

Case No. 15,782. UNITED STATES V. MINIFIE.
[2 Cranch, C. C. 109.]¹

Circuit Court, District of Columbia.

Dec. Term, 1814.

WITNESS—FREED NEGRO.

A colored person who has been “made free in virtue of” act Md. 1796, c. 67, is not a competent witness against a white person.

Indictment, for larceny, against [Christopher Minifie] a white man.

Mr. Jones, for the United States, offered, as a witness, a black man who had obtained his freedom by being removed from Virginia to Maryland, contrary to the Maryland law of 1796, c. 67.

Mr. Key, for defendant, objected; and relied upon the fifth section of that statute, which declares that no slave “who shall be manumitted or made free by virtue of that act,” “shall be entitled” “to give evidence against any white person.”

THE COURT (CRANCH, Chief Judge, contra) rejected the witness.

CRANCH, Chief Judge, not having the statute then before him, supposed it referred only to voluntary manumission.

¹ [Reported by Hon. William Cranch, Chief Judge]