

XV.

1541 THE ACT OF OCTOBER 1, 1890, ESTABLISHING THE SUMMARY COURT.

An Act to promote the administration of justice in the Army.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That hereafter in time of peace all enlisted men charged with offenses now cognizable by a garrison or regimental court-martial shall, within twenty-four hours from the time of their arrest, be brought before a summary court, which shall consist of the line officer¹ second in rank at the post or station or of the command of the alleged offender, and at stations where only officers of the staff are on duty the officers second in rank shall constitute such court, who shall have power to administer oaths and to hear and determine the case, and when satisfied of the guilt of the accused party adjudge the punishment to be inflicted. There shall be a summary court record-book or docket kept at each military post, and in the field at the headquarters of the command, in which shall be entered a record of all cases heard and determined and the action had thereon, and no sentence adjudged by said summary court shall be executed until it shall have been approved by the post or other commander: *Provided*, That when but one commissioned officer is present with a command he shall hear and finally determine such cases as require summary action: *Provided further*, That the President be, and he hereby is, authorized to prescribe specific penalties for such minor offenses as are now brought before garrison and regimental courts-martial: *Provided, further*, That any enlisted man charged with an offense and brought before such summary court may, if he so desires, object to a hearing and determination of his case by such court and request a trial by court-martial, which request shall be granted as of right, and when the court is the accuser the case shall be heard and determined by the post commander, or by regimental or garrison court-martial: *And provided further*, That post and other commanders shall, on the last day of each month, make a report to the department headquarters of the number of cases determined by summary court during the month, setting forth the offenses committed and the penalties awarded, which reports shall be filed in the office of the judge-advocate of the department.

SEC. 2. That it shall be lawful for any civil officer having authority under the laws of the United States or of any State, Territory, or District, to arrest offenders, to summarily arrest a deserter from the military service of the United States and deliver him into the custody of the military authority of the General Government.

¹ *Sic* in the roll.