

C H A P.  
LXVII.

defendant or defendants therein, to be ascertained by the court, shall have been paid or secured to be paid.

As to be given  
in charge, &c.

XXVIII. AND BE IT ENACTED, That it shall be the duty of the several county courts of this state to give this act in charge to the several grand juries of their respective counties.

Healthy slaves  
may be manu-  
mitted, &c.

XXIX. AND BE IT ENACTED, That where any person or persons possessed of any slave or slaves within this state, who are or shall be of healthy constitutions, and sound in mind and body, capable by labour to procure to him or them sufficient food and raiment, with other requisite necessaries of life, and not exceeding forty-five years of age, and such person or persons possessing such slave or slaves as aforesaid, and being willing and desirous to set free or manumit such slave or slaves, may, by writing under his, her or their hand and seal, evidenced by two good and sufficient witnesses at least, grant to such slave or slaves his, her or their freedom; and that any deed or writing, whereby freedom shall be given or granted to any such slave, which shall be intended to take place in future, shall be good to all intents, constructions and purposes whatsoever, from the time that such freedom or manumission is intended to commence by the said deed or writing, so that such deed and writing be not in prejudice of creditors, and that such slave, at the time such freedom or manumission shall take place or commence, be not above the age aforesaid, and be able to work, and gain a sufficient livelihood and maintenance, according to the true intent and meaning of this act; which instrument of writing shall be acknowledged before one justice of the peace of the county wherein the person or persons granting such freedom shall reside, which justice shall endorse on the back of such instrument the time of the acknowledgment, and the party making the same, which he or they, or the parties concerned, shall cause to be entered among the records of the county court where the person or persons granting such freedom shall reside, within six months after the date of such instrument of writing, and the clerk of the respective county courts within this state shall, immediately upon the receipt of such instrument, endorse the time of his receiving the same, and shall well and truly enrol such deed or instrument in a good and sufficient book, in folio, to be regularly alphabetized in the names of both parties, and to remain in the custody of the said clerk for the time being among the records of the respective county courts; and that the said clerk shall, on the back of every such instrument, in a full legible hand, make an endorsement of such enrolment, and also of the folio of the book in which the same shall be enrolled, and to such endorsement set his hand, the person or persons requiring such entry paying the usual and legal fees for the same.

A copy good  
evidence, &c.

XXX. AND BE IT ENACTED, That a copy of such record, duly attested under the seal of such office, shall at all times hereafter be deemed, to all intents and purposes, good evidence to prove such freedom.

Several acts re-  
pealed.

XXXI. AND BE IT ENACTED, That an act passed at April session, seventeen hundred and eighty-three, chapter twenty-three, entitled, An act to prohibit the bringing of slaves into this state, and an act passed at November session, seventeen hundred and ninety, chapter nine, entitled, An act to repeal certain parts of an act, entitled, An act to prevent disabled and superannuated slaves being set free, or the manumission of slaves by any last will and testament, and of a supplementary act thereto, and for certain other purposes, and an act passed at November session, seventeen hundred and ninety-one, chapter fifty-seven, entitled, A supplement to the act, entitled, An act to prohibit the bringing slaves into this state, and to alter and amend parts of the said act, and an act passed at November session, seventeen hundred and ninety-one, chapter seventy-five, entitled, An act concerning petitions for freedom, and an act passed at November session, seventeen hundred and ninety-three, entitled, A supplement to an act concerning petitions for freedom, and an act passed November session, seventeen hundred and ninety-four, entitled, A further supplement to an act to prohibit the bringing slaves into this state, shall be and the same are hereby repealed; provided, that all rights heretofore acquired under the said repealed laws, or any of them, shall not be affected or impaired by this act.

C H A P. LXVIII.

Passed 31st of  
Dec. 1796.

An ACT to erect Baltimore-town, in Baltimore county, into a city, and to incorporate the inhabitants thereof. Lib. JG. No. 2. fol. 540.

Supplementary and other acts 1797, ch. 54, 1797, ch. 57, 1797, ch. 75, 1798, ch. 2, 1798, ch. 11.

Preamble.

WHEREAS it is found by experience that the good order, health, peace and safety, of large towns and cities cannot be preserved, nor the evils and accidents to which they are subject avoided