

or five each. If the business on hand was very important a large number might be demanded. The Governor might refuse to accept the deputies, if they were not of the oldest and richest in the community.¹ After receiving the Governor's instructions the deputies were required both to publish them and to assist in carrying them out. Mascarene summed up their duties as follows:

1. Deputies having fixed times for meeting and consultation should act together in the execution of the orders, etc., of the Government in the interests of justice and of the good of the community.

2. They should "in their meetings make joint reply to the letters of the Government addressed to them in common and propose measures for the common good."

3. They should watch and keep in hand restless spirits who could turn the *habitans* from their duty and lead them contrary to their oath of allegiance. They were expected to restrain the Indians.

4. They were to enforce the regulations for keeping up the fences and to prevent the trespass of unruly cattle.

5. They were to concert measures for the improvement and upkeep of bridges and highways. They were to assign to each *habitant* what according to custom he must contribute in material, labour, carriage or payment.

6. They were to keep an account of the mills, those erected by the seigniors and those erected "without leave since the King has been in possession of the seigniori," and the dues that should be paid so that "the King may get his rights."

7. They were to arbitrate in land disputes, but appeal to the Governor-in-Council was permitted. They were to redress wrong and recover stolen property.²

In short the deputies were practically mediators, with little real power but great opportunity to facilitate or clog the work of administration.

In only one instance is there evidence of the appointment of an Acadian to be a justice of the peace.³ Prudent Robicheau was the honoured name. A Prudent Robicheau, once before, had been

¹ N.S. Archives II. 89, 66, 74.

² Ibid. II. 241 *et passim*.

³ Ibid. 172.