

Of the court established in 1637, Capt. George Evelyn was given the title of Commander of the Isle of Kent and as such was its presiding justice; and he was empowered to associate with him six or more inhabitants, who are not named in the commission, to sit in a court with powers similar to an English Court of Sessions (*Arch. Md. iii*, 59). The title of Commander continued to be used for the chief civil, judicial, and military officer of a county until towards the close of the fifties when it was dropped in Kent as in other counties. The commanders of the Isle of Kent County were the following: George Evelyn, Dec. 30, 1637-Feb. 9, 1637/8; Robert Philpot, Feb. 9, 1637/8-Oct. 22, 1638; William Braithwaite, Oct. 22, 1638-Feb. 3, 1639/40; Giles Brent, Feb. 3, 1639/40-Nov.?, 1644; John Wyatt, Nov.?, 1644-Jan. 1, 1644/5; William Braithwaite, Jan. 1, 1644/5-Apr. 16, 1647; Capt. Robert Vaughan, Apr. 16, 1647-July 31, 1652; Philip Conner (Conier), July 31, 1652-May 26, 1658 (*Arch. Md. iii*, 59, 62, 80, 81, 88, 105, 124, 158, 161; *xli*, 89; *liv*, 13-14, 30-31, 123; *Hall's Narratives of Early Maryland*, 153, 159). In the spring of 1658 when the title of Commander disappeared, Conner, who had been called Commander at the January court, at the March court and thereafter appears as presiding justice without any title (pp. 123, 126). When the court met in July 1658, Robert Vaughan who had been appointed presiding justice on May 26, 1658, returned to head the same court on which as Commander he had presided from 1647 to 1652. When Edward Lloyd presided on the Kent court, November 19, 1657, it was as a member of the Provincial Council and not as a local justice (p. 90).

It is difficult to fix hard and fast dates for the men who followed Vaughan in the seventies as presiding justices. On April 16, 1669, a commission was issued designating Robert Dunn for this office (p. 260). It is not certain that he was immediately succeeded by Joseph Wickes who was appointed to head the Kent bench, April 18, 1671 (*Arch. Md. v*, 87). Nor is it known whether the latter was immediately followed by Thomas South, who was appointed the presiding justice, July 2, 1674 (*Arch. Md. xv*, 42). South died a few months later and thereafter it would appear from the Kent court records that Wickes was again the presiding justice from August 1675 to October 1676, when these county records end (pp. 319, 344). It is probable, however, that he continued to hold this position uninterruptedly until November 1683, when we learn from the Council proceedings that he and other members of the Kent court were turned out of office (*Arch. Md. xvii*, 171-172).

It would be of interest to say something of all the Kent men who served as justices of the Court from 1637 to the year 1676, the end of the period covered by these county records, but they were so numerous that space permits the mention only of the several presiding justices and of the few other members of the court whose activities made them outstanding. The names of a very large proportion of all the Kent justices for the first ten years following the establishment of the court in 1637, may be learned from the commissions to be found recorded in the Proceedings of the Council; and those of the justices who served during the twenty-nine year period from 1648 to 1676, may in great part be found in these Kent County Court records, or where breaks exist