

and unsettled, which titles were secured to them by an agreement made in the year one thousand seven hundred and thirty-two, between the said proprietors; and not being able since to acquire legal titles, their lands have been sold by the intendant of the revenue as confiscated property, which sales they are desirous to be relieved from: And whereas the legislature are of opinion, that the said petitioners, and all others similarly circumstanced, are entitled to the aid and assistance of the legislature;

II. BE IT THEREFORE ENACTED, *by the General Assembly of Maryland*, That all persons claiming the said lands in Cæcil county, known by the name of The Nottingham Lands, or The Welch Tract, by virtue of any grant, warrant, lease, patent, licence or agreement, from the proprietors of Pennsylvania, or their agents, at any time prior to the fifteenth day of May, seventeen hundred and twenty-four, and all persons claiming by, from or under, such settlers, or any of them, shall be entitled to a patent from the state of Maryland for such part of the said land as they do hold, or may be entitled to, by virtue of any such grant, patent, lease, warrant, licence or agreement, with the satisfaction of the chancellor, and upon paying for their lands at the rate of fifteen pounds per hundred acres in depreciation and other liquidated state certificates, and the fees of office, and all the fees chargeable to this state in making and returning surveys of the said lands, and all legal costs of suit incurred on their bonds which have not been remitted by former resolves or acts of assembly.

Persons claiming entitled to a patent, &c.

III. AND BE IT ENACTED, That the chancellor is hereby authorised to direct the treasurer of the western shore to deliver up such persons bonds as are now in the treasury, upon proving titles and making such payments as are above described, provided that such proof and payment be made within one year from the end of this present session of assembly.

Chancellor to direct, &c.

IV. AND BE IT ENACTED, That if any of the said settlers have paid all or any part of their bonds, that upon proving title as aforesaid, and paying fees of office, and all fees attending the surveys as aforesaid; and all legal costs of suit which have accrued on their said bonds, and which have not been remitted by former resolves or acts of assembly, such settlers shall be entitled to receive a certificate from the treasurer of the western shore for the surplus of their said bond, after deducting fifteen pounds per hundred for every hundred acres of land such settlers shall be entitled to; and that such certificate shall be receivable by this state in the same payments as depreciation or other liquidated state certificates are.

Settlers entitled to a certificate, &c.

V. AND BE IT ENACTED, That no further or other process shall hereafter issue on any such bonds, at any time within one year from the end of this present session of assembly.

No process shall issue, &c.

VI. AND BE IT ENACTED, That it shall not be necessary for any person or persons, claiming any part or parcel of the aforesaid lands, to make proof before the chancellor of any intermediate title derived from any other person or persons originally claiming under the said proprietor or proprietors of Pennsylvania, or their agents as aforesaid, except a possession of such part or parcel of the said lands acquired immediately by descent or purchase; but proof of the original grant, patent, lease, warrant, licence or agreement, from the said proprietors, or their agents, together with the possession derived as aforesaid, shall be deemed sufficient evidence of title.

Not necessary to make proof, &c.

VII. PROVIDED NEVERTHELESS, That if any person or persons who may conceive him, her or themselves affected by the operation of this act, shall, at any time within the space of one year after the end of the present session of assembly, exhibit his, her or their petition to the chancellor for the time being, stating his, her or their title to such part or parcel of the lands aforesaid as such person or persons may claim, it shall and may be lawful for the said chancellor, and he is hereby authorised and required, after summoning the person or persons being the tenant or tenants in possession of such part or parcel of the said lands as shall be claimed by such petition, to hear and determine the matter in controversy between the parties, and to adjudge the right to him, her or them, as shall appear to have the same; and if no patent shall have been granted before such petition from the state of Maryland for the part or parcel of the lands which shall be so disputed, then the said chancellor shall direct a patent to be issued to the person or persons to whom he shall adjudge the right as aforesaid; but if a patent shall have been before granted as aforesaid, and the same, on a decision of the said controversy, shall appear to him to have been improperly granted, the said chancellor shall then decree such patent to be vacated and annulled, and shall direct another to be issued to the petitioner or petitioners to whom he shall adjudge the right, on payment as aforesaid, or otherwise shall dismiss the said petition, with costs to the person or persons who shall be affected thereby.

Proviso.