785, prescribing the mode for the survey of the "Western Territory," and which provided that said territory should be divided into "townships of six miles square, by lines running due north and south, and others crossing them at right angles" as near as might be.

It further provided that the first line running north and south should begin on the Ohio River, at a point due north from the western terminus of a line run as the south boundary of the State of Pennsylvania, and the first line running east and west should begin at the same point, and extend through the whole territory. In these initial surveys only the exterior lines of the townships were surveyed, but the plats were marked by subdivisions into sections of one mile square, numbered from 1 to 36, commencing with No. 1 in the southeast corner of the township, and running from south to north in each tier to No. 36 in the northwest corner of the township; mile corners were established on the township lines. The region embraced by the surveys under this law forms a part of the present State of Ohio, and is generally known as "the Seven Ranges."

The Federal Congress passed a law, approved May 18, 1796, in regard to surveying the public domain, and applied to "the territory northwest of the Ohio River, and above the mouth of the Kentucky River."

Section 2, of said act, provided for dividing such lands as had not been already surveyed or disposed of, "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 6 miles square," &c. It also provided that "one half of said townships, taking them alternately, should be subdivided into sections containing, as nearly as may be, 640 acres each, by running parallel lines through the same each way at the end of every two miles, and marking a corner on each of said lines at the end of every mile." The act also provided that "the sections shall be numbered, respectively, beginning with the number one in the northeast section, and proceeding west and east alternately through the township, with progressive numbers till the thirty-sixth be completed." This method of numbering sections is still in use.

An act amendatory of the foregoing, approved May 10, 1800, required the "townships west of the Muskingum, which are directed to be sold

Ordinance of the Congress of the Confederation of May 20, 1785. U. S. Land Laws, p. 349. Edition 1828.

Act of May 18, 1796. U. S. Statutes at Large, vol. 1, p. 468. Section 2395. U. S. Revised Statutes.

in quarter townships, be subdivided into half sections of 320 acres each, as nearly as may be, by running parallel lines through the same from east to west, and from north to south, at the distance of one mile from each other, and marking corners, at the distance of each half mile on the lines running east and west, and at the distance of each mile on those running from south to north. And the interior lines of townships intersected by the Muskingum, and of all townships lying east of that river, which have not been heretofore actually subdivided into sections, shall also be run and marked. And in all cases where the exterior lines of the townships thus to be subdivided into sections or half sections shall exceed, or shall not extend six miles, the excess or deficiency shall be specially noted, and added to or deducted from the western or northern ranges of sections or half sections in such townships, according as the error may be in running the lines from east to west or from south to north." Said act also provided that the northern and western tier of sections should be sold as containing only the quantity expressed on the plats, and all others as containing the complete legal quantity.

Act of May 10, 1800  
U. S. Statutes at Large,  
vol. 2, p. 73. Section  
2395, U. S. Revised  
Statutes.

The act approved June 1, 1796, "regulating the grants of land appropriated for military services," &c., provided for dividing the "Virginia Military Tract," in the State of Ohio, into townships 5 miles square, each to be subdivided into quarter townships containing 4,000 acres.

Act of June 1, 1796.  
U. S. Statutes at Large,  
vol. 1, p. 492.

Section 6 of the act approved March 1, 1800, amendatory of the foregoing act, enacted that the Secretary of the Treasury was authorized to subdivide the quarter townships into lots of 100 acres, bounded as nearly as practicable by parallel lines 160 perches in length by 100 perches in width. These subdivisions into lots, however, were made upon the plats in the office of the Secretary of the Treasury, and the actual survey was only made at a subsequent time when a sufficient number of such lots had been located to warrant the survey. It thus happened, in some instances, that when the survey came to be made the plat and survey could not be made to agree, and that fractional lots on plats were entirely crowded out. A knowledge of this fact may explain some of the difficulties met with in the district thus subdivided.

Act of March 1, 1800.  
U. S. Statutes at Large,  
vol. 2, p. 14.

The act of Congress approved February 11, 1805, directs the subdivision of the public lands into quarter sections, and provides that all corners marked in the field shall be established as the proper corners of the sections or quarter sections which they were intended to designate, and that corners of half and quarter sections not marked shall be placed as nearly as possible "equidistant from those two corners which stand on the same line." This act further provides that "the boundary lines actually run and marked" (in the field) "shall be established as the proper boundary lines of the sections or subdivisions for which they were intended; and the length of such lines as returned by the surveyors shall be held and considered as the true length thereof, and the boundary lines which shall not have been actually run and marked as aforesaid shall be ascertained by running straight lines from the established corners to the opposite corresponding corners, but in those fractional townships where no such opposite or corresponding corners have been or can be fixed, the said boundary line shall be ascertained by running from the established corners due north and south, or east and west, as the case may be, to the external boundary of such fractional townships."

Act of February 11,  
1805. U. S. Statutes  
at Large, vol. 2, p. 312.  
Section 2396, U. S.  
Revised Statutes.

The act of Congress approved April 24, 1820, provides for the sale of public lands in half quarter sections, and requires "that in every case of the division of a quarter section the line for the division thereof shall run north and south, and fractional sections, containing 160 acres and upwards, shall in like manner, as nearly as practicable, be subdivided into half quarter sections, under such rules and regulations as may be prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury; but fractional sections, containing less than 160 acres, shall not be divided."

Act of April 24, 1820,  
U. S. Statutes at Large,  
vol. 3, p. 566. Section  
2397, U. S. Revised  
Statutes.

The act of Congress approved May 24, 1824, provides "that whenever, in the opinion of the President of the United States, a departure from the ordinary mode of surveying land on any river, lake, bayou, or water course would promote the public interest, he may direct the surveyor general in whose district such land is situated, and where the change is intended to be made, under rules and regulations as the President may prescribe, to cause the lands thus situated to be surveyed in tracts of two acres in width, fronting on any river, bayou, lake, or water course, and running back the depth of forty acres."

Act of May 24, 1824,  
U. S. Statutes at Large,  
vol. 4, p. 34.

The act of Congress approved April 5, 1832, directed the subdivision of the public lands into quarter quarters; that in every case of the division of a half quarter section the dividing line should run east and west, and that fractional sections should be subdivided, under rules and regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury. Under the latter provision the Secretary directed that fractional sections containing less than 160 acres, or the residuary portion of a fractional section, after the subdivision into as many quarter quarter sections as it is susceptible of, may be subdivided into lots, each containing the quantity of a quarter quarter section as nearly as practicable, by so laying down the line of subdivision that they shall be 20 chains wide, which distances are to be marked on the plat of subdivision, as are also the areas of the quarter quarters and residuary fractions.

Act of April 5, 1832,  
U. S. Statutes at Large,  
vol. 4, p. 563. Section  
2397, U. S. Revised  
Statutes.

These two acts last mentioned provided that the corners and contents of half quarters and quarter quarter sections should be ascertained as nearly as possible in the manner and on the principles prescribed in the act of Congress approved February 11, 1805.

From the foregoing synopsis of Congressional legislation it is evident—

1st. That the boundaries of the public lands established and returned by the duly appointed Government surveyors, when approved by the surveyors general and accepted by the Government, *are unchangeable*.

2d. That the original township, section, and quarter section corners established by the Government surveyors must stand as the true corners which they were intended to represent, whether the corners be in place or not.

3d. That quarter quarter corners not established by the Government surveyors must be planted equidistant and on line between the quarter section and section corner.

4th. That all subdivisional lines of a section running between corners established in the original survey of a township must be straight lines, running from the proper corner in one exterior line to its opposite corresponding corner in the opposite exterior line.

5th. That in fractional sections where no opposite corresponding corner has been or can be established, any required subdivision line of such section must be run from the proper original corner in the boundary

line due east and west, or north and south, as the case may be, to the water course, Indian reservation, or other exterior boundary of such section.

From the foregoing it will be plain that extinct corners of the Government surveys must be restored to their original locations, whenever it is possible to do so; and hence resort should always be first had to the marks of the survey in the field. The locus of the missing corner should be first identified on the ground by the aid of the mound, pits, line trees, bearing trees, &c., described in the field notes of the original survey.

The identification of mounds, pits, and witness trees, or other objects noted in the field notes of survey, afford the best means of relocating the missing corner in its original position. If this cannot be done, clear and unquestioned testimony as to the locality it originally occupied should be taken, if such can be at all obtained. In any event, whether the locus of the corner be fixed by the one means or the other, such locus should always be tested and proven by measurements to *known* corners. No definite rule can be laid down as to what shall be sufficient evidence in such cases, and much must be left to the skill, fidelity, and good judgment of the surveyor in the performance of his work.

Where retracements of lines have to be made for the purpose of either testing the relocation of a missing corner, or by direct measurement between known corners intersecting at the point sought to be re-established, it will almost invariably happen that a difference of measurement is developed between the original measurement, as stated in the field notes, and the new measurement made for the purpose of re-establishment or proof. When these differences occur, the surveyor must in all cases re-establish or prove his corners at intervals proportionate to those given in the field notes of the original survey. *From this rule there can be no departure*, since it is the basis upon which the whole operation depends for accuracy and truth.

#### TO RESTORE LOST OR OBLITERATED CORNERS.

1. *To restore corners on base and correction lines.*—Run a right line between the nearest existing corners on such line, whether base or correction line, which corners must, however, be fully identified, and at the point proportionate to the distance given in the field notes of the original survey, establish a new corner. This point should be verified by measurements to the nearest known corners north or south of the base or correction line, or both.

Where several corners are missing between the corners to be connected, as directed above, their location will be determined upon the same principle and in the same manner; that is to say, the original distance of the entire line between the recognized corners is to the entire distance remeasured between the same corners as the original distance of the first, second, third, &c., interval of the original survey is to the new distance to be laid off for the corresponding new interval. After having checked each new location by measurement to the nearest known corners north or south of the line, new corners will be established permanently, and new bearings and measurements taken to prominent objects, which should be of as permanent a character as possible, and the same recorded for future reference.

As has been observed, no existing original corner can be disturbed, and it will be plain that any excess or deficiency in measurements between existing corners cannot in any degree affect the distances beyond said existing corners, but must be added or subtracted proportionately to or from the intervals embraced between the corners which are still standing.

2. *Re-establishment of township corners common to four townships.*—Inasmuch as township lines are sometimes run in a direction not true north and south, or east and west, a line should first be run connecting the nearest known corners on the north and south township lines and a temporary corner established at the proportionate distance. This will establish the location of the township corner only so far as its relative position north and south is concerned. The nearest known corners on the east and west township lines will then be connected in the same manner, independent of the temporary corner previously set, and the proportionate point determined in that direction; any difference east or west of the temporary corner which may be developed by the last operation, by intersection with the line previously run north and south, will then be laid off in the direction required from the temporary corner, and a permanent corner established at such point, marked and witnessed as in the foregoing case.

3. *Re-establishment of corners common to two townships.*—The two nearest known corners on the township line, the same not being a base or a correction line, will be connected as in case No. 1, by a right line, and the missing corner established by proportionate distance as directed in that case; the location thus found will be checked upon by measurements to nearest known section or quarter section corners north and south, or east and west, of the township line as the case may be.

4. *Re-establishment of closing corners.*—Measure from the quarter section, section or township corner east or west, as the case may be, to the next preceding or succeeding corner in the order of original establishment, and re-establish the missing closing corner by proportionate measurement. The line upon which the closing corner was originally established should always be remeasured, in order to check upon the correctness of the new location.

5. *Re-establishment of interior section corners.*—This class of corners should be re-established in the same manner as corners common to four townships. In such cases, when a number of corners are missing on all sides of the one sought to be re-established, the entire distance must, of course, be remeasured between the nearest existing recognized corners both north and south and east and west, in accordance with the rule laid down, and the new corner re-established by proportionate measurement. The mere measurement in any one of the required directions will not suffice, since the direction of the several section lines running northwards through a township, or running east and west, are only in the most exceptional cases true prolongations of the alignment of the section lines initiated on the south boundary of the township; while the east and west lines running through the township, and theoretically supposed to be at right angles with the former, are seldom in that condition, and the alignment of the closing lines on the east and west boundaries of the township, in connection with the interior section lines, even less seldom in accord. Moreover, the alignment of the section line itself from corner to corner, in point of fact, also very frequently diverges from a right line, although presumed to be so from the record contained in the field notes and so designated on the plats, and become either a broken or a curved line. This fact will be determined, in a



timbered country, by the blazes which may be found upon trees on either side of the line, and although such blazed line will not strictly govern as to the absolute direction assumed by such line, it will assist very materially in determining its approximate direction and should never be neglected in retracements for the re-establishment of lost corners of any description. Sight trees described in the field notes, together with the recorded distances to same, when fully identified, will, it has been held, govern the line itself, even when not in a direct or straight line between established corners, which line is then necessarily a broken line by passing through said sight trees. Such trees, when in existence and properly identified beyond a question of doubt, will very materially assist in evidencing the correct relocation of a missing corner. It is greatly to be regretted that the earlier field notes of survey are so very meager in the notation of the topography found on the original line, which might in very many instances materially lessen a surveyor's labors in retracement of lines and re-establishment of the required missing corner. In the absence of such sight trees and other evidences regarding the line, as in an open country, or where such evidence has been destroyed by time, the elements, or the progress of improvement, the line connecting the known corners should be run straight from corner to corner.

6. *Re-establishment of quarter section corners on township boundaries.*—Only one set of quarter section corners are actually marked in the field on township lines, and they are established at the time when the township exteriors are run. When double section corners are found, the quarter section corners are considered generally as standing midway between the corners of their respective sections, and when required to be established or re-established, as the case may be, they should be generally so placed; but great care should be exercised not to mistake the corners of one section for those of another. After determining the proper section corners marking the line upon which the missing quarter section corner is to be re-established, and measuring said line, the missing quarter section corner will be re-established in accordance with the requirements of the original field notes of survey by proportionate measurement between the section corners marking the line.

Where there are double sets of section corners on township and range lines, and the quarter section corners for sections south of the township or east of the range lines are required to be established in the field, the said quarter section corners should be so placed as to suit the calculation of areas of the quarter sections adjoining the township boundaries as expressed upon the official township plat, adopting proportionate measurements when the present measurements of the north and west boundaries of the section differ from the original measurements.

7. *Re-establishment of quarter section corners on section lines closing upon the north and west township boundaries.*—This class of corners must be re-established according to the original measurement at forty chains from the last interior section corner. If the measurements do not agree with the original survey, the excess or deficiency must be divided proportionately between the two distances, as expressed in the field notes of original survey. The section corner started from and the corner closed upon should be connected by a right line, unless the retracement should develop the fact that the section line is either a broken or curved line, as is sometimes the case.

8. *Re-establishment of interior quarter section corners.*—In some of the older surveys these corners are placed at variable distances, in which case the field notes of the original survey must be consulted, and the

quarter section corner re-established at proportionate distances between the corresponding section corners, in accordance therewith. The later surveys being more uniform and in stricter accordance with law, the missing quarter section corner must be re-established equidistant between the section corners marking the line, according to the field notes of the original survey. The marks made under § 5, in relation to section lines, apply with full force here also; the caution there given not to neglect sight trees is equally applicable; since the proper re-establishment of the quarter section corner may in some instances very largely depend upon its observance, and avoid one of the many sources of litigation.

8. *Where double corners were originally established, one of which is standing, to re-establish the other.*—It being remembered that the corners established when the exterior township lines were run belong to the sections in the townships north and west of those lines, the surveyor must first determine beyond a doubt to which sections the existing corner belongs. This may be done by testing the courses and distances to witness trees or other objects noted in the original field notes of survey, and by remeasuring distances to known corners. Having determined to which township the existing corner belongs, the missing corner may be re-established in line north or south of the existing corner, as the case may be, at the distance stated in the field notes of the original survey, by proportionate measurement, and tested by remeasurement to the opposite corresponding corner of the section to which the missing section corner belongs. These double corners being generally not more than a few chains apart, the distance between them can be more accurately laid off, and it is considered preferable to first establish the missing corner as above, and check upon the corresponding interior corner, than to reverse the proceeding; since the result obtained is every way more accurate and satisfactory.

9. *Where double corners were originally established, and both are missing, to re-establish the one established when the township line was run.*—The surveyor will connect the nearest known corners on the township line, by a right line, being careful to distinguish the section from the closing corners, and re-establish the missing corner at the point indicated by the field notes of the original survey, by proportionate measurement. The corner thus restored will be common to two sections either north or west of the township boundary, and the section north or west, as the case may be, should be carefully retraced; thus checking upon the re-established corner, and testing the accuracy of the result. It cannot be too much impressed upon the surveyor, that any measurements to objects on line noted in the original survey are means of determining and testing the correctness of the operation.

10. *Where double corners were originally established, and both are missing, to re-establish the one established when the township was subdivided.*—The corner to be re-established being common to two sections south or east of the township line, the section line closing on the missing section corner should be first retraced to an intersection with the township line in the manner previously indicated, and a temporary corner established at the point of intersection. The township line will of course have been previously carefully retraced in accordance with the requirements of the original field notes of survey, and marked in such a manner as to be readily identified when reaching the same with the retraced section line. The location of the temporary corner planted at the point of intersection will then be carefully tested and verified by remeasurements to noted objects and known corners on the township line, as noted in the

original field notes of survey, and the necessary corrections made in such relocation. A permanent corner will then be erected at the corrected location on the township line, properly marked and witnessed, and recorded for future requirements.

11. *Where triple corners were originally established on range lines, one or two of which have become obliterated, to re-establish either of them.*—It will be borne in mind that only two corners were established as actual corners of sections, those established on the range line not corresponding with the subdivisional survey east or west of said range line. The surveyor will, therefore, first proceed to identify the existing corner or corners, as the case may be, and then re-establish the missing corner or corners in line north or south, according to the distances stated in the original field notes of survey in the manner indicated for the re-establishment of double corners, and testing the accuracy of the result obtained, as hereinbefore directed in other cases. If, however, the distances between the triple corners are not stated in the original field notes of survey, as is frequently the case in the returns of older surveys, the range line should be first carefully retraced, and marked in a manner sufficiently clear to admit of easy identification upon reaching same during the subsequent proceedings. The section lines closing upon the missing corners must then be retraced in accordance with the original field notes of survey, in the manner previously indicated and directed, and the corners re-established in the manner directed in the case of double corners. The surveyor cannot be too careful, in the matter of retracement, in following closely all the recorded indications of the original line, and nothing, however slight, should be neglected to insure the correctness of the retracement of the original line; since there is no other check upon the accuracy of the re-establishment of the missing corners, unless the entire corresponding section lines are remeasured by proportional measurement, and the result checked by a recalculation of the areas as originally returned, which, at best, is but a very poor check, because the areas expressed upon many plats of the older surveys are erroneously stated on the face of the plats, or have been carelessly calculated.

12. *Where triple corners were originally established on range lines, all of which are missing, to re-establish same.*—These corners should be re-established in accordance with the foregoing directions, commencing with the corner originally established when the range line was run, establishing the same in accordance with previously given directions for restoring section and quarter-section corners; that is to say, by remeasuring between the nearest known corners on said township line, and re-establishing the same by proportionate measurement. The two remaining will then be re-established in conformity with the general rules for re-establishment of double corners.

13. *Re-establishment of meander corners and meanders.*—Before proceeding with the re-establishment of missing meander corners, the surveyor will carefully rechain at least three of the section lines between known corners of the township within which the lost corner is to be relocated, in order to establish the proportionate measurement to be used. This requirement of preliminary remeasurement of section lines must in no case be omitted; since it is the only data upon which the fractional section line can be remeasured proportionately, the corner marking the terminus, or the meander corner, being missing, and which it is intended to re-establish. The missing meander corner will be re-established on the section or township line retraced in its original location, by the proportionate measurement found by the preceding operations, from the

nearest known corner on such township or section line, in accordance with the requirements of the original field notes of survey. To retrace the original meander lines, between the meander corners re-established as above, is generally an operation of much greater difficulty, owing to the fact that the line connecting the meander corners is, in most instances, a broken line, and is, moreover, unmarked at each point of change in direction intermediate between the said meander corners, thus affording no check upon the work as it progresses through a section. The several deflections of line comprising the meanders in any one section being originally run by compass, their retracement by compass at a later period offers too many opportunities for error; inasmuch as the variation of the needle, as noted in the original field notes of survey, may have undergone violent changes by removal of the cause, such as timber, &c., or increased attractions by exposure of minerals, thus giving no means of correction to be applied in that direction at the time of retracement. Moreover, the variation of the needle as noted is not to be implicitly depended upon, since the observations for variation are in many instances crude and rough, and at best afford but an approximation in such work. It is, therefore, deemed preferable, where such variation has been carefully noted in the original field notes of survey, and the lines have been run with a true meridian throughout, to retrace the meanders by the angles made by the several successive courses. For instance, supposing the first course of a meander in a section to be initiated from a north and south section line, and the course by compass to be N. 30° 15' E., true meridian, the surveyor will lay off the angle of 30° 15' in the direction required; the second course being N. 85° 45' E., makes an angle with the preceding course of 55° 30'; the next course being S. 23° 30' E. makes an angle with the preceding course of 70° 45', and so on through the section. The required distances on each course being carefully chained, the excess or deficiency of the aggregate distance should be proportionately distributed on each course between the meander corners from the data thus found; also any error that may develop itself in the angles will be proportionately distributed upon the several angles and the entire meanders corrected in accordance therewith. Where no variation has been noted in the original field notes of survey, the meanders can only be retraced by trial lines, on the courses and distances originally given, and corrected by proportionate measurement of angle and distance as above. The surveyor will, of course, take cognizance of any information furnished by the original field notes of survey, as to objects on each course to which distances may be given or bearings taken, as well as at the meander stations themselves.

14. *Fractional section lines.*—County and local surveyors being sometimes called upon to restore fractional section lines closing upon Indian, military, or other reservations, private grants, &c., such lines should be restored upon the same principles as directed in the foregoing pages, and checked whenever possible upon such corners or monuments as have been placed to mark such boundary lines.

In some instances corners have been moved from their original position, either by accident or design, and county surveyors are called upon to restore such corners to their original positions, but, owing to the absence of any and all means of identification of such location, are unable to make the result of their work acceptable to the owners of the lands affected by such corner. In such cases the advice of this office has invariably been to the effect that the relocation of such corner must be made in accordance with the orders of a court of competent jurisdiction,

the United States having no longer any authority to order any changes where the lands affected by such corner have been disposed of.

The original evidences of the public land surveys in the following States, viz: Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Missouri, Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, and Kansas have been turned over, under the provisions of sections 2218, 2219, and 2220, United States Revised Statutes, to the State authorities, to whom application should be made for such copies of the original plats and field notes as may be desired.

N. C. McFARLAND,  
*Commissioner.*

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*March 13, 1883.*

Approved.

H. M. TELLER,  
*Secretary.*

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