

more and more jurisdiction to the county courts, not, however, materially reducing the jurisdiction and prestige of the Provincial Court. Free as the people were to work their entire will on the judicial system in 1776, the constitution of that year made no change in the distribution of jurisdiction between the trial courts, but provided only that the chief court, now termed the General Court, should hold sessions on both sides of the bay. In 1785, the enlargement of the jurisdiction of the county courts was taken up again and the enlargement made was extensive.<sup>50</sup> In 1790 the plan of grouping the county courts in districts or circuits was turned to again, this time, no doubt, recommended by the adoption of such an arrangement in the federal judiciary act of September 24, 1789. Five judicial districts were formed: the first of St. Mary's, Calvert, Prince George's, and Charles Counties; the second, of Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne's and Talbot Counties; the third, of Anne Arundel, Baltimore and Harford Counties; the fourth, of Caroline, Dorchester, Somerset and Worcester Counties; and the fifth, of Washington, Frederick, Montgomery and Allegany Counties. There was to be a strengthening of the courts by the appointment for each district of a chief justice trained in the law and two associate justices not necessarily so trained, thus for the first time providing lawyers to sit in the county courts. This system did not give perfect satisfaction; the Chief Justice, with his legal knowledge, appears to have overborne his associates. John Leeds Bozman, a contemporary lawyer of unusual powers but

50. Act 1785, chap. 87.