

INTRODUCTION

THE territory, now called by the name of The County of Lambton, was originally part of The District of Hesse, which was bounded, according to the Proclamation of his Excellency the Governor-General, Guy, Lord Dorchester, dated 24th July, 1788, in the twenty-eighth year of the reign of His Majesty George III., as follows:—

“The District of Hesse, which is to comprehend all the residue of our said Province in the Western or inland parts thereof, of the entire breadth thereof, from the Southerly to the Northerly boundaries of the same.”

As the District of Nassau was the next District to Hesse in the East and extended “so far Westerly as to a North and South line, intersecting the extreme projection of Long Point into the Lake Erie, on the Northerly side of said Lake Erie,” the District of Hesse took in all the rest of the lands to the West of Long Point.

By 31 George III. (Imperial) Chapter 31 (1791) section 14, the Lieutenant-Governor, in the absence of the Governor-General, received power to divide the Province into Counties or Districts. In pursuance of this Act, his Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, Colonel John Graves Simcoe, by proclamation dated 16th July, 1792, divided the Province of Upper Canada into nineteen Counties, namely: Glengarry, Stormont, Dundas, Grenville, Leeds, Frontenac, Ontario, Addington, Lennox, Prince Edward, Hastings, Northumberland, Durham, York, Lincoln, Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Kent, the nineteenth being called by the name of The County of Kent, “which County is to comprehend all the Country, (not being Territories of the Indians) not already included in the several Counties hereinbefore described, extending Northward to the boundary line of Hudson’s Bay, including all the territory to the Westward and Southward of the said line, to the utmost extent of the country commonly called or known by the name of Canada.”

The County of Essex was the adjoining County to Kent, and its Westerly boundary is described in Governor Simcoe’s Proclamation as bounded “on the west by the River Detroit to Maisonville’s Mill, from thence by a line running parallel to the River Detroit and Lake St. Clair, at the distance of four miles, until it meets the River La Tranche, or Thames, and thence up the said River to the Northwest boundary of the County of Suffolk.”

All the territory, therefore, now known as the County of Lambton, was then part of the County of Kent, which, by the Proclamation, was to be represented by two members in the Legislative Assembly of Canada; but by the Redistribution Act (Upper Canada) 40 George III. Chapter 3, passed 4th July, 1800, the County of Kent was to be represented by one member only.

By 32 George III. (Upper Canada) Chapter 8, section 5, passed 15th October, 1792, the name of the District was changed, and thereafter it was called The Western District.

By 38 George III Chapter 5, (1798), assented to 1st January, 1800, Essex and Kent, together with so much of the Province as is not included within any other District thereof, “were formed into the Western District.”

By 2 George IV. Chapter 3, Section 12, passed 14th April, 1821, (being the first Session in that year) “The following NEW Townships in the Western District were attached to the County of Kent, namely: the Townships of Zone, Dawn, Sombra and Saint Clair.” The last named Township was changed to Sarnia, probably in Sir John Colborne’s time, 1839, as that was the Roman name of the Island of Guernsey, with which Sir John was identified.