

days on the highway, or to be sent to the House of Correction to receive ten stripes and to be discharged."

One of the duties of the 16 constables of the town of Halifax was to attend the Court of Quarter Sessions. Records indicate that a number of constables were fined for failure to appear as detailed.

By the end of 1798 constables were paid five pounds a year. At that time a crime wave of major proportions took place in the settlement, and the magistrates met on Jan. 5, 1799 and passed the following resolution: "The many recent attempts to break open houses and stores by night, and the thefts that have been actually committed, occasioning serious apprehensions in the minds of the inhabitants of Halifax, and the magistrates, wishing as much as possible to prevent so enormous an evil, have adopted the resolution of dividing the Township of Halifax into a certain number of districts or wards and that certain magistrates appointed to each will immediately pro-

ceed to take an account of the number of persons in their respective wards in order the more effectually to ascertain who the aggressors might be and to restrain their depredations for the future. Have thought proper to establish patrols to walk the streets by night so long as it is found necessary for the preservation of tranquility in the Place." They then proceeded to divide the town into nine districts, naming two, three or four magistrates to each district, according to its size.

On Aug. 17, 1799 Gentlemen Magistrates met at the Court House and agreed to patrol the streets. By this time the Grand Jury nominated persons for the office of constable from the "list of inhabitants" with or without their consent, and records mention a number of persons fined for refusing to so serve. The usual fine was two pounds.

In 1804, the House of Assembly recommended that a new Court House and police office be erected on George Street at Water. But it was not until the summer of 1815 that the building was occupied.

During the war of 1812 Halifax became overcrowded and crimes and violence were prevalent. It then became necessary to establish a militia patrol; however, by Feb. 12, 1814, the town became quiet and the patrol was discontinued. Immediately, crime increased sharply, and it became necessary to re-activate the patrol.

In 1815 an act, passed by the House of Assembly, provided for three Justices of the Peace and three constables to man the new police office which was opened that year. Two-fifths of the Spirituous Liquor Licence Fund was diverted to pay the salaries of the constables.

Two years later crime again shot upward. To combat it an elaborate system of nightly patrol was organized, and the participants were drawn from a list of 600 of the inhabitants who had volunteered for this duty.

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