



Bankers' Books Evidence Act 1879

1879 CHAPTER 11

An Act to amend the Law of Evidence with respect to Bankers' Books. [23d May 1879]

BE it enacted by the Queen'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, as follows:

1 Short title.

This Act maybe cited as the Bankers' Books Evidence Act, 1879.

2 Repeal of 39 & 40 Vict. c. 48.

The Bankers' Books Evidence Act, 1876, shall he repealed as from the passing of this Act, but such repeal shall not affect anything which has been done or happened before such repeal takes effect.

3 Mode of proof of entries in bankers' books.

Subject to the provisions of this Act, a copy of any entry in a banker's book shall in all legal proceedings be received as prima facie evidence of such entry, and of the matters, transactions, and accounts therein recorded.

4 Proof that book is a banker's book.

A copy of an entry in a banker's book shall not be received in evidence under this Act unless it be first proved that the book was at the time of the making of the entry one of the ordinary books of the bank, and that the entry was made in the usual and ordinary course of business, and that the book is in the custody or control of the bank.

Such proof may be given by a partner or officer of the bank, and may be given orally or by an affidavit sworn before any commissioner or person authorised to take affidavits.

5 Verification of copy.

A copy of an entry in a banker's book shall not be received, in evidence under this Act unless it be further proved that the copy has been examined with the original entry and is correct.

Such proof shall be given by some person who has examined the copy with the original entry, and may be given either orally or by an affidavit sworn before any commissioner or person authorised to take affidavits.

6 Case in which banker, &c. not compellable to produce book, &c.

A banker or officer of a bank shall not, in any legal proceeding to which the bank is not a party, be compellable to produce any banker's book the contents of which can be proved under this Act, or to appear as a witness to prove the matters, transactions, and accounts therein recorded, unless by order of a judge made for special cause.

7 Court or judge may order inspection, &c.

On the application of any party to a legal proceeding a court or judge may order that such party be at liberty to inspect and take copies of any entries in a banker's book for any of the purposes of such proceedings. An order under this section may be made either with or without summoning the bank or any other party, and shall be served on the bank three clear days before the same is to be obeyed, unless the court or judge otherwise directs.

8 Costs.

The costs of any application to a court or judge under or for the purposes of this Act; and the costs of anything done or to be done under an order of a court or judge made under or for the purposes of this Act shall be in the discretion of the court or judge, who may order the same or any part thereof to be paid to any party by the bank, where the same have been occasioned by any default or delay on the part of the bank. Any such order against a bank may be enforced as if the bank was a party to the proceeding.

9 Interpretation of "bank," "banker," and "bankers' books".

In this Act the expressions "bank" and "banker" mean any person, persons, partnership, or company carrying on the business of bankers and having duly made a return to the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, and also any savings bank certified under the Acts relating to savings banks, and also any post office savings bank.

The fact of any such bank having duly made a return to the Commissioners of Inland Revenue may be proved in any legal proceeding by production of a copy of its return verified by affidavit of a partner or officer of the bank, or by the production of a copy of a newspaper purporting to contain a copy of such return published by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue; the fact that any such savings bank is certified under the Acts relating to savings banks may be proved by an office or examined copy of its certificate; the fact that any such bank is a post office saving bank may be proved by a certificate purporting to be under the hand of Her Majesty's Postmaster-General or one of the secretaries of the Post Office.

Expressions in this Act relating to "bankers' books" include ledgers, day books, cash books, account books, and all other books used in the ordinary business of the bank:

10 Interpretation of "legal proceeding", "court", "judge".

In this Act—

The expression " legal proceeding " means any civil or criminal proceeding or inquiry in which evidence is or may be given, and includes an arbitration ;

The expression " the court " means the court, judge, arbitrator, persons, or person before whom a legal proceeding is held or taken;

The expression " a judge " means with respect to England a judge of the High Court of Justice, and with respect to Scotland a lord ordinary of the Outer House of the Court of Session, and with respect to Ireland a judge of the High Court of Justice in Ireland;

The judge of a county court may with respect to any action in such court exercise the powers of a judge under this Act.

11 Computation of time.

Sunday, Christmas Day, Good Friday, and any bank holiday shall be excluded from the computation of time under this Act.