

LAW OF VIRGINIA!

AN Act to amend the 4th Section of Chapter 165 of the Code so as to increase the rewards for the Arrest of Runaway Slaves. Passed March 17, 1856.

1. Be it enacted by the General Assembly, That the fourth Section of Chapter one hundred and five of the Code of Virginia be and the same is hereby re-enacted, so as to read as follows:

§ 1. Every person who may arrest a runaway slave, and deliver such slave to the owner or his agent, or to some jailor at his jail, with the certificate of a justice in the manner herein provided, shall be entitled to demand of such owner, or of the fiduciary having charge of the estate to which such slave belongs, a reward thereof; that is to say, if such slave be arrested in this State, except in the counties hereinafter specially provided for, and within fifty miles of his residence, a reward of five dollars; or if more than fifty miles, ten dollars; and if any other slaveholding State, excepting the portion of Maryland hereinafter excepted, if within fifty miles of his residence, twenty, and if more than fifty miles, thirty dollars. And in every case, the person making the arrest and delivery shall be allowed mileage, at the rate of ten cents a mile, for necessary travel from the place of arrest. The hirer of any slave shall not be liable for the payment of any reward allowed by this section, unless such running away was caused by the bad treatment of the hirer, or otherwise by his act or procurement; and in that event, the hirer shall pay to the owner the whole of such reward, and expenses of apprehending such slaves.

2. And whenever any slave is arrested in the counties of Allegany, Washington and Frederick in the state of Maryland, as now bounded and established, escaping to a nonslaveholding state, the person making the arrest of such slave, and delivering him to the owner or his agent, or to the jailor of any county of this commonwealth, shall be entitled to demand of the owner of such slave, or the fiduciary having charge of the estate to which the slave belongs, a reward of fifteen per centum on the value of such fugitive slave.

3. And whenever any slave is arrested in any nonslaveholding state, the person making such arrest, and delivering to the owner or agent thereof or to the jailor of any county in this commonwealth, shall be entitled to demand of the owner, or the fiduciary having control of such slave, a reward of twenty-five per centum on the value of such fugitive slave.

4. And whenever any runaway slave seeking to escape to any nonslaveholding state is arrested in any of the counties of this state, which are bounded by the Ohio river, or by the division line between Pennsylvania and Virginia, or by the Potomac river, or by the division line between Fairfax and Prince William, the person making such arrest shall be entitled to demand of the owner of such runaway slave, or of the fiduciary having charge of the estate to which such runaway slave belongs, a reward of ten per centum on the value of such slave, upon the delivery of such slave to the owner or his agent, or the jailor of any such counties, as hereinbefore provided for.

5. Should the parties disagree as to the value of the slaves arrested under the provisions of the three preceding clauses of this act, the person making such arrest shall apply to any justice of the peace of the county from which such slave escaped, or of any county in the jail of which said slave may be deposited, who shall, upon such application, appoint three persons being freeholders and slaveholders, to ascertain the value of such slave.

6. And in case of the arrest of a runaway slave within any of the said counties, the person making such arrest, and the owner or his agent, or the fiduciary having control of such slave, do not agree as to the fact of such slave having been actually escaping to a nonslaveholding state at the time of such arrest, or if from any cause the owner or holder of such slave fail and refuse to pay the reward herein provided for, the Court of the county in which such arrest is made, shall at the next term after the petition of any party interested shall have been presented to such Court, asking the adjudication of the right of all parties under the provisions of this section, proceed to determine, or if either party require it, impanel a jury to determine whether, under the provisions of this section, the person who made such arrest is entitled to the said reward; and all cases arising under this section shall be heard and determined without pleadings: *Provided*, That for good cause shown, the same may be continued from time to time: *And provided further*, That all parties interested shall have been duly apprised for the filing of such petition by service of notice thereof in the manner now provided for the service of notice in other cases.

7. Upon the arrest of a fugitive slave in a nonslaveholding state, when under the provisions of this section the person making such arrest is entitled to a reward of as much or more than one hundred dollars from the owner of such slave, it shall be the duty of the auditor of public accounts to issue his warrant on the Treasury for the sum of fifty dollars, in favor of such persons or his assigns, *Provided*, That a certificate from the Court of the county, in which the value of such slave has been ascertained, under the provisions of this section, (or when it appears to the said Court that such value has been agreed upon by the parties, stating the fact of such arrest and amount of such reward) shall be presented to the auditor within three months from its date, and within twelve months from the date of such arrest; which, in all cases, shall be stated in such certificate.

8. The amount herein provided to be paid by the auditor of public accounts to the person holding the certificates of the county Court as aforesaid, shall only be payable out of any moneys in the Treasury arising from fines, forfeitures and confiscation, imposed and made under the provisions of laws now existing and hereafter to be enacted, providing for the punishment of persons aiding and abetting the escape of slaves, or interfering with the rights of property in slaves, and from funds arising from the sale of free negro convicts, failing to leave the state after the expiration of their term of imprisonment.

Whenever the said reward, to be paid by the owner of the slave so arrested, shall have been certified by the Court, as herein provided to be due the person apprehending such slave, and the same shall not be paid or satisfied within thirty days of the date of such certificate, after demand made therefor, the owner or holder of such certificate shall be impowered, and he is hereby authorized to recover the same by motion, after ten days notice, together with the costs of such motion before any court of record in the county where the owner of said slave may reside, or in which the said slave may be.

[Sept. 10, 1856—3t.