

special qualifications for the position, he was the son-in-law of a prominent member of the Council and the nephew of a leader of the Government in that House. In 1850 and the two following years he was associated with the Honorable William Young, Jonathan McCully and Joseph Whidden, Clerk of the House of Assembly, in preparing the First Series of the Revised Statutes, a masterpiece of its kind. No similar Legislative work was undertaken, until after the lapse of some years, by any other British Colony. Mr. Ritchie undoubtedly found it most congenial.

In 1764 the Island of St. John, afterwards of Prince Edward, and at that time part of Nova Scotia, was divided into 67 Lots or Townships of about twenty thousand acres each, which with the exception of three small reservations intended for three county towns and the two lots 40 and 59, were disposed of in London by lottery before the Board of Trade and Plantations in one day. In August 1767 Grants were ordered to the several allottees. These Grants were in the form of long leases and contained provisions for the payment of quitrents and the placing of settlers on the lands, under penalty of forfeiture. As time went on much confusion and dissatisfaction arose in the Island as a result of these leases. The Proprietors, as the allottees and their successors in title were called, failed to carry out the conditions of the leases; while the tenantry did not, as a rule, pay the rent due to the Proprietors. By the middle of the last century, things were felt to call for some effective action. The Island Legislature attempted to deal with the matter in the interest of the tenantry, but its Acts were disallowed in London, and the Imperial Government declined to declare the leases forfeited for non-performance of the conditions by the Proprietors. After much correspondence, a Commission was on the 25th of June, 1860, issued by the Government to John Hamilton Gray of New Brunswick, nominated by the Duke of Newcastle, Secretary for the Colonies, the Honorable Joseph Howe, nominated by the Prince Edward Island Assembly, acting on behalf of the tenantry, and John William Ritchie,