

Earl of Abingdon impowered to build a Bridge over the Thames from Swynford to Eynsham.

Ferry, whereby many Mischiefs and Inconveniencies will be remedied, and great Advantages accrue to the Publick; May it therefore please Your Majesty that it may be enacted; and be it enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, That it shall and may be lawful to and for the said Earl of Abingdon, his Heirs and Assigns, and he and they is and are hereby authorized and impowered, and shall have full Power and Authority by virtue of this Act, at his and their own proper Costs and Charges, by himself and themselves, his and their Deputies, Agents, Officers, Workmen, Servants, and others, to build a Bridge cross the River Thames or Isis, from Swynford in the County of Berks, to Eynsham, in the County of Oxford, as near as conveniently may be to the present Ferry; and to design, assign, and lay out, how and in what Manner the said intended Bridge shall be erected, built, and completed, leaving sufficient Water-way for Boats, Barges, and other Vessels, commodiously to pass up and down the said River; and from time to time, and at all Times hereafter, to do all other Matters and Things necessary and convenient for erecting and maintaining the said Bridge, and for the Improvement thereof, and for preserving the Navigation of the said River.

The Bridge vested in the said Earl.

And be it further enacted, That for and in Consideration of the great Charges that the said Earl of Abingdon, his Heirs and Assigns, will be obliged to defray in erecting the said Bridge, and repairing and supporting the same, and also the Loss which he and they will sustain by the ceasing of the Tolls of the said Ferry; the said Bridge, when built, shall be and is hereby vested in the said Earl of Abingdon, his Heirs and Assigns for ever: And it shall and may be lawful to and for the said Earl of Abingdon, his Heirs and Assigns, from time to time, and at all Times hereafter, to erect, or cause to be erected, a Gate or

Gates, Turnpike or Turnpikes, and also a Toll-house or Toll-houses, at, near, or upon the said Bridge; and there to ask, demand, receive, recover, and take, to and for his and their own proper Use and behoof in respect of his and their Charges and Loss as aforesaid, before any Passage over the said Bridge shall be permitted, the several Sums following; that is to say,

For every Coach, Chariot, Berlin, Hearse, Chaise, Chair, Calash, Waggon, Main, Dray, Cart, Carr, or other Carriage whatsoever, with four Wheels, the Sum of four Pence; and with less than four Wheels, the Sum of two Pence. The Tolls.

For every Horse, Mare, Gelding, Mule, or Ass, laden or unladen, drawing or not drawing, the Sum of one Penny.

For every Foot Passenger whatsoever, the Sum of one Halfpenny.

For every Ox, Bull, Cow, Steer, or Heifer, the Sum of one Halfpenny.

And for every Calf, Swine, Sheep, or Lamb, the Sum of one Farthing.

Which said respective Sums of Money shall be demanded and taken in the Name of Pontage, or as a Toll or Duty; and the Monies to be received as aforesaid, and all other Monies to be received by Authority of this Act, are hereby vested in the said Earl of Abingdon, his Heirs and Assigns, and the same and every Part thereof shall be paid to him or them accordingly; and the said Earl of Abingdon, his Heirs and Assigns, is and are hereby authorized by himself and themselves, or by any Person or Persons appointed by him or them, to levy the Toll or Duty hereby made payable upon any Person or Persons who shall, after Demand thereof made, neglect or refuse to pay the same as aforesaid; and he the said Earl of Abingdon, his Heirs and Assigns, shall and may deny and refuse to permit any Passage over the said Bridge until Payment thereof; and he or they, or any Per-

Tolls vested in the Earl of Abingdon;

he may levy the same by Distress and Sale.

Distress to be
fold after 4
Days.

son or Persons appointed by him or them, are hereby impowered to seize, take, and distrain, any Horse, Cattle, or other Thing, upon or in respect of which such Tolls or Duties shall be payable, or any other of the Goods and Chattels of such Person or Persons who ought to pay the same, wheresoever the same may be found; and shall and may detain such Distress for any Time not exceeding the Space of Four Days; and then if the Tolls or Duties for which the same Distress shall be so made, together with the Tolls and Charges attending the distraining and keeping the same, shall not be fully paid and satisfied, shall and may sell the same, rendering the Overplus (if any be) after Deduction of the Charges of distraining, keeping, and selling such Goods or Chattels.

Exemptions
from Tolls.

Provided always, That no Toll shall be taken for the Driver of any Coach, Cart, or other Carriage aforesaid, drawn by Horses or other Cattle, or for any Person or Persons riding in and bona fide belonging to the same; or for any One Person riding upon any Horse, Gelding, Mare, Mule, or Ass; but in case Two or more Persons shall be riding upon one and the same Horse, Gelding, Mare, Mule, or Ass, then One Person only so riding (at the Option of the Keeper or Keepers of the said Gate or Gates) shall be excused from the said Toll or Duty; and all and every other Person and Persons so riding, and also all and every Person and Persons not bona fide belonging to such Coach, Cart, or other Carriage as aforesaid, shall be liable to pay the same Tolls and Duties, as if he, she, or they, were passing on Foot.

Tolls to be
paid for every
Time of pas-
sing.

Provided also, That the said Tolls and Duties shall and may be demanded and taken for the Passage of Carriages, Cattle, and Persons, for every Time and as often as they shall pass over the said Bridge.

Tolls may be
lessened.

And be it further enacted, That if the said Earl of Abingdon, his Heirs or Assigns, shall at any Time

or Times hereafter think proper to lower the said Tolls, or any of them, and to take less for passing over the said Bridge than the Sums herein before-mentioned, it shall and may be lawful for him or them so to do, and afterwards at his or their Will and Pleasure again to raise the said Tolls, so as not to exceed the said respective Sums herein before-mentioned as Pontage or Toll for passing over the said Bridge; any thing herein before contained to the contrary notwithstanding.

And for preventing of the wilful or malicious destroying or damaging the said Bridge, or any Part thereof, or interrupting the building of the same; be it further enacted, That if any Person or Persons shall wilfully or maliciously burn, blow up, pull down, or otherwise destroy the said Bridge, or any Part thereof, or shall unlawfully, wilfully, and maliciously, and without Authority from the said Earl of Abingdon, his Heirs or Assigns, remove, take away, or destroy any Works or Materials thereunto belonging, or in any wise direct or procure the same to be done, whereby the said Bridge, or the Works or Materials thereof, may be damaged, or the Lives of Passengers endangered, every such Offender or Offenders, being lawfully convicted thereof, shall be adjudged guilty of Felony, and shall suffer as a Felon.

Persons pu-
nished for da-
maging the
Bridge, &c.

And for preventing Trespasses, Damages, and Mischiefs that may be done and committed by evil-minded or disorderly Persons rowing, navigating, or managing any Boats, Barges, or other Vessels, in or upon the said River Thames or Isis, and to the End that the Masters and Owners of such Boats, Barges, or other Vessels may be more careful therein; be it further enacted, That every Master and Masters, Owner and Owners, of any Boat, Barge, or other Vessel, shall be and is hereby made answerable for any Damage or Mischief that shall be wilfully or negligently done by his or their Boat, Barge, or Vessel, or by any of the Boatmen, Barge-men, or Watermen, or Crew, or in such

Owners of
Barges, &c.
answerable for
Damages done
by their Men.

such Boat, Barge, or Vessel, to the said Bridge, or any Part thereof, or to any of the Works which shall be erected by virtue of this Act: And the said Master or Masters, Owner or Owners of every such Boat, Barge, or Vessel, shall and may be by the said Earl, his Heirs or Assigns, sued for every such Trespass or Damage which shall be so done, in any of His Majesty's Courts of Record at Westminster, and shall be liable to pay such Damages as any Jury shall assess for the same.

A Ferry to be provided when the Bridge not passable.

And whereas it may happen that the said Bridge may in Times to come receive such Damage, that the Passage thereof may for some Time become dangerous or impracticable; be it further enacted, That in all such Cases it shall be lawful for the said Earl of Abingdon, his Heirs and Assigns, from time to time, as often as Occasion shall require, to provide a proper and convenient Ferry or Ferries cross the said River Thames or Isis, at such Place or Places as he or they shall judge to be most proper and convenient, and as near to the said Bridge as conveniently may be; and there to take for Passage over the said River, by such Ferry or Ferries, such Rates or Duties as are hereby directed to be paid for passing over the said Bridge.

Ferry not to continue longer than Bridge impassable.

Provided always, That such Ferry or Ferries shall not continue for any longer Time than the Passage over the said Bridge shall or may be dangerous or impracticable as aforesaid.

Penalty on Persons ferrying over for Hire.

And be it further enacted, That if any Person or Persons, from and after the passing of this Act, shall for Gain or Reward convey any Person or Persons, or any Carriage or Cattle, over the said River Thames or Isis, within Two Miles of the said Ferry or intended Bridge (except at such ancient and accustomed Ferry or Ferries as subsisted at the Time of the passing of this Act, if any such there be) every such Person shall, for every such Offence, forfeit to the said Earl of Abingdon, his Heirs or Assigns, the Sum of Forty

Forty Shillings, to be recovered by Action of Debt in any Court of Record at Westminster, wherein no Writ, Wager of Law, or Protection, or more than One Imparliament shall be allowed.

And it is hereby further enacted, That the said Bridge, when erected, shall be called by the Name of Swynford Bridge, and shall be so named and intitled in all legal Proceedings whatsoever; and that the same shall be deemed and taken to be comprised in, and to be Part of the Parish of Cumner aforesaid; and that the said Bridge, and the Colls thereof, shall be liable to such and the same Rates and Assessments in respect of the Land Tax, and of all other publick and Parochial Taxes, and to such and the same Quit Rents, Services, and Duties, and to such and the same Composition for Cythes or other Payment to the Vicar of Cumner aforesaid, as the said Ferry, and the Colls thereof, were subject and liable to at and immediately before the passing of this Act, and to no other or greater Assessment, Tax, Rent, Rate, Duty, or Payment whatsoever.

Bridge to be called Swynford Bridge:

How to be rated:

Provided always, That the said Bridge shall not be deemed a County Bridge, so as to subject the said Counties of Berks or Oxford, or either of them, to the Repairs or Support of the same.

Not to be deemed a County Bridge.

And be it further enacted, That if any Action or Suit shall be commenced against any Person or Persons for any Thing done or to be done in pursuance of this Act, in every such Case the Action or Suit shall be commenced within Six Months next after the Fact committed, and not afterwards; and shall be laid in the said County of Berks, and not elsewhere; and the Defendant or Defendants in such Action or Suit shall and may plead the General Issue, and give this Act and the Special Matter in Evidence at the Trial to be had thereupon, and that the same was done in pursuance and by the Authority of this Act; and if it shall appear so to be done, or that such Action or Actions shall be brought after the Time before limited for bringing the same, or shall be laid in any other County or Place, that then the Jury shall find for

Limitation of Actions.

General Issue.

Anno Regni septimo Georgii III. Regis.

for the Defendant or Defendants; or if the Plaintiff or Plaintiffs shall become nonsuited, or discontinue his, her, or their Action or Suit, or if a Verdict shall pass against the Plaintiff or Plaintiffs, or if upon Demurrer Judgement shall be given against the Plaintiff or Plaintiffs, the Defendant or Defendants shall recover Treble Costs, and shall have such Remedy for the same as any Defendant or Defendants hath or have for Costs of Suit in other Cases by Law.

Treble Costs.

Publick Act.

And be it further enacted, That this Act shall be deemed a Publick Act, and be judicially taken Notice of as such by all Judges, Justices, and other Persons whomsoever, without specially pleading the same.

F I N I S.