

The Warrants issued at the early period to which we at present refer could only be those of original survey. The form of these, it has been seen by the examples given, was very loose and unsettled, as were also the distinctions of *common* and *special* now applied definitely to all Warrants of this kind. They were frequently of the nature of special Warrants as far as circumstances then permitted, it being in most cases impracticable to give them a location more precise than by designating the particular district or quarter in which they were to be laid. The periods prescribed for the return of Certificates of survey upon those Warrants appear to have been also loose and arbitrary. They were probably regulated by the quantity and the situation of the land to be surveyed: Six months seems to have been the mean period assigned for this purpose; but the Warrants at the expiration of that term were renewed upon application or others with new locations issued upon the surrender of the former ones. Not only Warrants and Certificates, but Patents themselves, were at this time transferrable by assignment, endorsed thereon, or in the case of the two former, made and acknowledged before the Secretary, and by him entered on record. The assignment of Patents, which will be hereafter more particularly noticed was attended in general with more solemnity. It is necessary here to observe that the practice in the points already spoken of, and a variety of others is gathered only from the records of particular cases, and not from any positive regulations now to be found. Hence our accounts must frequently appear conjectural and inconclusive until we arrive at a period when the Land Office establishment became distinctly organized and the proceedings of course took a more determinate and regular form.

The surrender of Warrants, which has just been mentioned, is not perceived to have been provided for by any express regulation, nor to have been a practice frequently occurring. It appears however to have been allowed as a matter of course, although doubtless within the controul of the government. The object of this proceeding is supposed to have been a change of location, or the gaining time to look out for eligible lands; the parties choosing in the interval to let their claims rest upon the *rights* standing to their credit in the office, instead of keeping their Warrants in force by periodical renewals. Accordingly upon the surrender of a Warrant the rights on which it was founded were revived as if it had never been issued. New Warrant was sometimes immediately taken, or the revived rights applied in