R.S. § 2789, authorizing the collector, when an entry was imperfect, to take the merchandise into his custody until the quantity, quality, or value could be ascertained;

R.S. § 2840, providing that when the collector should suspect that merchandise was not invoiced at a sum equal to that for which it had usually been sold, he should take possession and retain the same until its value had been ascertained and the duties paid or secured;

R.S. § 2926, providing that merchandise of which incomplete entry had been made, or entry without specification of particulars, should be conveyed to some warehouse or designated by the collector to remain until the particulars, cost or value should have been ascertained, and the duties paid or secured, and a permit for delivery granted;

R.S. § 2963, providing that when merchandise had not been entered it should be deposited in a public warehouse, and there remain until an invoice was produced, but that it should not be construed to prohibit sales of merchandise to discharge duties and charges;

R.S. § 2964, authorizing the collector to take possession of merchandise, and deposit it in public stores, or other stores to be agreed on, in case of failure or neglect to pay duties, or when the owner, etc., should make entry for warehousing;

R.S. § 2965, providing for the storage in a public warehouse, or private bonded warehouse, of unclaimed merchandise required to be taken possession of by collectors, and making provision for payment of charges and expenses;

R.S. § 2966, as amended by act June 26, 1884, ch. 121, § 24, 23 Stat. 58, providing for the deposit in a bonded warehouse of merchandise imported in vessels, when it should appear by the bills of lading that it was to be delivered immediately after entry of the vessel, or on request, when it did not so appear.

A prior provision authorizing the collector to require a bond for the production of proof to enable the collector to ascertain the class or description of manufacture, or rate of duty to which merchandise was liable, was contained in R.S. § 2925, which was also repealed by act Sept. 21, 1922, ch. 356, title IV, § 642, 42 Stat. 989.

AMENDMENTS

1996—Subsec. (c)(1). Pub. L. 104–295 substituted ''subparagraphs (A) through (D) of subsection (a)(1)'' for ''paragraphs (1) through (4) of subsection (a)''.

1993—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 103–182, § 658(1), amended subsec. (a) generally. Prior to amendment, subsec. (a) read as follows: ''Whenever entry of any imported merchandise is not made within the time provided by law or the regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury, or whenever entry of such merchandise is incomplete because of failure to pay the estimated duties, or whenever, in the opinion of the appropriate customs officer, entry of such merchandise can not be made for want of proper documents or other cause, or whenever the appropriate customs officer believes that any merchandise is not correctly and legally invoiced, he shall take the merchandise into his custody and send it to a bonded warehouse or public store, to be held at the risk and expense of the consignee until entry is made or completed and the proper documents are produced, or a bond given for their production.''

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 103–182, § 658(2), substituted heading for one which read ''At request of consignee'' and in text substituted ''Customs Service'' for ''appropriate customs officer''.

Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 103–182, § 658(3), added subsec. (c).

1970—Pub. L. 91–271 substituted references to appropriate customs officer for references to collector wherever appearing.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1970 AMENDMENT

For effective date of amendment by Pub. L. 91–271, see section 203 of Pub. L. 91–271, set out as a note under section 1500 of this title.

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

For transfer of functions, personnel, assets, and liabilities of the United States Customs Service of the Department of the Treasury, including functions of the Secretary of the Treasury relating thereto, to the Secretary of Homeland Security, and for treatment of related references, see sections 203(1), 551(d), 552(d), and 557 of Title 6, Domestic Security, and the Department of Homeland Security Reorganization Plan of November 25, 2002, as modified, set out as a note under section 542 of Title 6.

§ 1491. Unclaimed merchandise; disposition of forfeited distilled spirits, wines and malt liquor

(a) Appraisal and sale of unclaimed merchandise

Any entered or unentered merchandise (except merchandise entered under section 1557 of this title, but including merchandise entered for transportation in bond or for exportation) which shall remain in a bonded warehouse pursuant to section 1490 of this title for 6 months from the date of importation thereof, without all estimated duties, taxes, fees, interest, storage, or other charges thereon having been paid, shall be considered unclaimed and abandoned to the Government and shall be appraised and sold by the Customs Service at public auction under such regulations as the Secretary of the Treasury shall prescribe. All gunpowder and other explosive substances and merchandise liable to depreciation in value by damage, leakage, or other cause to such extent that the proceeds of sale thereof may be insufficient to pay the duties, taxes, fees, interest, storage, and other charges, if permitted to remain in[1] pursuant to section 1490 of this title in a bonded warehouse for 6 months, may be sold forthwith, under such regulations as the Secretary of the Treasury may prescribe. Merchandise subject to sale hereunder or under section 1559 of this title may be entered or withdrawn for consumption at any time prior to such sale upon payment of all duties, taxes, fees, interest, storage, and other charges, and expenses that may have accrued thereon, but such merchandise after becoming subject to sale may not be exported prior to sale without the payment of such duties, taxes, fees, interest, charges, and expenses nor may it be entered for warehouse. The computation of duties, taxes, interest, and fees for the purposes of this section and sections 1493 and 1559 of this title shall be at the rate or rates applicable at the time the merchandise becomes subject to sale.

(b) Notice of title vesting in United States

At the end of the 6-month period referred to in subsection (a) of this section, the Customs Service may, in lieu of sale of the merchandise, provide notice to all known interested parties that the title to such merchandise shall be considered to vest in the United States free and clear of any liens or encumbrances, on the 30th day after the date of the notice unless, before such 30th day—

(1) the subject merchandise is entered or withdrawn for consumption; and

(2) payment is made of all duties, taxes, fees, transfer and storage charges, and other expenses that may have accrued thereon.

[1] So in original. The word ''in'' probably should not appear.

(c) Retention, transfer, destruction, or other disposition

If title to any merchandise vests in the United States by operation of subsection (b) of this section, such merchandise may be retained by the Customs Service for official use, transferred to any other Federal agency or to any State or local agency, destroyed, or otherwise disposed of in accordance with such regulations as the Secretary shall prescribe. All transfer and storage charges or expenses accruing on retained or transferred merchandise shall be paid by the receiving agency.

(d) Petition

Whenever any party, having lost a substantial interest in merchandise by virtue of title vesting in the United States under subsection (b) of this section, can establish such title or interest to the satisfaction of the Secretary within 30 days after the day on which title vests in the United States under subsection (b) of this section, or can establish to the satisfaction of the Secretary that the party did not receive notice under subsection (b) of this section, the Secretary may, upon receipt of a timely and proper petition and upon finding that the facts and circumstances warrant, pay such party out of the Treasury of the United States the amount the Secretary believes the party would have received under section 1493 of this title had the merchandise been sold and a proper claim filed. The decision of the Secretary with respect to any such petition is final and conclusive on all parties.

(e) Appraisal and sale or other disposition of forfeited distilled spirits, wines, and malt liquor

All distilled spirits, wines, and malt liquor forfeited to the Government summarily or by order of court, under any provision of law administered by the United States Customs Service, shall be appraised and disposed of by—

(1) delivery to such Government agencies, as in the opinion of the Secretary have a need for such distilled spirits, wines, and malt liquor for medical, scientific, or mechanical purposes, or for any other official purpose for which appropriated funds may be expended by a Government agency:

(2) gifts to such eleemosynary institutions as, in the opinion of the Secretary, have a need for such distilled spirits, wines, and malt liquor for medical purposes;

(3) sale by Customs Service at public auction under such regulations as the Secretary shall prescribe, except that before making any such sale the Secretary shall determine that no Government agency or eleemosynary institution has established a need for such spirits, wines, and malt liquor under paragraph (1) or (2); or

(4) destruction.

(June 17, 1930, ch. 497, title IV, § 491, 46 Stat. 726; June 25, 1938, ch. 679, § 14, 52 Stat. 1083; Pub. L. 91–271, title III, § 301(j), June 2, 1970, 84 Stat. 289; Pub. L. 95–410, title II, § 208, Oct. 3, 1978, 92 Stat. 901; Pub. L. 103–182, title VI, § 659, Dec. 8, 1993, 107 Stat. 2213; Pub. L. 104–295, § 21(e)(8), Oct. 11, 1996, 110 Stat. 3531.)

PRIOR PROVISIONS

Provisions similar to those in this section were contained in R.S. §§ 2973, 2975 and 2976, all of which were superseded by act Sept. 21, 1922, ch. 356, title IV, § 491, 42 Stat. 963, and repealed by section 642 thereof. Section 491 of the 1922 act was superseded by section 491 of act June 17, 1930, comprising this section, and repealed by section 651(a)(1) of the 1930 act.

AMENDMENTS

1996—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 104–295 substituted ''in a bonded warehouse pursuant to section 1490'' for ''in in a bonded warehouse pursuant to section 1490'' and ''Customs Service'' for ''appropriate customs officer''.

1993—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 103–182, § 659(1), substituted ''in a bonded warehouse pursuant to section 1490 of this title for 6 months'' for ''customs custody for one year'', ''estimated duties, taxes, fees, interest, storage,'' for ''estimated duties and storage'', ''duties, taxes, fees, interest, storage, and other charges, if permitted'' for ''duties, storage, and other charges, if permitted'', ''pursuant to section 1490 of this title in a bonded warehouse for 6 months'' for ''public store or bonded warehouse for a period of one year'', ''duties, taxes, fees, interest, storage, and other charges'' for ''duties, storage, and other charges'', ''duties, taxes, fees, interest, charges, and expenses'' for ''duties, charges, and expenses'', and ''computation of duties, taxes, interest, and fees for the purposes'' for ''computation of duties for the purposes''.

Subsecs. (b) to (d). Pub. L. 103–182, § 659(2), added subsecs. (b) to (d). Former subsec. (b) redesignated (e).

Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 103–182, § 659(2), (3), redesignated subsec. (b) as (e) and substituted ''Customs Service'' for ''appropriate customs officer'' in par. (3).

1978—Pub. L. 95–410 amended section catchline, designated existing provisions as subsec. (a), and added subsec. (b).

1970—Pub. L. 91–271 substituted reference to appropriate customs officer for reference to collector, and struck out reference to appraiser of merchandise.

1938—Act June 25, 1938, amended generally so much of this section as preceded ''shall be considered unclaimed and abandoned''.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1970 AMENDMENT

For effective date of amendment by Pub. L. 91–271, see section 203 of Pub. L. 91–271, set out as a note under section 1500 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1938 AMENDMENT

Amendment by act June 25, 1938, effective on thirtieth day following June 25, 1938, except as otherwise specifically provided, see section 37 of act June 25, 1938, set out as a note under section 1401 of this title.

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

For transfer of functions, personnel, assets, and liabilities of the United States Customs Service of the Department of the Treasury, including functions of the Secretary of the Treasury relating thereto, to the Secretary of Homeland Security, and for treatment of related references, see sections 203(1), 551(d), 552(d), and 557 of Title 6, Domestic Security, and the Department of Homeland Security Reorganization Plan of November 25, 2002, as modified, set out as a note under section 542 of Title 6.

EXTENSION OF ONE-YEAR PERIOD

For extension of one year period prescribed in this section, see Proc. No. 2948, Oct. 12, 1951, 16 F.R. 10589, 65 Stat. c41, set out as a note under section 1318 of this title.

Proc. No. 2599, Nov. 6, 1943, 8 F.R. 15359, 57 Stat. 758, as amended by Proc. No. 2712, Dec. 4, 1946, 11 F.R. 14133, 61 Stat. 1947, was superseded by Proc. No. 2948, Oct. 12, 1951, 16 F.R. 10589, 65 Stat. c41.

§ 1492. Destruction of abandoned or forfeited merchandise

Except as provided in R.S. § 3369 (relating to tobacco and snuff), and in section 901 of the Revenue Act of 1926 (relating to distilled spirits), any merchandise abandoned or forfeited to the Government under the preceding or any other provision of the customs laws, which is subject to internal revenue tax and which the Customs Service shall be satisfied will not sell for a sufficient amount to pay such taxes, shall be forthwith destroyed, retained for official use, or otherwise disposed of under regulations to be prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury, instead of being sold at auction.

(June 17, 1930, ch. 497, title IV, § 492, 46 Stat. 727; Pub. L. 91–271, title III, § 301(b), June 2, 1970, 84 Stat. 287; Pub. L. 103–182, title VI, § 660, Dec. 8, 1993, 107 Stat. 2214.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

R.S. § 3369, referred to in text, is covered by sections 5723(a) and 5753 of Title 26, Internal Revenue Code.

Section 901 of Revenue Act of 1926, referred to in text, is covered by section 5243 of Title 26.

PRIOR PROVISIONS

Provisions similar to those in this section were contained in act Sept. 21, 1922, ch. 356, title IV, § 492, 42 Stat. 963. That section was superseded by section 492 of act June 17, 1930, comprising this section, and repealed by section 651(a)(1) of the 1930 act.

Prior to its incorporation into the Code, this section read: ''Except as provided in section 3369 of the Revised Statutes, as amended,'' etc. R.S. § 3369, as amended by act Oct. 14, 1921, ch. 107, 42 Stat. 205, related in part to abandoned, condemned or forfeited tobacco, snuff, cigars, or cigarettes, which would not bring a price equal to the internal revenue tax thereon. So far as it related to tobacco and snuff, it was incorporated into the Code as sections 702(a)(1), 803(a)(1), (c), (d), and 890, of Title 26, Internal Revenue Code, and so far as it applied to cigars and cigarettes, it was incorporated into the Code as sections 812(d)(2) and 890, of Title 26.

AMENDMENTS

1993—Pub. L. 103–182 substituted ''Customs Service'' for ''appropriate customs officer'' and inserted '', retained for official use, or otherwise disposed of'' after ''destroyed''.

1970—Pub. L. 91–271 substituted reference to appropriate customs officer for reference to collector.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1970 AMENDMENT

For effective date of amendment by Pub. L. 91–271, see section 203 of Pub. L. 91–271, set out as a note under section 1500 of this title.

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

For transfer of functions, personnel, assets, and liabilities of the United States Customs Service of the Department of the Treasury, including functions of the Secretary of the Treasury relating thereto, to the Secretary of Homeland Security, and for treatment of related references, see sections 203(1), 551(d), 552(d), and 557 of Title 6, Domestic Security, and the Department of Homeland Security Reorganization Plan of November 25, 2002, as modified, set out as a note under section 542 of Title 6.

§ 1493. Proceeds of sale

The surplus of the proceeds of sales under section 1491 of this title, after the payment of storage charges, expenses, duties, taxes, and fees, and the satisfaction of any lien for freight, charges, or contribution in general average, shall be deposited in the Treasury of the United States, if claim therefor shall not be filed with the Customs Service within ten days from the date of sale, and the sale of such merchandise shall exonerate the master of any vessel in which the merchandise was imported from all claims of the owner thereof, who shall, nevertheless, on due proof of his interest, be entitled to receive from the Treasury the amount of any surplus of the proceeds of sale.

(June 17, 1930, ch. 497, title IV, § 493, 46 Stat. 727; Pub. L. 91–271, title III, § 301(e), June 2, 1970, 84 Stat. 288; Pub. L. 103–182, title VI, § 661, Dec. 8, 1993, 107 Stat. 2214.)

PRIOR PROVISIONS

Provisions substantially similar in most respects to those in this section, with further provisions concerning the documents to be forwarded by the collector to the Treasury Department, were contained in R.S. § 2974, which was superseded and more nearly assimilated to the present section by act Sept. 21, 1922, ch. 356, title IV, § 493, 42 Stat. 964, and repealed by section 642 thereof. Section 493 of the 1922 act was superseded by section 493 of act June 17, 1930, comprising this section, and repealed by section 651(a)(1) of the 1930 act.

AMENDMENTS

1993—Pub. L. 103–182 inserted ''taxes, and fees,'' after ''duties,'', struck out ''by the appropriate customs officer'' after ''shall be deposited'', and substituted ''the Customs Service'' for ''such customs officer''.

1970—Pub. L. 91–271 substituted references to appropriate customs officer or such customs officer for references to collector wherever appearing.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1970 AMENDMENT

For effective date of amendment by Pub. L. 91–271, see section 203 of Pub. L. 91–271, set out as a note under section 1500 of this title.

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

For transfer of functions, personnel, assets, and liabilities of the United States Customs Service of the Department of the Treasury, including functions of the Secretary of the Treasury relating thereto, to the Secretary of Homeland Security, and for treatment of related references, see sections 203(1), 551(d), 552(d), and 557 of Title 6, Domestic Security, and the Department of Homeland Security Reorganization Plan of November 25, 2002, as modified, set out as a note under section 542 of Title 6.

APPROPRIATIONS

Section 2 of act June 26, 1934, ch. 756, 48 Stat. 1225, which was classified to section 725a of former Title 31, Money and Finance, repealed the permanent appropriation under the title ''Refunding proceeds of unclaimed merchandise (Customs) (2x326)'' effective July 1, 1935, and provided that such portions of any Acts as make permanent appropriations to be expended under such account are amended so as to authorize, in lieu thereof, annual appropriations from the general fund of the Treasury in identical terms and in such amounts as now provided by the laws providing such permanent appropriations.

§ 1494. Expense of weighing and measuring

In all cases in which the invoice or entry does not state the weight, quantity, or measure of the merchandise, the expense of ascertaining the same shall be collected from the importer of record before its release from customs custody.