

CHAPTER DCXLIV.

1772.

An ACT for erecting a part of the counties of Lancaster, Cumberland, Berks, Northampton and Bedford, into a separate county.

WHEREAS a great number of the inhabitants of the counties of Berks and Bedford have represented to the assembly of this province the great hardships they lie under, from being so remote from the present seat of judicature and the public offices: For remedying whereof, *Be it enacted*, That all and singular the lands lying and being within the boundaries following, that is to say, beginning at the mouth of Mohontongo creek, on the west side of the river Susquehanna; thence up the south side of said creek, by the several courses thereof, to the head at Robert Meteer's spring; thence west by north to the top of Tussey's mountain; thence south-westerly, along the summit of the mountain, to Little Juniata; thence up the north-easterly side of the main branch of Little Juniata, to the head thereof; thence north to the line of Berks county; thence northwest, along the said line, to the extremity of the province; thence east, along the north boundary, to that part thereof, which is due north from the most northern part of the Great swamp; thence south to the most northern part of the Swamp aforesaid; thence with a straight line to the head of the Lehigh, or Middle creek; thence down the said creek so far, that a line run west-south-west will strike the forks of Mohontongo creek where Pine creek falls into the same, at the place called Spread Eagle, on the east side of Susquehanna; thence down the southerly side of said creek to the river aforesaid; thence down and across the river to the place of beginning; shall be, and the same is hereby, erected into a county, henceforth to be called Northumberland.

II. *And be it further enacted*, That the inhabitants of the said county of Northumberland shall, at all times hereafter, have and enjoy all and singular the jurisdictions, powers, rights, liberties and privileges whatsoever, which the inhabitants of any other county, within the said province, do, may or ought to enjoy, by any charter of privileges, or the laws of this province, or by any other ways and means whatsoever, excepting only in the number of Representatives to serve in General Assembly of this province: In which case it is *Provided, and further enacted*, That the freeholders and inhabitants of each township within the said county, qualified by the laws of this province to elect, shall meet at some convenient place within their respective townships, at the same time the freeholders and inhabitants of the several townships of the other counties shall meet for like purpose, and proceed to choose Inspectors; and that the freemen and inhabitants of the said county, qualified as aforesaid, shall meet at or near Fort-Augusta, at the same time the inhabitants of the other counties shall meet for the like purpose, and

Boundaries of the county.

Its name.

Privileges granted to it.

Freeholders to meet and choose Inspectors.

1772.
One Representative to be elected.

proceed to elect one Representative or Delegate, to serve them in Assembly, in the same manner, and under the same rules, regulations and penalties, as by the charter and laws of this province are directed in respect to other counties; which said Representative, when so chosen, shall be a Member of the General Assembly of the province of Pennsylvania, and shall sit and act as such, as fully and freely as any of the Representatives for the other counties, within this province, do, may, can or ought to do.

Justices of the Supreme Court to have like powers, &c.

IV. *And be it further enacted,* That the Justices of the Supreme Court of this province shall have like powers, jurisdictions, and authorities, within the said county of Northumberland, as by law they are vested with and entitled to in the other counties within the province aforesaid; and are hereby authorized and empowered, from time to time, to deliver the gaols of the said county of capital or other offenders, in like manner as they are authorized to do in other the counties aforesaid.

Courts of Quarter Sessions to be held.

V. *And be it further enacted,* That there shall be a competent number of Justices nominated and authorized by the Governor for the time being, by commissions under the broad seal of the province, which said Justices, or any three of them, shall and may hold Courts of General Quarter Sessions of the Peace and Gaol Delivery, and County Courts for holding of pleas; and shall have all and singular the powers, rights, jurisdictions and authorities, to all intents and purposes, as other the Justices of the Courts of General Quarter Sessions, and Justices of the County Courts for holding of pleas, in the other counties aforesaid, may, can, or ought to have in their respective counties; which said Courts shall, from and after the publication of this act, sit and be held for the said county of Northumberland, on the fourth Tuesday in the months of May, August, November, and February, in every year, at Fort-Augusta, until a court-house shall be built: and when the same is built and erected in the county aforesaid, the said several Courts shall then be holden and kept at the said court-house on the days before mentioned. And the election of a Representative to serve in General Assembly, Assessors, and all other officers of the said county, who are or shall be appointed to be annually elected, shall be made and elected at or near the said court-house, at the same time, and in the same manner, as by the charter of privileges, and the laws of the province aforesaid, are directed to be done in the other counties within this province. And it shall be lawful for the freemen of the said county, for the first year, to choose three Commissioners for raising county rates and levies for the said county.

Time of holding courts.

Time and place of elections.

Passed 21st March, 1772.—Recorded A. vol. V. page 474. (x)

(x) The sections of this act which are omitted, were all occasional, and now obsolete; such as the provision for the collection of taxes assessed in the

original counties; the appointment of trustees for the erection of the public buildings for the county; raising money for such purpose; continuing suits; ap-

pointing a collector of excise; running boundary lines, &c.

Boundary lines ascertained, Sept'r 30th, 1779, (chap. 837.) extended to part of the New Purchase, April 8th, 1785, (chap. 1153, sect. 18.) Commissioners appointed to run the lines between Berks, Northampton, Northumberland and Luzerne, April 17th, 1795, (chap. 1837.)

The northern part of Northumberland erected into a new county called Luzerne, Sept'r 25th, 1786, (chap. 1233.) The line between the two counties rectified, Dec'r 27th, 1786, (chap. 1245.)

Part of Northumberland county taken to form the new county of Mifflin, Sept. 19th, 1799, (chap. 1425.) But this part, with an additional part of Northumberland county, was afterwards, with other territory, erected into the county of Centre, Feb'y 13th, 1800, (chap. 2092.) Lycoming county erected out of Northumberland, April 13th, 1795, (chap. 1823.)

By the last enumeration, the county of Northumberland contained six thousand and sixty-one taxables; and together with the county of Luzerne, eight thousand seven hundred and ninety-one taxables: And by the act apportioning the representation in pursuance thereof, passed March 21st, 1808, (chap. 2931,) the county of Northumberland sends four members to the House of Representatives; and, with the county of Luzerne, two members to the Senate.

By the act of Sept'r 1785, (chap. 1164,) the county of Northumberland, according to its then bounds, was divided into four election districts; but part of the second district afterwards fell into the county of Luzerne, and the whole of the fourth district into the county of Lycoming.

Penns and Beaver townships erected into a separate district, and the place of holding elections in the third district altered, Sept'r 26th, 1788, (chap. 1350.) This was called the sixth district; Pottery township had been erected into the fifth district, by act of Sept'r 19th, 1786, (chap. 1231;) but that district is now in the county of Centre.

The seventh district established by act of Sept'r 7th, 1789, (chap. 1415,) part of this district is now in the county of Luzerne.

The eighth and ninth districts esta-

lished by act of Sept'r 30th, 1791, (chap. 1579.) 1772.

March 21st, 1797, a new district, called the eighth district, erected, (chap. 1922.)

The fourth district new modelled, and the ninth, eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth districts erected, April 4th, 1798, (chap. 1994.)

The fourteenth election district established April 8th, 1799, (chap. 2050.)

Three new districts established; the place for holding elections in Bloom and Brier creek townships altered, and Mahoning township annexed to Washington district, Jan'y 2d, 1801, (chap. 2146.)

Mahoning and Hemlock townships erected into a new district, and called Danville district; the place of holding elections in the sixth district changed, and the lines of New Berlin district altered, March 16th, 1803, (chap. 2335.)

Chillisquaqui district established, and the places of election changed in the seventh and fourteenth districts, March 12th, 1804, (chap. 2443.)

Mahantango township erected into a district, April 4th, 1805, (chap. 2599.)

Upper Mahonoy township formed into a district; the place of holding the elections in Mahonoy township, and in the eighteenth district changed, April 11th, 1807, (chap. 2856.)

Part of West Buffaloe township erected into a separate district; and the places of holding elections in the third and eleventh districts changed, April 4th, 1809.

Augusta township erected into a separate district, March 20th, 1810.

By the Judiciary act of Feb'y 24th, 1806, (chap. 2634,) Northumberland, Luzerne and Lycoming counties compose the eighth Judiciary district.

The courts in Northumberland are held on the third Mondays in January, April, August and November; the term continuing two weeks.

The Supreme Court for the middle district, is held at Sunbury, in this county, by act of April 10th, 1807, (chap. 2846,) and by act of March 11th, 1809, the term commences annually on the third Wednesday next after the third Monday in May.

For other matters relating to Northumberland county, see the General Index, title, *Northumberland County*.