

However, the outcome of the matter was the ordinance of April, 1787, making further provision for the administration of the new settlements.¹ The most important section bearing on our present inquiry is the following, "Whereas, there are many thousands of loyalists and others settled in the upper countries above Montreal, and in the bays of Gaspé and Chaleurs below Quebec, whose ease and convenience may require that additional districts should be erected as soon as circumstances will permit, it is enacted and ordained by the authority aforesaid, that it may be lawful for the Governor or Commander-in-chief for the time being, with the advice and consent of the Council, to form by patent under the seal of the province, one or more new districts, as his discretion may direct, and to give commission to such officer or officers therein as may be necessary, or conducive to the ease and convenience of His Majesty's subjects residing in the remote parts of the province." In accordance with the authority granted in this ordinance Lord Dorchester issued a proclamation, dated July 24th, 1788, dividing the western settlements into four districts, named Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nassau and Hesse.² On the same day appointments were made to the following offices in each of the new districts: judges of the Court of Common Pleas, justices of the peace, sheriff, clerk of the Court of Common Pleas, and of the Sessions of the Peace, and coroners.³

Courts of Quarter Sessions were thus organized, and began their sittings the following year. The first court for the district of Mecklenburg was held at Kingston on April 14th, 1789,⁴ and the first court for the district of Lunenburg was held at Osnabruck, on June 15th, in the same year.⁵

Except as regards the criminal law, the justices were still required to administer the French system in accordance with the Quebec Act. But as this immediately led to difficulties, the justices of the district of Mecklenburg submitted certain problems to the Government at Quebec. For instance, proclamations to be legal were required to be made at the church doors of the parish, and to be published in the *Quebec Gazette*. But in the whole of the western settlements there were only two church doors, and no one was known to take the *Quebec Gazette*. The justices, therefore, made a characteristic suggestion, namely, that as most of the settlers had to go to one or other of the two grist mills of the district, at

¹ Laws of Lower Canada, Vol. I., p. 121.

² Canadian Archives, Q. 37. p. 178.

³ Canadian Archives, Q. 39. pp. 134-139.

⁴ Early Records of Ontario, *Queen's Quarterly*, Vol. VII., p. 55.

⁵ Lunenburg, or the Old Eastern District, by J. F. Pringle, Cornwall, 1890. p. 47.