
CHAPTER 158.

THE LAW ABOUT TRYING AND PUNISHING NEGROS.

Whereas many Difficulties have Arrisen in this Province & Territories, for want of a law Prescribing the Tryall & Punishment of Negros, Comitting Rapes, Attempts of Rapes & other Henious, Enormous & Capitall Offences, For Remedy whereof for the Future Be it Enacted by the Authority aforesaid That it Shall & May be Lawfull for Two Justices of the Peace and Six of the Most Substantiall freeholders residing in the neighbourhood to heare & determine all criminal Cases against Negroes which said freeholders shall be by a warrant under the hand & Seal of the said Justices, directed to the Next Constable, Summond to Appear at Such time & place as the said Justices Shall therein appoint whom the said Justices Shall direct well and truely to give their assistance & judgement upon the tryal of Such offender Negro or Negros . . . whose agreement thereupon they Shall Pronounce and whose Judgeent they Shall Cause by warrent under the hands & seals of the said Justices directed to the respective sherriff to be duly executed upon the offender or offenders according to the Law And if any of the sadd Justices or assistants shall neglect delay or delay to do theire duty herein they shall be fined by the Governor & Councill in any sum not Exceeding pounds. And if any Negro whatsoever, shall hereafter Comitt a Rape or Ravishment upon any White Woman or Maid they Shall be Tryed as aforesaid, & Punished by Death. And if they Shall Attempt a Rape or Ravishment upon such or any Such Like Abuse they Shall be tryed in Manner aforesaid, and Shall be Punished by Castration.

A.P.S., Original Laws of Pennsylvania from 1693-1700, f. 217. Act of June 7, 1700, No.5. Also P.H.M.C., Archives. See Vol. II St.L. 77, ch. LXI.