

The Provincial Statutes of Lower-Canada, Being the second session of the fifteenth Provincial Parliament of Lower-Canada. Quebec: John Carleton Fisher & William Kemble, Law Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1836.

6 William IV – Chapter 16

An Act for the qualification of the Justices of the Peace. (21st March, 1836.)

Whereas as well by the Criminal Laws of England, in force in this Province, as by divers Acts of the Provincial Parliament, Justices of the Peace are invested with great powers and authority, wherefore it is become of the utmost consequence to all classes of His Majesty's subjects, that none but persons well qualified should be permitted to act as Justices of the Peace; and whereas the Laws now in force in this Province are insufficient for that purpose;—Be it therefore enacted by the King's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Assembly of the Province of Lower Canada, constituted and assembled by virtue of, and under the authority of an Act passed in the Parliament of Great Britain, intituled, "An Act to repeal certain parts of an Act passed in the fourteenth year of His Majesty's Reign, intituled, 'Act for malting more effectual provision for the Government of the Province of Quebec, in North America,' And to make further provision for the Government of the said Province;" and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, that from and after the first day of May in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-six, all Justices of the Peace to be appointed in the several Districts of this Province, shall be of the most sufficient persons dwelling in the said Districts, respectively.

II. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that no Attorney, Solicitor or Proctor in any Court whatsoever, shall, from and after the said first day of May, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-six, be capable of being or continue to be a Justice of the Peace, in and for any District of this Province, during such time as he shall continue to practice as an Attorney, Solicitor, or Proctor.

III. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that from and after the said first day of May, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-six, no person shall be a Justice of the Peace, or act as such within any District of this Province, who shall not have in his actual possession, to and for his own proper use and benefit, a real estate either en fief, en roture, in free and common soccage, in absolute property, or by emphyteose, or lease for one or more lives, or originally created for a term not less than twenty-one years, or by usufruit for his life, in lands, tenements, or other immoveable property, lying and being in this Province, of or above the value of three hundred pounds currency, over and above what will satisfy and discharge all incumbrances affecting the same, and over and above all rents and charges payable out of, or affecting the same, and who shall not before the said first day of May, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-six, or before he takes upon himself to act as a Justice of the Peace, after the said first day of May, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-six, take and subscribe the oath following, before some Justice of the Peace for the District for which

he intends to act, that is to say:—"I, A. B. do swear, that I truly and bond fide have to and for my own proper use and benefit, such an estate (specifying the nature of such estate, whether land, rents, titles, or any thing else) as doth qualify me to act as Justice of the Peace for the District of _____ according to the true intent and meaning of an Act of the Provincial Parliament, made in the sixth year of the Reign of His Majesty King William the Fourth, intituled, 'An Act for the qualification of Justices of the Peace;' and that the same is lying, being, or issuing out of lands, tenements or hereditaments, situate within the parish, seigniorie [seigneurie], or township of _____ or in the several parishes, seigniories or townships of _____ (as the case may be.)—So help me God. A certificate of which oath having been so taken and subscribed as aforesaid, shall be forthwith deposited by the said Justice of the Peace, who shall have taken the same at the Office of the Clerk of the Peace for the District, and be by the said Clerk filed among the records of the Sessions of the said District.

IV. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that every such Clerk of the Peace, shall, upon demand for that purpose made, forthwith deliver a true and attested copy of the said oath, in writing, to any person paying the sum of one shilling currency, and no more, for the same, which copy being produced as evidence on the trial of an issue in any action or suit brought upon this Act, shall have the same force and effect as the record of the said oath would have, if so produced.

V. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that from and after the said first day of May, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-six, any person who shall act as a Justice of the Peace in and for any District in this Province, without having taken and subscribed the said oath as aforesaid, or without being qualified according to the true intent and meaning of this Act, shall for every such offence forfeit the sum of twenty-five pounds currency, one moiety to His Majesty, and the other moiety to such person or persons as shall sue for the same, to be recovered, together with full costs of suit, by civil action, or by plaint or information, in any Court of competent jurisdiction, in the District wherein the offence shall have been committed, and in every such action, suit, or information, the proof of his qualification shall be upon the person against whom the suit shall be brought.

VI. Provided always, and be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that if the defendant in any such action, suit, or information, shall intend to insist upon any lands, tenements, or real estate, not mentioned in the oath aforesaid, as constituting the whole or any part of his qualification to act as a Justice of the Peace, at the time of the offence alleged against him, he shall, at, or before the time of his pleading, deliver to the plaintiff or informer, or to his attorney, notice in writing, specifying such lands, tenements, or real estate, (other than those mentioned in the said oath,) and the parish, seigniorie, township, or place, and the County or Counties in which the same may be respectively situate, and if the plaintiff or informer in any such action, suit, or information, shall think fit thereupon not to proceed any further, he may, with leave of the Court, discontinue such action, suit, or information, on payment of such costs to the defendant, as such defendant may be entitled to, according to the course and practice of the Court.

VII. Provided also, and be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that upon the trial of any issue in any such action to be brought as aforesaid, no lands, tenements, or real estate, which are not mentioned in such oath or notice as aforesaid, shall be insisted upon by the defendant as part of his said qualification.

VIII. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that when the lands, tenements, or real property, mentioned in the said oath or notice, are together with other lands, tenements, or real property, belonging to the person taking such oath or delivering such notice, liable to any charges, rents, or incumbrances, then and in that case, within the true intent and meaning, and for the purposes of this Act, the lands, tenements, and real property mentioned in the said oath or notice, shall be deemed and taken to be liable and chargeable, only so far as the other lands, tenements, and real property so jointly charged, are not sufficient to pay, satisfy, or discharge the same.

IX. Provided always, and be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that when the qualification hereby required, or any part thereof, consists of rent, it shall be sufficient to specify in such oath or notice as aforesaid, so much of the lands, tenements, or real property, out of which such rent is issuing, as shall be of sufficient value to secure such rent.

X. Provided always, and be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that in case the plaintiff or informer in any such action, suit, or information, shall discontinue the same, otherwise than as aforesaid, or judgment be given against him, then and in every such case, the defendant shall recover the treble costs.

XI. Provided always, and be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that when an action, suit, or information, shall be brought, and due notice thereof shall be given to the person against whom such action, suit or information shall be brought, no proceedings shall be had upon any subsequent action, suit, or information against the same person, for any offence committed before the time of giving such notice; but the Court wherein such subsequent action, suit, or information shall be brought, may upon the defendant's motion, stay proceedings upon every such subsequent action, suit or information; Provided such first action, suit, or information be prosecuted without fraud, and with effect, it being hereby declared that no action, suit, or information shall be deemed or construed to be an action, suit, or information, within the intent and meaning of this Act, unless it shall be so prosecuted.

XII. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the Court in which any action, suit, or information shall be brought, for the recovery of any penalty imposed by this Act, shall require from the plaintiff or informer his declaration upon oath, that such action, suit, or information has been brought without fraud, and not for the purpose of protecting the defendant from any action, suit, or information, which might be brought by any other person, by reason of the same offence; and that if such declaration be not made to the

satisfaction of the Court, the action, suit, or information, shall be immediately dismissed with costs.

XIII. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that if the statement in any oath or in any declaration under oath, taken or made in pursuance of the requirements of this Act, shall, to the knowledge of the person making the same, be false, such person shall be guilty of wilful and corrupt perjury, and subject to all the pains and penalties attendant on that offence.

XIV. Provided always, and be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that every action, suit, or information given by this Act, shall be commenced within the space of six calendar months next after the fact, upon which the same is grounded, shall have been committed,

XV. Provided always, and be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that nothing in this Act contained, shall extend to the Members of His Majesty's Legislative Council, or to the Members of His Majesty's Executive Council, or to the Justices of the Court of King's Bench, Provincial Judges of the Inferior District of Saint Francis and the Inferior District of Gaspe, or to His Majesty's Attorney General, Solicitor General, Advocate General, or any of His Majesty's Counsel in the Law.

XVI. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that no person or persons having, using, or exercising the Office of Sheriff or Coroner, in and for any District in this Province, shall be competent or qualified to be a Justice of the Peace, or to act as such, for any District wherein he or they shall be Sheriff or Coroner, during the time that he or they shall have used or exercised such Office, under the penalties aforesaid; and that all and every act and acts to be done by any such Sheriff or Sheriffs, Coroner or Coroners, by the authority of any commission of the Peace during the time aforesaid, shall be absolutely void and of non-effect.

XVII. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the fines and penalties which shall be incurred and payable to His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, by virtue of this Act, shall be paid into the hands of the Receiver General, and shall remain at the disposal of the Provincial Parliament for the public uses of the Province, and shall be accounted for to His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, through the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury for the time being, in such manner and form as His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors shall direct.

XVIII. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that this Act shall be and remain in force, until the first day of May, one thousand eight hundred and forty, and no longer.