

The BOOK of the General
L A W S
OF the INHABITANTS of the
J U R I S D I C T I O N of
New-Plimouth,
Collected out of the RECORDS of the
GENERAL COURT,

And lately Revised:

And with some Emendations and Additions Established and Disposed into such
Order as they may readily Conduce to General Use and Benefit.

And by the Order and Authority of the GENERAL COURT of New-Plimouth Held
at Plimouth, June 2d. Anno Dom. 1685. Reprinted and Published;

Nathaniel Clerk Secr^t.



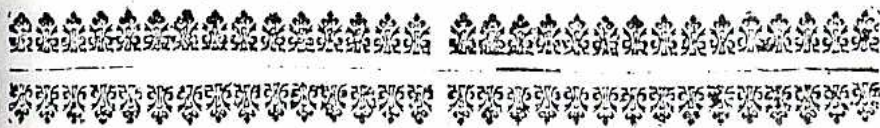
Be subject to every Ordinance of Man for the Lords sake, 1 Pet. 2. 13.

BOSTON In NEW-ENGLAND:

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Chap: IV Capital Laws

who as the case is circumstanced, shall lay Countrey, County, Town or Person that is defective under such penalty as to them shall seem meet; that they in such time as shal be Ordered, Repair or make such Bridge or Way as is presented; and if they neglect or refuse to perform the same, within the time set, besides such Fine as is laid on them, shall pay double Damage to any particular Person that may suffer by reason thereof: and if it be the occasion of the Death, of any person after the time set them, for making or repairing the same, the Countrey, County, Town or Person defective shal be liable to such reasonable satisfaction or fine to the Relations, as the Court shall judge meet.



CHAP, IV.

CAPITAL LAWS.

IT is Enacted by this Court, and the Authority thereof, That if any Person having had the knowledge of the true God, openly and manifestly, have or worship any other God but the Lord God, he shall be put to Death. Exod. 22. 20. Deut. 13. 6, 10.

Idolatry.

2. If any Person within this Jurisdiction professing the True God, shall wittingly and willingly presume to Blaspheme the Holy Name of God the Father, Son, or Holy Ghost, with direct, express, presumptuous, high-handed Blasphemy, either by wilful or obstinate denying of the True God, or his Creation, or Government of the World, or shall curse God the Father, Son or Holy Ghost, such Persons shall be put to Death, Levit. 24. 15, 16.

Blasphemy.

3. Treason against the Person of our Sovereigne Lord the King, the Realm and Common-wealth of England, shall be punished by Death.

Treason.

4. That whosoever shall Conspire and Attempt any Invasion, Insurrection, or publick Rebellion against this Jurisdiction and His Majesties Authority here established, or surprize any Town, Plantation, Fortification or Ammunition therein provided for the safety thereof; or shall treacherously and profideously attempt and endeavour the Alteration and Subversion of our Fundamental Frame and Constitution of this Government, every such Person shall be put to Death.

Conspiring against this Jurisdiction and His Majesties authority here established.

5. If any Person shall commit wilful Murther, by Killing any Man, Woman or Child upon premeditated Malice, Hatred or Cruelty; not in a way of necessity and just Defence, nor by Casualty against his will, he shall be put to Death.

Wilful Murther premeditated.

Further in
sudden pas-
sion.
through guile
or poysoning.

6. If any Person slayeth another suddenly in anger and cruelty of passion, he shall be put to Death.

7. If any person slay another through Guile, either by poysoning or other devilish practice, he shall be put to Death.

Witchcraft.

8. If any Christian (so called) be a Witch; that is, hath or consulteth with a Familiar Spirit, he or they shall be put to Death.

Bestiality.

9. If any Person lyeth with a Beast, or Brute Creature by carnal copulation, they shall surely be put to Death, and the Beast shall be slain and buried, and not eaten.

Sodomy.

10. If any Man lyeth with Man-kind as he lyeth with a Woman, both of them hath committed abomination, they both shall surely be put to Death, unless one party were forced, or were under fourteen years of Age; and all other Sodomitical filthiness shall be severely punished according to the nature of it.

False witness.

11. If any Person rise up by false Witness, wittingly and of purpose to take away a Mans Life, he shall be put to Death.

Man stealing.

12. If any Man stealerh Mankind, he shall be put to Death, or otherwise grievously punished.

Curfing or
smiting father
or mother

13. If any Child or Children above sixteen years old, and of competent understanding, shall curse or smite their natural Fathers or Mothers, he or they shall be put to Death; unless it can sufficiently be proved that the Parents have been very negligent in the Education of such Children, or so provoked them by extreme and cruel Correction, that they have been forced thereunto to preserve themselves from Death or Maiming.

Wilful burn-
ing of Houses,
Ships, &c.

14. If any Man shall Ravish a Maid or Woman, committing carnal copulation with her by force, that is above the Age of ten Years; or if she were under the Age of ten Years, though her will was gained by him, he shall be punished with Death, or some other grievous punishment.

15. Whosoever shall willingly, or on purpose burn any House, Ship, Barque, or any other Vessel of considerable value; such person shall be put to Death, or otherwise grievously punished as the Case and circumstances of it may require.

An Act for the Refraining and Punishing Privateers and Pirates in pursuance of His Majesties Special Directions and Command; by the General Court Summoned for that End, July, 4th. 1684.

Articles in all
Treaties of
peace agreed
on by His Ma-
jesty, to be in-
violably kept
by His Sub-
jects.

15. Whereas nothing can more Contribute to His Sacred Majesties Honour, then that such Articles are concluded and agreed on in all Treaties of Peace, should by His Majesties Subjects, according to their duty, be most Inviolably preserved, and kept in and over all His Majesties Dominions and Territories; And whereas, not only against such Treaties of Peace made by His Majesty, with His Allies, but also contrary to His Majesties Royal Proclamations: Several of His Subjects have, and do continually go off from this Colony, into Foreign Princes Services, and sail under their Commissions, contrary to their Duty and good Allegiance, and by fair means cannot be restrained from so doing.

Be it therefore Enacted by this General Court and Authority thereof; and it is hereby Enacted by the Authority of the same, that from and after Publication hereof, it shall be Felony for any person which now doth, or
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within four years last past, heretofore hath, or hereafter shall Inhabit or Be-
 long to this Colony, to serve in *America*, in an Hostile manner, under any
 foreign Prince, State or Potentate, or any employed under any of them, a-
 gainst any other Prince, State or Potentate, in amity with His Majesty, with-
 out especial License for so doing, under the Hand and Seal of the Govern-
 our or Commander in chief of this Colony for the time being. And that
 all and every such Offender or Offenders, contrary to the true intent of this
 Act, being thereof duly convicted in any of His Majesties Courts of Juda-
 cature within this Colony; to which Court Authority is hereby given to
 hear and determine the same, as in other cases of Felony, shall suffer pains
 of Death, without benefit of the Clergy.

Provided nevertheless, that this act, nor any thing therein contained,
 shall extend to any Person or Persons, which now are or have been in the
 Service or Employment of any foreign Prince, State or Potentate whatso-
 ever, that shall return to this Colony, and leave and desert such Service and
 Employment, before the tenth day of *December* next ensuing: rendering them-
 selves to the Governour or Commander in chief for the time being; and gi-
 ving him such Security as he shall appoint for their future good behaviour;
 and also that they shall not depart this Colony without the Governours
 leave.

*And for the better and more speedy Execution of Justice upon such, who having
 committed Treasons, Piracies, Felonies, and other Offences upon the Sea, shall be
 apprehended in, or brought Prisoners to this Colony:*

Be it therefore Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That all Treasons, Fe-
 lonies, Piracies, Robberies, Murders, or Confederacies committed, or that
 hereafter shall be committed upon the Sea, or in any Haven, Creek or Bay,
 shall be Enquired, Tried, Heard, Determined, and Judged within this Colo-
 ny, in such like form, as if such Offence had been committed in and upon
 the Land; and to that end and purpose Commissions shall be had under the
 great Seal of this Colony, directed to the Judge or Judges of the Admiralty of
 this Colony for the time being; and to such other substantial Persons as by His
 Majesties Governour or Commander in chief for the time being, shall be named
 or Appointed; which said Commissioners, or such a Quorum of them, as by
 such Commission shall be thereunto Authorized, shall have full power to do
 all things in and about the Enquiry, Hearing, Determining, Adjudging and
 Punishing of any of the Crimes and Offences aforesaid, as any Commis-
 sioners to be appointed by Commission under the great Seal of *England*, by
 vertue of a Statute made in the XXVIII. Year of the Reign of King *Henry*
the eighth, are Impowred to Do and Execute within the Kingdome of *En-
 gland*. And that the said Offenders which are or shall be Apprehended in, or
 brought Prisoners to this Colony, shall be liable to such Order, Process, Judg-
 ments and Execution, by vertue of such Commission to be grounded upon
 this Act, as might be Awarded or Given against them, if they were proceed-
 ed against within the Realm of *England*, by vertue of any Commission
 grounded upon the said Statute.

And all Trials heretofore had against such Criminal or Criminals, before
 any Judge or Judges, by vertue of such Commission or Authority, at any
 time heretofore granted; and all Proceedings thereupon, are hereby Ratified,
 Confirmed and Adjudged lawful: and all such Judges, with all and every the
 inferiour Officers that have acted thereby, are hereby Indemnified to all In-
 tents and Purposes whatsoever. And in case they, or any of them shall at
 any time hereafter, be Sued, Vexed, Molested or Troubled, for any such their
 Proceedings aforesaid; he or they so Sued, Vexed or Molested, shall Plead the
 General Issue, and give the Act in Evidence; Any Law, Statute, Custome
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Treasons, Spi-
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 as if commit-
 ted on the land
 by Commission
 to the Judges
 of the Admiralty
 & others.
 Their power.

And Indemnifi-
 cation.

or Usage to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding.

The Abettors of Privateers, &c. to be punished as accessories.

And it is further Enacted by the Authority aforesaid; That all and every person or persons that shall any way knowingly Entertain, Harbour, Conceal, Trade or Hold any Correspondence, by Letter or otherwise, with any person or persons, that shall be Deemed or Adjudged to be Privateers, Pirates, or other Offenders, within the construction of this Act; and that shall not readily endeavour to the best of his or their power to Apprehend, or cause to be apprehended such Offender or Offenders, shall be liable to be Prosecuted as Accessories and Confederates; and to suffer such pains and penalties as in such case by Law is provided.

What is required of Commission officers in pursuance of this act.

And for the better and more effectual Execution of this Act; Be it further Enacted by the Authority aforesaid; That all Commission Officers in their several Precincts within this Colony, are hereby required and impowred, upon his or their Knowledge, or notice given, that any Privateers, Pirates or other Persons suspected, to be upon any unlawful design, are in any place within their respective Precincts; to Raise and Levy such a number of well Armed Men, as he or they shall think needful for the seizing, apprehending & carrying to Goal all and every such person or persons; and in case of any resistance or refusal to yield Obedience to His Majesties Authority, it shall be lawful to kill or destroy such person or persons; and all and every person or persons, that shall oppose or resist, by Striking or Firing upon any of the commanded parties, shall be deemed, taken, and adjudged as Felons, without benefit of the Clergy. And every such Officer that shall omit or neglect his duty herein, shall forfeit fifty pounds current Money of this Colony, for every such Offence, to be recovered in any of His Majesties Courts of Record within this Colony, by Bill, Plaint, or Information, wherein no *Essoin*, Wager of Law or Protection shall be allowed; one moiety thereof to be to our Sovereign Lord the King, His Heirs and Successors, for, and towards the support of the Government of this Colony, and the contingent charges thereof, and the other moiety to the Informer: and all and every person or persons, that upon Orders given him or them, shall refuse to repair immediately with his or their Arms well fixed, and Amunition, to such place or places as shall be appointed by the said Officer, and not readily obey his Commands in the Execution of the premises, shall be liable to such Fine or corporal Punishment, as by a Regimental Court Marshal shall be thought fit.

Their power

penalty of their neglect

Penalty of the Souldiers not obeying their Officers orders in execution of the premises,

CHAP. V.

Childrens Education

1. **F**Orasmuch as the good Education of Children and Youth is of singular use and benefit to any Common wealth; and whereas many Parents and Masters either through an over respect to their own Occasions and Business, or not duly considering the good of their Children and Servants, have too much neglected their Duties in their Education whilst they are young and capable of Learning.

Select mens care that all Children and Servants be brought to Read

It is Ordered; That the Select men of every Town, shall have a vigilant Eye from time to time over their Brethren and Neighbours, to see that all Parents and Masters do duly endeavour by themselves or others, to teach their Children and Servants as they grow capable, so much Learning as through

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