

A C T S

OF THE

General Assembly of Pennsylvania,

Passed in the seventh General Assembly—the first Session of which commenced October 28th, and ended December 4th, 1782. The second commenced January 15th, and ended March 22d, 1783.—And the third commenced August 14th, and ended September 26th, 1783.

1782.

FREDERICK AUGUSTUS MUHLENBERG, SPEAKER.

CHAPTER DCCCCLXXXIX.

An ACT to prevent the erecting any new and independent state within the limits of this commonwealth.

SECT. I. WHEREAS, by the separation of the thirteen United States from Great-Britain, the commonwealth of Pennsylvania hath become a sovereign and independent state, and, in consequence of such separation, a government, established solely on the authority of the people, hath been formed; and it being evident that every county hath, by the constitution, or by laws enacted for that purpose, an incontestible right to send deputies to represent them in the General Assembly, and that they have exercised that right, they being now actually represented in this House; therefore all the inhabitants of this commonwealth, as they are under the protection of its laws, are bound by and do owe allegiance thereto:

SECT. II. And whereas great exertions have been made for the defence of the frontiers, and large sums expended therein, notwithstanding the embarrassments and difficulties under which the commonwealth hath and still doth labour in its finances:

SECT. III. And whereas this commonwealth is indebted to the late Proprietaries of Pennsylvania in a large sum of money, payable at the end of the war, and each and every county ought to contribute its just part or proportion for that end, and the unlocated lands

within this state are and always have been considered a valuable fund towards paying and discharging the said debt: (c)

1782.

SECT. IV. And whereas, notwithstanding the premises, this House hath received information that divers ill disposed persons setting at naught every principle of public virtue, and pursuing their ambitious and interested views, have caused great uneasiness among the good people of this state, by manifesting the most criminal design of setting up a distinct state or government within this commonwealth:

SECT. V. *Be it therefore enacted, and it is hereby enacted by the Representatives of the Freemen of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in General Assembly met, and by the authority of the same,* That if any person or persons shall erect or form, or shall endeavour to erect or form, any new and independent government, within the boundaries of this commonwealth, as described in the charter, and settled between this state and the state of Virginia, such person or persons, being thereof legally convicted in any court of Oyer and Terminer, shall be adjudged guilty of high treason.

Persons erecting or attempting to erect any new government within this commonwealth, declared guilty of high treason;

SECT. VI. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That if any person or persons shall set up any notice, written or printed, calling or requesting the people to meet together for the design or purpose of forming a new and independent government as aforesaid, such person or persons, and all others who shall assemble themselves for that purpose, in consequence of such notice, shall be adjudged guilty of high treason.

or noticing the inhabitants to meet for that purpose;

SECT. VII. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That if any person or persons, at any meeting of the people convened for the purpose aforesaid, or for any other purpose, shall maliciously and advisedly recommend or desire them to erect or form any new government in any part of this state, independent of the present, or shall read to them any new form of a constitution, with design to induce them to adopt the same as a new and independent constitution, every such person or persons, being thereof legally convicted, shall be adjudged guilty of high treason.*

or advising the same at any meeting of the people.

SECT. VIII. *Provided always, and be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That nothing contained in this act shall extend, or be construed to extend, to the dispute now subsisting between the state of Pennsylvania and the state of Connecticut, respecting their limits, boundaries or jurisdiction. (d)

[* See the constitution of the United States. Art. 4, sect. 3.]

[SECT. IX. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That if any person or persons shall commit any offence against this act, every such offender shall be tried in any county within this commonwealth, if the Supreme Executive Council shall think proper to order and direct said trial to be had in any other county, than that in which the offence may have been committed.†

Proviso respecting the dispute between Pennsylvania and Connecticut.

Offenders against this act may be tried in any county within this commonwealth. [† Repealed Aug. 31st, 1785, chap. 1157.]

(c) Provision was finally made for paying this debt by an act of the 9th of April, 1791. (Note to former Ed.)

(d) This dispute was settled in favour of Pennsylvania, by a decree

pronounced by the commissioners appointed in pursuance of the 9th article of the confederation, at Trenton, on the 30th of December, 1782. (Note to former edition.)

1782.

Penalty for
offending
against this
act.

SECT. X. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That any person or persons, who shall offend against this act, and shall be thereof legally convicted, by the evidence of two sufficient witnesses, in any court of Oyer and Terminer within this commonwealth, he or they shall be adjudged guilty of high treason, and shall suffer death; and his or their estate is hereby declared to be forfeited to this commonwealth.

Council en-
abled to call
out the mili-
tia to sup-
press offen-
ces against
this act.

SECT. XI. *And in order the more effectually to prevent the mischiefs, which this act is intended to guard against and remedy, Be it enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That the Supreme Executive Council shall be, and they are hereby, enabled to call out the militia of such counties, as they may think necessary to prevent or suppress any attempts to set up a new and independent government, in any county or counties within the boundaries of this commonwealth, as above mentioned.

Passed 3d December, 1782.—Recorded in Law Book No. II. pa. 33.

(e) Respecting high treason in general, see ante. vol. I. pa. 435, chap. 729, and the notes thereto subjoined.

CHAPTER DCCCCXCVI.

An ACT for the sale of certain lands therein mentioned, for the purpose of redeeming and paying off the certificates of depreciation given to the officers and soldiers of the Pennsylvania line, or their representatives; and for appropriating certain other lands therein mentioned for the use of the said officers and soldiers, to be divided off to them severally at the end of the war. (f)

SECT. I. **WHEREAS** it was enacted by a law of this commonwealth, passed the eighteenth day of December, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty, entitled "An act to settle and adjust the accounts of the troops of this state, in the service of the United States, and for other purposes therein mentioned," That the certificates of depreciation given to the officers and soldiers of the Pennsylvania line should be receivable at the Land-Office of this state, equal to gold and silver, in the payment of the purchase money of unlocated lands, if the possessor or possessors of the same should think proper to purchase such lands.

Description
of the land
appropriated
for the

SECT. II. *Be it therefore enacted, and it is hereby enacted by the Representatives of the Freemen of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in General assembly met, and by the authority of the same,* That for the more speedy and effectual complying with the intentions of the law aforesaid, there be, and hereby is, located and laid off a certain tract of land, as follows; beginning where the western

(f) By an act of the 24th of March, 1785, the mode of distributing the donation lands mentioned in the fifth section was prescribed; by an act of the 11th of September, 1787, the Executive was directed to lay out a town, and

sell the lots in the first reserved tract; and by an act of the 28th of Sept. 1791, the Governor was directed to lay out a town, and sell the lots in the second reserved tract, mentioned in the second section of this act. (Note to former edit.)