

Frederick, fifteen pounds like money; to the sheriff of Montgomery, fifteen pounds like money; to the sheriff of Prince-George's, twenty pounds like money; to the sheriff of Charles, twelve pounds ten shillings like money; to the sheriff of Saint Mary's, seven pounds ten shillings like money; to the sheriff of Calvert, seven pounds ten shillings like money; which said several respective sums of money shall be paid out of the public treasury of this state, in consideration whereof, the sheriffs of the said several and respective counties shall defray all such charges as shall accrue by reason of conveying all such letters or packets.

VIII. And be it enacted, That the following, and no other, shall be deemed public letters and packets, that is to say: All packets containing the laws passed at any session of assembly, the votes and proceedings of the senate and house of delegates, endorsed for public service and signed by the clerk of the council; all letters sent by the governor for the time being, and endorsed for public service, and signed by the clerk of the council; all letters sent by the president of the senate, and endorsed by the clerk of the senate for public service, and signed by him; all letters sent by the speaker of the house of delegates, and endorsed for public service and signed by him; and all joint letters sent by the president and speaker, endorsed for the public service and signed by them; all certificates of assessments and books of proceedings of the commissioners of the tax, and endorsed by the clerks of the several counties on public service, and signed by them; all letters and packets sent by any judge of the general court, and endorsed on public service and signed by him; all letters sent to the governor and council by the lieutenant or commanding officer of the militia of any county, and endorsed for the public service and signed by him; shall be deemed public letters and packets.

What are
deemed public
letters, &c.

IX. And, Whereas the pernicious custom of opening letters is loudly complained of:

X. Be it therefore enacted, That if any person or persons hereafter, shall wilfully break the seal of any letter or package belonging to the public, or directed to private persons, and the same can be proved against him or them by one credible witness, such person or persons so offending shall, on conviction thereof, pay the sum of one hundred pounds, to be recovered and applied as aforesaid.

Penalty on
persons open-
ing letters,
&c.

XI. Provided nevertheless, That the governor, or either of the council, the chancellor, any judge of the court of appeals or general court, the judge of the court of admiralty, or the lieutenant of any county, have full power and authority to open any letter or letters, which they may have reason to think contain any thing detrimental to this or any of the United States, any thing contained in this act to the contrary notwithstanding.

Provido.

XII. This act to continue and be in force for one year, and to the end of the next session of assembly which shall happen thereafter.

Continuance.

1781 Nov^r 7. 1 year - 1782 Nov^r 32. 3 yrs