

An A C T to appoint commissioners to take the depositions of witnesses on the petition of sundry inhabitants of Cæcil county.

Preamble.

W H E R E A S divers persons, now inhabiting and residing in Cæcil county, in the state of Maryland, have, by their humble petition to this present general assembly, set forth, that very many tracts of land near the temporary line, the settlers of which formerly adhered to the government of Pennsylvania and Delaware, and now, by a resolve of the convention, passed July the third, seventeen hundred and seventy-six, taken into and made subject to the government of Maryland, the lands belonging to which persons were settled and improved, and have descended in fee-simple, and others transferred and conveyed in various forms, but always for valuable consideration, although no patent or other grant hath ever been made to the possessors, and some perhaps under no regular grant or survey from either of the proprietors; that this defect arose at first from the disputes agitated between the proprietors, which the settlers imagining would speedily be terminated, delayed taking grants or patents until they might know what office they might apply to in safety; that afterwards, when transfers were made of these improvements, and possessory rights, held under well known visible boundaries, peaceable and undisturbed possession has ripened into a title, and the possessors are now assessed as high as those holding in fee other lands of the same quality, whose titles are founded on grants; that the owners of these lands are apprehensive, that, by the usage of the courts of law in Maryland, on account of the variation of the compass, and several other ways and means, they may be much injured, and run to cost in maintaining and defending their property, by actions of trespass or other actions; that the petitioners and others, in whose behalf they would now intercede, although they have manifested their zeal for America in all services they have been called to, and have cheerfully paid their part of the common burden of taxes, yet they apprehend their landed estates to be in some danger, unless the general assembly would avert the evil they are apprehensive of: And a certain Mark Alexander, of Baltimore county, having put in a counter petition thereto, it hath been thought expedient to appoint commissioners in the vicinity of the place where the parties interested reside, to take depositions of witnesses, and also to receive any papers or authenticated copies of records that may be lodged with them by either of the parties, to be by them transmitted, together with a report thereon, to the next session of the general assembly that shall happen after such commission may be closed.

Names of the
commission-
ers, &c.

II. Be it therefore enacted, by the General Assembly of Maryland, That Joseph Gilpin, Stephen Hyland, Patrick Ewing, Thomas May, and Jonathan Booth, or any three or more of them, shall be and are hereby appointed commissioners, and shall and may meet at such time and place as may be agreed upon between themselves, and after giving due notice of such time and place of meeting, by advertisement published for three weeks in the Baltimore gazette, shall and may proceed to the examination of all such witnesses as may be produced by either
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