



THE GENERAL
L A W S

And

LIBERTIES of
CONNECTICUT COLONIE:

Revised and Published by Order of the
GENERAL COURT

Held at Hartford, in October 1672.

FOrasmuch as the free Fruition of such Liberties, as Humanity, Civility and Christianity call for, as due to every man, in his place and proportion, without Impeachment and Infringement hath ever been, and ever will be the Tranquility and Stability of Churches and Common wealths; and the denyal or deprival thereof, the disturbance, if not ruine of both.

It is therefore Ordered by this Court and the Authority thereof; That no mans life shall be taken away, no mans honour or good Name, shall be stayned, no mans person shall be Arrested, Restrained, Banished, Dismembred, nor any wayes punished; no man shall be deprived of his Wife or Children; no mans Goods or Estate shall be taken away from him, nor any wayes indamaged under colour of Law, or countenance of Authority, unless it be by the vertue or equity of some expres Law of this Colony warranting the same, established by the General Court, and sufficiently published; or in case of the defects of a Law in any particular case by some clear and plain Rule of the word of God, in which the whole Court shall concur.

The Subjects Priviledg that his person and estate is secured to him according to Law.

A B I L I T Y.

Ability to dispose of estates

Condemned persons estates to be disposed of by the Court, &c.

IT is Ordered by the Authority of this Court; That all persons of the age of *Twenty one* years, and of right understanding and memory, whether communicated or other, shall have full power and liberty to make their Wills and Testaments; and other lawful Alienations of their Lands and Estates; always provided, that such persons who are condemned to Death, the disposal of their Estates, after the charges of their Prosecution and Imprisonment is answered, shall be left to the Court to be disposed according to Rules of Righteousness and Equity.

A C T I O N S.

TO prevent inconveniences, and that those who shall be called to make answer in such suits as shall be Commenced against them (in any the Civil Courts of Judicature in this Colony) may have due time to prepare themselves for their Answer;

Five days warning to answer any Action

It is therefore Ordered by this Court and the Authority thereof; That from henceforth no person shall be requireable to appear in any Court, to make Answer to any Action of Debt, Trespafs, Defamation, Slaunder, Accompt, or of the Case, except the Summons have been served upon him at least five dayes before the Court.

Plaintiffs not appearing to prosecute when called 3 times to be non suited. &c

It is also Ordered; That if any person who hath entred an Action to be tryed in any of our Courts, be called three times (after the first half dayes sitting of the Court) and not appear by himself or his Attorney to prosecute his Action, he may be Non-suited, and pay all costs and charges, as if his Action had been prosecuted in the said Court.

Liberty of process at adjourned Courts

And it is Ordered; That there shall be free liberty of Process granted in all Civil Actions according to Law, at any Adjourned County Court, as well as at the set County Courts.

Plaintiffs liberty to withdraw or Non-suit himself &c

It is further Ordered by this Court; that in all actions brought to any Court, the Plaintiffe shall have liberty to withdraw his Action, or to Non-suit himself before the Jury have given in their Verdict, in which case he shall allways pay full costs and charges to the Defendant, and may afterward renew his suit at another Court, the former Non-suit being first Recorded.

Actions charge what

It is also Ordered; That for all such Actions as shall be tryed by a Jury in any of our Courts, there shall be paid by the Plaintiffe *Twelve shillings, six shillings* to the Treasury and *six shillings* to the Jury. And for all such Actions as shall be tried by the Bench, there shall be paid by the Plaintiffe *two shillings* to the Treasury, besides the Secretary or Clarks fees.

Upon non-payment of cost of Court, the Court may refuse to hear the case

It is further Ordered; That if any person Commence an action in any of our Courts, either for the Bench or Jury, and do not pay down the charges thereof according to Order, both to the *Treasury, Secretary, Recorder and Jury* in good and currant Country pay, to the Courts satisfaction, it shall be in the power of the Court to refuse to hear such Actions.

A D U L T E R Y.

Adultery how punished

IT is Ordered By this Court and the Authority thereof; That whosoever shall commit Adultery with a Married Woman, or one betrothed to another

man, both of them shall be severely punished by whipping on the naked Body, and Stigmatized or Burnt on the Forehead with the Letter A. on a hot Iron, and he or she shall wear a Halter about his or her neck on the outside of their Garments, during his or her abode in this Colony, so as it may be visible; and as often as he or she shall be found without their Halters worn as aforesaid, they shall upon information and proof of the same made before any Assistant or Commissioner, be by them ordered to be whipt.

Adventurers in Discovering Commodities of publick Concernment.

IT is Ordered by the Authority of this Court; That if any person or persons shall set themselves on work to discover any Commodities, that may be of use for the Country, for the bringing in a supply of Goods from forreign parts, that is not as yet of use amongst us, he that discovers it shall have due encouragement granted to him, and the Adventurers therein.

Adventurers in discovering Commodities of use, &c to be encouraged

A G E.

IT is Ordered by the Authority of this Court; That the age for passing away of Lands or such kind of Hereditaments, or for giving of Vote, Verdicts or Sentence in any Civil Courts or Causes, shall not be under *twenty one years* of age: But in case of chusing Guardians, *fourteen* years.

Full age, and age of discretion

A L A R M S.

IT is Ordered by the Authority of this Court; That when there is an Alarm in any Plantation, the Souldiers shall repair to the severall Squadrons or places in which their chief Officers hath appointed them to meet in; and any person that shall neglect or refuse to attend his duty herein, he shall be punished, by a fine of *five pounds*, or imprisoned, or other corporal punishment; always provided, such delinquency be complained of, and prosecuted within *six moneths*, and the Delinquent do not give a satisfying reason to the Court of his disability to attend this Order.

In Alarms the Souldiers to repair to their quarters, penalty 5. l.

proviso

Falſe Alarms.

IT is Ordered by the Authority of this Court; That if any person or persons in this Colony, without just and necessary occasion so to do, shall cause any Alarm, by firing any Gun or Guns, or otherwise, in any of our Plantations, at any time between the shutting in of the Evening or break of the Day, (such practices being very prejudicial to the comfort and safety of the Plantations) the person or persons that are discovered, and convicted to be guilty herein, shall pay *five pounds* a piece to the publick Treasury, or suffer *two moneths Imprisonment*, or other *Corporal punishment*; provided, the Delinquency be complained of, and prosecuted within *six moneths* after the same is committed. *Alarms, see Constables Charge to the Watch.*

Falſe Alarms

penalty 5. l.

Proviso.

A P P E A L S.

IT is Ordered, by the Authority of this Court; That if any person shall be agrieved with the sentence of any inferiour Court, Assistant or Commissioner,

B 2

he