

CHAPTER MDCXXV.

AN ACT FOR ESTABLISHING AND BUILDING A BRIDGE ACROSS THE RIVER LEHIGH, AT BETHLEHEM, IN THE COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON.

Whereas it hath been represented by a number of the inhabitants of the county of Northampton, that the erecting of a good and substantial bridge across the river Lehigh, at or near the present ferry at Bethlehem, in the county aforesaid, would greatly benefit the trade and general interest of the community; and whereas John Shropp, in order to effect an uninterrupted communication between the city of Philadelphia and the northern counties of this state, is desirous of erecting a bridge across the said river Lehigh, at the place aforesaid, at his proper cost and expenses, and therefore hath prayed the general assembly to vest the said bridge, when built, in him, his heirs and assigns forever, with liberty to demand and receive such toll or fees from travelers as hereinafter mentioned and expressed; and whereas it appears to the legislature of this commonwealth that the erection of a toll bridge across the river Lehigh, as proposed by the said John Shropp, will be beneficial to the public: Therefore:

[Section I.] (Section I. P. L.) Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in General Assembly met, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, That it shall and may be lawful to and for the said John Shropp, his heirs and assigns, to erect and build, maintain and support, a good and substantial bridge over and across the river Lehigh, at or near the present ferry at Bethlehem, and that the property of the aforesaid bridge, when built, shall be, and the same is hereby vested in the said John Shropp, his heirs and assigns forever; and that the said John Shropp, his heirs and assigns, shall and may demand and receive toll from travelers and others, according to the following rates, viz.: for every coach, landau, chariot, phaeton or

other pleasurable carriage with four wheels, drawn by four horses, the sum of three shillings, and for the same carriage, with two horses, the sum of two shillings and six pence; for every wagon with four horses, when loaded, the sum of three shillings, and for the same when empty, the sum of two shillings and four pence; for a loaded wagon with two horses, two shillings and six pence, and for the same when empty, two shillings; for every chaise, riding chair, cart or other two-wheeled carriage, with two horses, the sum of one shilling and ten pence, and for the same with one horse, the sum of one shilling and six pence; for every sleigh or sled, with four horses, the sum of three shillings, and for the same with two horses, one shilling and six pence, and for the same with one horse, the sum of one shilling and two pence; for a single horse and rider, the sum of six pence; for every horse, the sum of five pence; for every foot passenger, the sum of one penny; for every head of horned cattle, the sum of four pence; for every sheep and swine, the sum of one penny. Provided always, nevertheless, That nothing in this act contained shall extend to authorize the said John Shropp, or any other person, to erect a bridge in the manner in this act before mentioned, without the consent of the owners of the ground on each side of and contiguous to the said river, where the said bridge may be erected, or to erect the same in such manner as in any way to interfere with, injure or interrupt the navigation of the said river, or the passage over the ford across the same near the said ferry.

[Section II.] (Section II, P. L.) And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That if the said John Shropp, his heirs or assigns, or whosoever shall hereafter own or possess the said bridge, shall exact or demand any greater rates or prices for the passage over the same, than what is herein before prescribed or specified, or shall neglect to keep the said bridge in good repair, he, she or they so offending shall, for every such offence, forfeit and pay the sum of ten pounds, one moiety thereof to the overseers of the poor of Bethlehem township, in the county of Northampton, for the benefit of the poor of said township, and the other moiety thereof to the party

who may sue for the same, to be recovered before any justice of the peace of the said county, who is hereby empowered, on information made to him on oath, or affirmation, of any such offence, to issue his summons or warrant to any constable of said county, commanding him to bring or cause every person against whom information shall be made to come before him, and on due proof of the said offence, to convict such person thereof, and on such conviction, to issue his warrant after the expiration of six days from the date of such conviction, to any such constable, to levy the sum of money on the goods and chattels of such offender, by distress and sale thereof, and in case no goods or chattels of the said offender can be found, on which to make such distress, then to take his body and commit him to the gaol of the county where the offence is committed, until the sum is paid. Provided always, That any person, as aforesaid convicted, who shall find himself aggrieved thereby, may within the said six days, appeal to the next court of quarter session for the county, which appeal on giving security within the same time, shall be allowed; and if the conviction so made by said justice, shall be confirmed, the said justice shall proceed to levy the said forfeiture in manner hereinbefore directed: And provided also, That no suit or action shall be brought unless the same is brought within two months after the offence is committed.

[Section III.] (Section III, P. L.) And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That if the legislature should at any time after the erecting and building of said bridge, declare the same a free bridge by law, three persons shall be appointed by the legislature, on the part of this commonwealth, and three by the said John Shropp, his heirs and assigns, who, or any four or more of them, shall estimate what sum or sums of money the said John Shropp, his heirs or assigns, shall be entitled to as a compensation for his trouble and expense in building and maintaining said bridge, and an indemnification for the ferry hitherto kept by the owner of the shores, which sum or sums shall be paid to the said John Shropp, his heirs or assigns, by the state treasurer, out of the money appropriated for the expenses of the government.

Passed April 3, 1792. Recorded L. B. No. 4, p. 318.