

State of Maryland
Executive Department
Annapolis March 14th 1863

F. Thompson Sales Exp. Sir:

I have received to day yours of 10th Inst. in reference to certain negro slaves seized by you under Execution in 1860 and who are supposed to be within the Army lines at Point Look-out from which you have been unable to recover them and so liciting some interference in that behalf. I have written to Genl. Lockwood the Commander at that Post, giving my views of the condition of property so taken, and why I should not consider it as coming within the operation of the Act of Congress prohibiting U.S. Officers from delivering fugitive Slaves; and I am in hopes he will agree in the views I have suggested and allow you to resume possession of the property.

You will of course be required to assure him by authentic evidence of the rendition of the Judgement, the issue of the Execution and your Levy thereunder on this property, and that the debt be secured by said Execution is still unsatisfied.

Yours Respectfully
F. W. Bradford

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Orig. Genl. W. W. Lockwood
Comdg Post at Point Look-out &c
General:

I have just received from the late Sheriff of St. Marys County a letter, a copy of which I have the honor to enclose. The letter, as you will perceive, calls attention to the fact of certain negroes heretofore levied on by the Sheriff to satisfy an execution upon Judgement in said County, and feeling assured that the laws of the State will at all times be observed by you unless when clearly in conflict with Acts of Congress regulating your Military duties, you will I am sure, ascribe to proper motives the suggestions I here submit in reference to the legal questions —

I beg leave therefore to remark that a Levy made under Execution upon Judgement by the Sheriff upon any property vests in such officer a special property, and authorizes him even as against the Owner to maintain an action for the recovery of the property so seized — From the time of the seizure the property is considered in the custody of the law — and although the Sheriff may leave it in the possession of the former owner, and may even go out of office, he is still considered responsible for it, and may proceed to sell it to realize the amount of the Execution under which he took it —

Such being the situation and legal status of the property it would seem not to come within the spirit or letter of the Act of