

Laws Governing the Residents of the Colony of Connecticut

“Whosoever shall defame or slander any person or persons whatsoever, and be convicted of the offense, shall pay a sum not to exceed £10 (\$67.00) and pay any court costs.”

“If any Negro, Indian or Mulatto slave shall utter, publish or speak such words, they shall be punished by whipping on the naked body not exceeding 40 stripes, and such slaves so convicted shall be sold or disposed of to defray all charges arising thereupon, unless the fine be paid by his or her master or mistress.”

“Any Negro, Indian or Mulatto servant that strikes a white person, and shall be convicted, shall be whipped not exceeding 30 stripes for one offense.”

“Any Negro, Indian or Mulatto found wandering out of the bounds of the town, or place where they belong without a ticket, or pass in writing under the hand of a Justice of the Peace or master, or owner of such Negro, Indian or Mulatto, shall be deemed a runaway. Any person in the colony who finds or meets any such Negro, Indian or Mulatto is empowered to seize and secure him and bring him before the next authority to be examined and returned to his master, who shall satisfy any costs incurred.”

“No ferry-man shall take on board any such person without a written pass, etc., and if he does, shall pay a 20 shilling (\$6.70) fine for each offense.”

Highways

All males from 16 to 60 shall work on the highways at least two days per year, or as much as ordered by the surveyors of highways. Exempts are Magistrates, Justices of the Peace, Gospel Ministers, Ruling Elders, allowed physicians, school masters, constant herdsman, shepherds, one miller to each mill and such other persons as are exempted by law.

Bricks

The lengths of all bricks, made within this colony, shall be full 9 inches, their breadth 4 ½ inches and their thickness 2 ½ inches. The upper side of every mold used to make bricks in, or that side on which they are struck, shall be shod, or plaited with iron.

And whosoever shall put to sale any bricks that are not made according to this act, shall forfeit all such bricks, or the full value thereof; one half to the complainer, and the other half to the treasury of the county wherein the offence is committed.

Adultery

Whosoever shall commit adultery with a married woman or one betrothed to another man, both of them shall be severely punished by whipping on the naked body, and stigmatized, or burnt on the forehead with the letter **A**, on a hot iron; and each of them shall wear a halter about their necks, on the outside of their garments, during their abode in this colony, so as it may be visible; and so often as either of them shall be found without their halters, worn as aforesaid, they shall, upon information and proof of the same, made before as assistant or justice of the peace, be by them ordered to be whipt; not exceeding 20 stripes.

Wolves

An act to Encourage the Destruction of Wolves.

If any person shall kill, or destroy any grown wolf, or wolves, or panther within the bounds of any town in this colony, he shall have £3 [nearly \$20.00 at the time] paid out of the public treasury of this colony; and every *Englishman* that shall kill, or destroy

any wolf or panther, shall have *twenty shillings* [£1], paid by such town in whose bounds such wolf, or panther was killed; and half so much for every wolf's whelp.

Standardization of Weights

(Enacted in May 1756). An act for ascertaining and regulating the size of cask, and preventing fraud in packing **beef, pork and fish** for sale.

Whereas there is no quantity fixed as a standard to determine the weight of meat in a barrel, either pork or beef, therefore each barrel of pork sold shall contain the quantity of 220 pounds, and of beef, 240.

Tax on Tea

An act for laying and collecting a duty on tea, and sundry sorts of goods. That from and after the first day of July next [1757]. There shall be paid a duty of six pence for every pound weight of tea brought into this colony, either by water or by land carriage. And from and after the same date, there shall be paid a duty of 5% for every 100 pounds worth of other goods.

Ferry Rates

An act stating the fare of the ferry called Warner's Ferry, on the Connecticut River. The fare of said ferry shall be for a man and horse, 3 pence; for a footman, 1 pence; for a lead horse 1 ½ ; for an ox or other neat kine, 2 pence; for sheep, hogs and goats, ½ pence per head. [1769]