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Debates in the North Carolina Hillsborough Convention, 29 July 1788 (excerpts)

Article fourth. . . . The last clause read.

Mr. [James] *Iredell* begged leave to explain the reason of this clause. In some of the northern states they have emancipated all their slaves. If any of our slaves, said he, go there and remain there a certain time, they would by the present laws, be entitled to their freedom; so that their masters could not get them again. This would be extremely prejudicial to the inhabitants of the southern states, and to prevent it, this clause is inserted in the Constitution.—Though the word *slave* be not mentioned, this is the meaning of it. The northern Delegates, owing to their particular scruples on the subject of slavery, did not choose the word *slave* to be mentioned.

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