

Petition of Jacob De Witt complaining of the undue election of J. W. Dunscomb, for the county of Beauharnois.

*Ormesstown*, in the said county of *Beauharnois*, on the eighth day of said *March* last, the said election to be thence continued, according to law. That petitioner, who had represented the said county of *Beauharnois*, for many years, in the late Assembly of *Lower Canada*, was invited by a large majority of freeholders, qualified to vote at the said election, to become a candidate for the high trust of representing the said county in the present parliament, and accordingly became a candidate, and was present as such, at the opening of the Poll, as aforesaid; and, being duly qualified to be elected, was present at the said election to receive the votes of the freeholders as aforesaid—That, however, the writ of Her Majesty and the principles of the British constitution, which ought, of right and justice, to be attended to, were totally disregarded and violated at the said pretended election, as well on the part of the Returning Officer, *William Bowron*, Esquire, as on the part of a great number of riotous and armed individuals, the largest part of whom were strangers to the said county of *Beauharnois*, or had no vote therein, who, together with some few electors of the other candidate, *J. William Dunscomb*, Esquire, who were also armed and riotously arraigned against the faithful execution of Her Majesty's said writ, prevented, with open and constant violence, and with force and arms, and also with bribery and corruption, the free and inoffensive electors of the said county from giving their votes at the said election in favour of petitioner—That the said *William Bowron* acted, at the said election, with partiality and corrupt motives, and was actively and illegally employing himself during all the time, and long before the said election, as an active partizan of the said *J. W. Dunscomb*, and violently opposed to Petitioner and the known determination of the great majority of electors supporting Petitioner, and that the said *William Bowron*, being otherwise unacquainted with the language of a large portion of the said electors, and unable to conduct the said election properly, on that account, was in fact during the said election, an active and violent partizan of the said *J. W. Dunscomb*—That the said *William Bowron*, previously to his being appointed Returning Officer, as aforesaid, went round the said county, at different times, and was engaged in an extensive correspondence, to solicit the electors to support the said *J. W. Dunscomb* and oppose the petitioner, and that the said *William Bowron*, was even sent to *Montreal* with another individual, on the part of the partizans of the said *J. W. Dunscomb*, to invite him to present himself at the said election—That having been, in the meantime, appointed Returning Officer, the said *William Bowron* did not abandon his canvassing in favour of the Petitioner's opponent, but continued in the same course, and being a party in the violence which was then before hand prepared, and being one of those who were guilty of the said violence, had unlawfully arranged all matters to proclaim the said *J. W. Dunscomb* as being duly elected, notwithstanding the well known determination of the electors, and went even so far as to advise the keeper of a hotel in the vicinity of the Poll, before the election, not to make any great preparations for the reception of voters, as the election, under any circumstances, was not to last more than two days—That the said county contains over seven hundred square miles, thickly inhabited, and that at the last general election the polling lasted nearly three weeks, the said *William Bowron* being then, all the time, a candidate—That from the large number of armed individuals preventing the electors from coming near the Poll and giving their votes to petitioner, and keeping back the electors at a distance with all sorts of menace and illtreatment, the said election, was by no means free, but that the danger for the life and security of voters was such, that the said *J. W. Dunscomb* was returned as a member with an apparent majority of about one hundred and fifty votes, while the said county contained